

Hesse, Jennifer

Subject: FW: Petcoke Rules Question

February 6, 2014

The Honorable Rahm Emanuel
Mayor
City of Chicago
121 North LaSalle Street 5th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear Mayor Emanuel,

On behalf of the Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA) Board of Directors, I am writing to respectfully request your careful consideration to the handling of the petroleum coke situation on the southeast side of Chicago.

While the regulations proposed by the City Public Health Department are well intended, we believe the regulations will have serious unintended consequences for those who rely on petroleum coke as a fuel or feedstock but also for many Illinois businesses that do not use or handle petroleum coke in their operations.

As an organization whose mission is to advocate for the expansion of opportunities for Hispanic Construction related businesses, the southeast side of Chicago is of critical importance to HACIA because of the majority percentage of Hispanics who live in the ward. We ask that you work with those businesses directly affected by the regulations, to discover mutually agreeable terms that will allow the continued safe storage and shipping of petroleum coke in Chicago.

By now, you probably have heard of all the perceptions and realities of what petroleum coke is. I will not repeat those, but only want to make the point that in this situation I wear two hats which provide a unique perspective. One as Executive Director of HACIA, the other as a lifelong resident of the Southeast Side. As a resident, I live a few blocks from the KCBX North Site. I want you to be assured that it is in my personal interest (and my family) to make sure that KCBX is being properly regulated and follow the rules.

As Executive Director of HACIA, we understand that many materials are handled on the Calumet River and petroleum coke handling does require strong fugitive dust plans to manage the impacts of dust. However, we are concerned that the proposed city rules do not allow for the flexibility companies need to develop optimal solutions. Another option is constructing a building to store the material. If a structure is required and feasible, we believe this would be an excellent opportunity for it be designed and constructed by Hispanic owned professional service and construction firms. Projects of this potential magnitude are rare in this community and the work to be performed by firms reflective of the area's demographics would be critical. Please consider giving more time and further analysis to this matter.

Please feel free to contact me directly with your questions or concerns

Sincerely,

Jorge Perez
Executive Director

cc: Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan
Chicago 10th Ward Alderman John Pope