


David Whitaker, Esq.
Director
Irvin Corley, Jr.
Executive Policy Manager
Marcell R. Todd, Jr.
Director, City Planning
Commission
Janese Chapman
Director, Historic Designation
Advisory Board

John Alexander
LaKisha Barclift, Esq.
Paige Blessman
M. Rory Bolger, Ph.D., FAICP
Victory Corley
Lisa DiChiera
Eric Fazzini, AICP
Willene Green
Christopher Gulock, AICP
Marcel Hurt, Esq.
Sandra Jeffers

City of Detroit
CITY COUNCIL
LEGISLATIVE POLICY DIVISION
208 Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: (313) 224-4946 Fax: (313) 224-4336

Kimani Jeffrey
Anthony W. L. Johnson
Phillip Keller, Esq.
Edward King
Kelsey Maas
Jamie Murphy
Dolores Perales
Analine Powers, Ph.D.
W. Akilah Redmond
Rebecca Savage
Sabrina Shockley
Renee Short
Floyd Stanley
Thomas Stephens, Esq.
Timarie Szwed
Theresa Thomas
Janice Tillmon
Ian Tomashik
Emberly Vick
Ashley A. Wilson

TO: Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director
Legislative Policy Division Staff 

DATE: September 16, 2025

**RE: A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SB 479 AND HB 4742, THE PROTECTING
OVERBURDENED COMMUNITIES ACT**

Council Member Latisha Johnson requested the Legislative Policy Division (LPD) provide a resolution in support of SB 479 and HB 4742, The Protecting Overburdened Communities Act.

The requested resolution is attached. Please contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Attachment

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF
THE PROTECTING OVERBURDENED COMMUNITIES ACT (POCA)**

COUNCIL MEMBER LATISHA JOHNSON

Whereas, the city of Detroit has the highest rates of asthma, lead poisoning and cardiovascular disease in Michigan and is home to five of the top twenty-five most polluted zip codes in the state, including 48217, ranking worst in the state, and

Whereas, due to systemic inequalities in land use policy and resource allocations, certain groups of people, and largely socio-economically disadvantaged communities have been routinely disregarded in relation to environmental policies and practices, experiencing disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards, such as pollution, proximity to industry, truck routes and highways, and

Whereas, most often low-income neighborhoods and communities of color face cumulative exposure from multiple sources of pollution and locally unwanted land uses which result in adverse health outcomes such as higher rates of cancer and respiratory illness, and

Whereas, lenient air quality standards and a failure in enforcement have allowed industries to build factories near residential housing although laws and regulations might dictate and request safe air quality standards, and

Whereas, within the city of Detroit there are areas currently battling some of the worst air pollution in the country, where senior centers and elementary schools, and early childcare facilities sit on the borders of high traffic truck routes, oil refineries, industrial and manufacturing plants, and

Whereas, minorities and low-income residents in southwest Detroit face health challenges and lack resources to address air pollution concerns caused by the dense concentration of heavy industry, including an oil refinery and steel plants, which have been emitting high levels of harmful pollutants for decades, and

Whereas, the expansion of the Stellantis plant in a lower-income majority Black community already plagued by pollution from nearby industry and major highways, continues to produce noise, odor, and air pollution, negatively impacting residents in the surrounding community, and

Whereas, the Protecting Overburdened Communities Act (POCA), known by the Michigan State Legislature as SB 479 and HB 4742, would require the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) to consider the cumulative impacts of pollution in the community prior to issuing a permit giving the department the opportunity to reject a permit if there is an excess amount of pollutants seeping into the community through the air, land and water, and

Whereas, the POCA would strengthen Michigan’s environmental permitting process by introducing new requirements and protections for overburdened communities, mandating environmental justice assessments, enhanced public participation, and stricter timelines and review standards, and

Whereas, the POCA would require the Michigan Department of Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) to conduct an Environmental Justice Impact Assessment when new permit applications are filed, aiming to reduce discriminatory environmental impacts from permitted facilities, **THEREFORE BE IT**

Resolved, the Detroit City Council supports the passage of the Protecting Overburdened Communities Act (POCA), and its intent to protect public health and safety, reduce the cumulative health impacts experienced in overburdened communities, mitigate the past impacts from pollution, and reduce the discriminatory impact of environmental harms, **BE IT FURTHER**

Resolved, the Detroit City Council requests that copies of this resolution be forwarded to Mayor Mike Duggan, Governor Gretchen Whitmer and both branches of the Michigan Legislature.