



Press Release

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25 local organizations sign letter urging Governor Shapiro to increase transparency regarding the timeline of the revised Environmental Justice Policy

PITTSBURGH, PA, June 11, 2025 — 25 local organizations signed on to a letter urging Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro to increase transparency regarding the adoption timeline of the revised [Environmental Justice Policy](#). The sign-on letter was sent to Gov. Shapiro on June 2, 2025. The Cancer & Environment Network of SWPA contacted individuals at the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection requesting a meeting with them, the Governor, and our network participants.

The recent deconstruction of environmental justice (EJ) initiatives at the federal level has resulted in censorship, distrust, and a new reality where EJ communities, advocates, and organizers are significantly challenged to continue the necessary work to keep our communities safe and healthy. Pennsylvania now has a greater responsibility to provide adequate resources and policy avenues for the continuation and expansion of EJ initiatives. It is essential that Gov. Shapiro act quickly to defend EJ initiatives by increasing transparency for implementing the EJ policy.

The revised Environmental Justice Policy has implications for the many EJ communities in Pennsylvania facing the disproportionate burden of environmental pollution and cancer risk. Rates of many types of cancer are [disproportionately high](#) in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region as compared with the rest of the state and nation, with [increased burdens](#) on people of color and marginalized communities. “Having the revised EJ policy would provide clarity and guidance to organizations in SWPA who are reeling from significant federal cutbacks, and yet continue their work towards health and vitality for all,” said Dani Wilson, executive director of the Cancer & Environment Network. “Governor Shapiro has a sworn duty to abide by the Pennsylvania Constitution, which includes the people’s right to clean air and pure water. Advancing environmental justice goals is a vehicle upon which we can collectively address the long-standing environmental harms and resulting cancer risks that many of our communities are facing.”

Increased transparency from the Governor’s Office regarding the timeline for adopting the proposed comments and releasing the finalized version of the EJ Policy is vital for all statewide EJ initiatives. It has been 18 months since the formal public comment period closed, and the subsequent silence and inaction has created an elevated sentiment of uncertainty. Official

adoption and implementation of this policy is essential for ensuring the adoption of EJ initiatives to reduce the burden of pollution and protect those most at risk of environmental injustices.

About the Cancer & Environment Network

The Cancer and Environment Network of Southwestern Pennsylvania (CENSWPA) is a group of over 60 organizations that collectively strive to raise awareness and emphasize the intersections between exposure to harmful chemicals and environmental cancer risks with a particular focus on community-informed healing and justice. Our network of partner organizations understands that concerted action by multiple sectors is required to realize our collective vision of a future where people in Southwestern Pennsylvania are not exposed to toxic chemicals that contribute to cancer.

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