



Troy Washington <twashington@jobstomoveamerica.org>

## Correction re: Environmental justice and good jobs email April 10

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To: twashington@jobstomoveamerica.org

Fri, Apr 11, 2025 at 1:39 PM



Note: An email we sent out yesterday incorrectly stated that the site of a New Flyer facility in Anniston is at the former site of a Monsanto plant. In fact, New Flyer is in Anniston but a different location. We regret this error.

Hi Troy,

Environmental justice means a lot to me because it connects to both of my homes.

I'm from Louisiana, where I learned first-hand with Hurricane Katrina that when climate disaster strikes, it's the most vulnerable populations who **are hit the hardest**. And beyond the constant struggle to protect the state from disasters both natural and man-made, Louisiana's oil and gas industry—a huge economic engine and job creator—**makes residents sick** and destroys **hurricane-protecting wetlands**.

I live in Chicago now, and during the campaign to stop a **General Iron** metal scrapping facility from moving to the city's already-polluted Southeast Side, I learned that environmental justice actually has its roots here. Hazel Johnson, also a Louisiana native turned Chicagoan, became known as the "mother of environmental justice" after she began investigating and raising awareness about the

environmental hazards faced by residents of her Altgeld Gardens community, a housing project originally built for veterans. Her activism led to then-President Bill Clinton recognizing environmental justice in an executive order.

That executive order was [recently reversed](#) by the current president, who is also leading the charge to [gut the Environmental Protection Agency](#). April is Earth Month, and as the administration rolls back environmental protections and funding and demonizes environmental justice, it's important to remember that protecting our planet and bolstering U.S. manufacturing—another one of the administration's goals—can go hand in hand.

Jobs to Move America also wants to rebuild manufacturing in America, and it's possible to do so while mitigating and repairing environmental harms. Take for instance Anniston, Alabama, where for over 40 years a Monsanto plant contaminated the surrounding area with [toxic chemicals called PCBs](#), harming thousands of residents.

Today, Anniston's Monsanto plant still operates at a much smaller scale, but the community is now charting a new path and is home to New Flyer, the electric bus manufacturer with whom we signed a [community benefits agreement](#) just over two years ago. Post-CBA, the company is helping the community recover from decades of over-exploitation—with good, family-sustaining jobs, a safe and respectful workplace, and quality training programs—instead of destroying it.

JMA builds locally rooted coalitions that include community members and environmental groups alongside our labor partners. We need this partnership because we know that the reason why manufacturing jobs were historically good jobs was [because they were union jobs](#), but good jobs can't come at the cost of a healthy community.

Our campaigns are in towns with long histories of extractive relationships with industry, whether through agricultural practices or mining the minerals needed for electric cars and batteries. These are towns that have experienced droughts and water contamination, and where industry is now building on area wetlands (not just in Louisiana). We work in places where residents deal with heavy traffic and asthma from polluted air, but feel like they're not reaping the benefits from the town's booming industries—just the harms—even though their tax dollars are fueling the economic subsidies given to these companies.

But by making sure the community, which includes environmental partners, is at the table with companies that are bringing manufacturing to towns around the country, we can make sure that environmental justice and economic prosperity work hand in hand. The fates of people and the planet are inextricably linked, and we can't sacrifice one for the other. In solidarity,



**Lauren LaBorde**  
Senior Communications Specialist

**Join us in the fight for good jobs and healthy communities.**

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