

APPENDIX E

Certified Transcript of Public Hearing

MDEQ Public Hearing - MZX Tech, LLC

**Transcript of Proceedings
February 17, 2026**

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**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
MZX TECH, LLC PUBLIC HEARING**

**Taken at Ranger Conference Center
Northwest Mississippi Community College - DeSoto
1210 Church Road West, Southaven, Mississippi
on Tuesday, February 17, 2026
beginning at 6:05 p.m.**

**REPORTED BY:
CHRISTA SHERMAN, CCR #1964**

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1 APPEARANCES:

2

3 JARICUS WHITLOCK, P.E.

4 JEFFREY BLAND, P.E.

5 MS Department of Environmental Quality

6 P.O. Box 2261

7 Jackson, Mississippi 39225

8 jwhitlock@mdeq.ms.gov

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1 MR. WHITLOCK: If you'll please find a
2 seat if you wish to be seated. Thank you so
3 much.

4 We will now -- it's 6:05, we will now
5 begin this public hearing. We want to say
6 good evening, again, to everyone tonight, and
7 thank you for being here tonight.

8 My name is Jaricus Whitlock. I am chief
9 of the Air Division at the Mississippi
10 Department of Environmental Quality, or MDEQ
11 for short. This public hearing first regards
12 the proposed issuance of an Air Prevention of
13 Significant Deterioration Permit to Construct
14 for the construction and operation of a
15 behind-the-meter power generation facility to
16 be called MZX Tech, LLC, and located at 2875
17 Stanton Road in Southaven, Mississippi.

18 This public hearing is the culmination
19 of the public comment period associated with
20 this proposed air permitting action, which
21 began January 16, 2026, and will formally
22 conclude tonight at 12:00 a.m.

23 Given the media interest this proposed
24 air permitting action has garnered, I will
25 share, at the onset of this hearing, that

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1 anything conveyed during this overall
2 proceeding is considered public record and
3 may be recorded, quoted, and/or reported.

4 The purpose of the overall public
5 comment period and this public hearing is to
6 receive comments, concerns, and other
7 information for consideration of the proposed
8 draft Prevention of Significant
9 Deterioration, or PSD for short, Permit to
10 Construct Air Emissions Equipment requested
11 by MZX Tech.

12 The public comment period and public
13 hearing is a standard permitting process for
14 such a project as this, and is an essential
15 aspect of the subsequent review that will be
16 conducted by MDEQ air permitting staff. As
17 such, at the table with me tonight is
18 Mr. Jeffrey Bland, Air Permitting Coordinator
19 for MDEQ's Air Permitting Branch in the Air
20 Division.

21 MDEQ developed the proposed draft PSD
22 permit and supporting documentation based on
23 a comprehensive review of all information
24 submitted by the applicant for the proposed
25 project. Moreover, the conditions of the

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1 draft PSD permit were developed to ensure
2 compliance with all applicable air
3 regulations and standards promulgated by the
4 State of Mississippi and the United States
5 Environmental Protection Agency, or the EPA
6 for short, but are subject to change based on
7 information received during the public
8 hearing and overall public comment period.

9 Please know that a final decision on
10 this proposed air permitting action will be
11 made by the Mississippi Environmental Quality
12 Permit Board. The Permit Board is created by
13 Mississippi law for the purpose of issuing,
14 denying, or modifying -- under such
15 conditions and limitations as it may
16 prescribe -- environmental permits and
17 coverages to control air and wastewater
18 releases within the State of Mississippi.

19 The composition of the Permit Board is
20 established by law and consists of the
21 directors, or their assigned designees, from
22 specific state agencies that have interest in
23 environmental matters of the state. A
24 complete listing of the specific agencies and
25 their corresponding directors, or assigned

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1 designees, can be found on MDEQ's website.

2 I will now provide a brief description
3 of the proposed air permitting action under
4 consideration.

5 On August 22, 2025, MDEQ received an
6 application from MZX Tech, LLC, Air Reference
7 Number 0680-00119, requesting a PSD Permit to
8 Construct Air Emissions Equipment for the
9 proposed construction of a behind-the-meter
10 electric power generation facility. As a
11 point of clarity, behind-the-meter means any
12 power generated by the proposed facility will
13 not be exported to the electrical grid.

14 The proposed project involves the
15 installation and operation of 41 natural
16 gas-fired, simple cycle, stationary
17 combustion turbines and the supporting
18 equipment, for a continuous power generating
19 capacity of approximately 1.2 gigawatts. The
20 overall power generation system is also to be
21 designed with full redundancy through the
22 on-site deployment of Tesla "Megapacks" for
23 back-up power to ensure uninterrupted
24 operations. Therefore, there will be no
25 back-up diesel-fired or natural gas-fired

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1 generator engines onsite.

2 With the projected operation of 41
3 stationary turbines, the overall project is
4 subject to the PSD permitting program because
5 the potential emission of several air
6 pollutants exceeds the applicable thresholds
7 established by this federal rule. As such,
8 MZX Tech is considered a "PDS major source."

9 As a PSD major source, MZX Tech is
10 required to complete a Best Available Control
11 Technology analysis and an Ambient Air
12 Quality analysis for each regulated air
13 pollutant that exceeds the established PSD
14 threshold. The specific pollutants that are
15 subject to the referenced analyses are:
16 Particulate matter less than 10 microns in
17 diameter, or PM10, particulate matter less
18 than 2.5 microns in diameter or PM2.5,
19 nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds,
20 sulfur dioxide, and carbon monoxide.

21 The Best Available Control Technology,
22 or BACT for short, analysis is required to
23 ensure that MZX Tech will incorporate the
24 best practical air pollution control devices,
25 techniques, and/or emission limitations to

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1 minimize the emission of each applicable
2 pollutant.

3 Upon completing this analysis and
4 submitting it to MDEQ for review, MDEQ is
5 proposing the following as BACT for each
6 stationary combustion turbine: For PM10 and
7 PM2.5, the application of "good combustion
8 practices" and the sole usage of
9 pipeline-grade natural gas; for nitrogen
10 oxides, the usage of selective catalytic
11 reduction control and a limitation on air
12 emissions to no more than 2 parts per
13 million; for carbon monoxide, the usage of
14 oxidation catalyst control and a limitation
15 on air emissions to no more than 4 parts per
16 million; for sulfur dioxide, the sole usage
17 of verified pipeline-grade natural gas; and
18 for volatile organic compounds, the
19 application of "good combustion practices"
20 and a limitation on air emissions to no more
21 2.5 parts per million.

22 The Ambient Air Quality analysis is also
23 required to demonstrate that the allowable
24 emission increases from MZX Tech will not
25 cause or contribute to air pollution that

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1 ultimately violates either an EPA-established
2 National Ambient Air Quality Standard or any
3 applicable maximum allowable increase over
4 the baseline concentration for the area.
5 Such a complex demonstration, which accounts
6 for existing air quality and historical
7 meteorological conditions -- excuse me -- is
8 accomplished through dispersion modeling.
9 With consideration to "existing air quality,"
10 please note that at present the "existing"
11 ambient air quality for DeSoto County, which
12 is part of the Memphis metropolitan
13 statistical area, is considered
14 "in-attainment" with all national standards
15 by EPA.

16 For this proposed project, the following
17 pollutants were evaluated in the ambient air
18 quality analysis: PM10, PM2.5, nitrogen
19 dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and ground-level
20 ozone, as volatile organic compounds and
21 nitrogen oxides are precursors.

22 As MDEQ is conscious of the concerns
23 regarding the contributions that emissions
24 from MZX Tech will potentially have on
25 existing air quality, this analysis was

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1 thoroughly scrutinized by MDEQ air modeling
2 staff. As such, the proposed facility's
3 impacts from their modeled emissions and the
4 estimates of precursor secondary formation
5 were found to be compliant with the
6 applicable National Ambient Air Quality
7 Standards, PSD increments, and significant
8 impact levels.

9 After a comprehensive review and
10 consideration of the information presented in
11 the application and the corresponding ambient
12 air quality modeling, MDEQ has concluded that
13 by adhering to the emission limitations,
14 operational restrictions, and compliance
15 assurance mechanisms incorporated into the
16 draft PSD permit, the proposed facility can
17 comply with all applicable Mississippi and
18 Federal environmental laws, regulations, and
19 air quality standards.

20 Now, before we begin the comment portion
21 of the hearing, I want to share a few
22 important guidelines to ensure we can hear
23 from as many people as possible and maintain
24 a respectful environment.

25 MDEQ is committed to providing a space

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1 where all participants can express their
2 views without disruption. Therefore, we ask
3 that you refrain from booing, cheering, or
4 interrupting a commenter during remarks.
5 Also, applause, vocal reactions, or any other
6 demonstrations, whether in support or in
7 opposition of the proposed project, should be
8 only made during the intermittent periods
9 between commenters.

10 Each speaker is asked to convey their
11 comments within a maximum time frame of
12 three minutes. We implore you all to please
13 adhere to this time limit as best you can so
14 that everyone who wishes to speak has an
15 opportunity to do so. A timer will be
16 visible, and you will be notified when your
17 time is nearing its end.

18 We appreciate your cooperation and your
19 professionalism. Your respect for these
20 guidelines helps ensure a fair, orderly, and
21 productive public hearing for everyone.

22 We are now ready to receive your
23 comments, but lastly, we wish to share a few
24 instructions for all commenters.

25 Please come to one of the three podiums

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1 that you see within the room before you
2 present your comment. If you are physically
3 impaired and cannot walk to the podium,
4 please let us know and we will bring a
5 microphone to your seat.

6 This public hearing is being transcribed
7 by a court reporter so that the proceedings
8 can be archived for the public record. In
9 addition, we have a sign interpreter present
10 for the hearing impaired. Therefore, we ask
11 that you please speak clearly in the
12 microphone so that your comments can be
13 properly archived and interpreted. If you
14 are presenting a pre-prepared comment, we ask
15 that you please submit them upon completion
16 of your presentation to ensure the transcript
17 is accurate.

18 Before sharing your comment, please
19 state your name. If you represent an
20 organization, please share its name as well.

21 In lieu of presenting your comment at
22 the podium, you may still submit written
23 comments to enter into the public record.
24 Located at both registration tables as you
25 entered the conference center are comment

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1 cards and pens. Upon completing your written
2 comment, please submit it to MDEQ staff.

3 We will now call individuals to comment
4 in the following order: First, those
5 individuals that indicated "yes" on their
6 registration cards with a desire to speak
7 will go first; second, those individuals that
8 indicated "maybe" on their registration card;
9 and lastly, we will open up the floor to
10 anyone else who wishes to comment and has not
11 already done so already.

12 I will also -- and there's one other
13 item that I might mention off the cuff, is
14 that you please silence any cell phone,
15 smart-watch, just so we can, I guess, clearly
16 transcribe any comment made. That is the
17 only thing that I had failed to mention
18 beforehand. But other than that, we are
19 ready to begin.

20 I also will apologize on the front end
21 if I mispronounce anyone's name. So, I'm
22 sorry in advance.

23 Mr. Gordon Jackson.

24 MR. JACKSON: Good afternoon. Or good
25 evening, I think it's evening now. Members

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1 of the board and executives of MDEQ, my name
2 is Gordon Jackson. I am the state
3 Environmental Climate Justice chair for the
4 Mississippi State Conference NAACP. We're
5 working closely with our DeSoto County
6 branch.

7 I'm here to urge you to disapprove the
8 draft of construction permit for the MZX,
9 LLC, power plant in Southaven. This case is
10 more than just about one facility, it's about
11 whether Mississippi will continue a pattern
12 of setting high -- citing high pollution
13 projects in communities already burdened by
14 poor air quality and health disparities, or
15 whether you will choose a path that aligns
16 with long-standing environmental laws, with
17 environmental justice, and basic public
18 health science.

19 The proposed 41 methane gas fired
20 turbines, as well as the 27 already installed
21 and operating without a permit, would have
22 significant smog forming pollutants,
23 particulate matter, and hazardous air
24 pollutants, like formaldehyde, into a region
25 that is already failing federal smog

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1 standards.

2 Smog and other fine particles are not
3 abstract words and phrases, but should be
4 treated with a level of concern that
5 environmental and public health officials
6 should consider them, which are triggers for
7 asthma attacks, hospital visits, heart
8 problems, and missed days of school and work.

9 The Memphis metro area, including
10 Southaven, already ranks among the highest in
11 the nation for asthma related emergency room
12 visits and deaths. To add a massive fossil
13 fuel power plant into this context without a
14 full, honest, cumulative impact analysis is
15 irresponsible for the state environmental
16 quality agency and government body to do.

17 We are asking to take a different course
18 here. The permit board should disapprove
19 this draft permit and direct MDEQ to require
20 MZX Tech and xAI to stop operating the 27
21 unpermitted turbines until they are brought
22 into full compliance, withdraw the current
23 draft permit, conduct a comprehensive air
24 quality and health impact analysis that
25 includes all turbines and cumulative

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1 pollution, and only then, with full
2 transparent information, issue a permit
3 proposal for meaningful public review.

4 And I'd like to add that last year at
5 our national convention in Charlotte, we
6 passed a resolution asking for such issues
7 and asking for -- to be able to reach out and
8 come and provide, or establish, community
9 benefits agreements so that the -- so that
10 the owners of the data center, along with the
11 municipalities, are acting as responsible
12 corporate citizens in the communities they --
13 that they exist.

14 Thank you very much.

15 MR. WHITLOCK: Kelly Jacobs. I'm sorry.

16 MS. JACOBS: Good evening, Mr. Bland,
17 Mr. Whitlock, and everybody who came here
18 tonight. Thank you for being here.

19 My name is Kelly Jacobs, my husband and
20 I live in Hernando. I am here to ask you to
21 not approve any permit for the new Southaven
22 xAI power station operated by MZX technology.

23 History has proven that greedy
24 businesses and politicians cannot be trusted
25 to think about the safety of the public's

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1 health versus their business plan to make as
2 much money as possible. This is why, in
3 1970, Congress passed the Clean Air and the
4 Clean Water Acts. These federal laws
5 overrule state laws and prohibit the people
6 of Mississippi from being used as polluted
7 air and water pollution guinea pigs.

8 On a personal note, recently my
9 husband's asthma and COPD-type symptoms and
10 costs have significantly increased. Paul has
11 never smoked anything, so please don't think
12 he brought this on himself.

13 DeSoto County has an F rating for its
14 air quality, the only county in our state
15 with this flunking designation. And I worry
16 that this newest polluter is why he continues
17 to have trouble breathing, stumping his heart
18 and lung doctors as to the problem, the
19 cause.

20 Today you will hear facts. That this
21 xAI company is operating without lawful
22 permission. That no tests or measurements of
23 the specific gray water pollution to cool
24 computers and air pollution these turbines
25 are making have been given -- specifically

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1 measured in this Southaven neighborhood
2 should appall you.

3 Would you want your children or your
4 grandchildren living in this area? I
5 listened to the mayor of Southaven at a city
6 council meeting split hairs about how noisy
7 this power plant can be, but he refused to
8 discover that -- to discuss the health
9 implications of his constituents who are now
10 breathing the exhaust from these gas turbines
11 that never turn off.

12 Even more turbines are being requested
13 for a total of 41 air polluters that would
14 run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The noise
15 will also increase dramatically.

16 Please deny their operational permits.
17 Federal laws protect our air and water, and
18 without proof that this business' air and
19 water pollution is harmless, you must err on
20 the side of the people. You need to enforce
21 the laws and the system that is set up to
22 protect the public.

23 You are our only hope, Obi-Wan, of all
24 enforcement of federal law that says we must
25 keep our air and water clean because MZX

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1 technology is violating the law by operating
2 without required permits.

3 Without proof that their billion-dollar
4 company cannot create power in a manner that
5 is safe for Mississippi residents to drink
6 and breathe, you must decline to issue a
7 Prevention of Significant Deterioration
8 construction permit.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. WHITLOCK: Hildi Hops.

11 MS. HOOPES: Hoopes.

12 MR. WHITLOCK: So sorry.

13 MS. HOOPES: Good evening. Thank you
14 for the opportunity to speak today, an
15 opportunity that was not extended to us prior
16 to xAI setting up shop in our county. I'm
17 not a professional speaker, so this won't be
18 easy for me. Please, bear with me.

19 As a citizen of DeSoto County, a major
20 concern that I have is for those who don't
21 have a voice. As an animal lover, the
22 studies provide -- providing (sic) adverse
23 side effects on wildlife, as well as our
24 precious cats and dogs, is nothing short of
25 alarming. Once the birds stop singing and

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1 our pets have suffered, it will be too late
2 to press a restart button.

3 The bluebirds, something close to my
4 heart, are a symbol of happiness, hope and
5 love, and renewal, and are one of the many
6 species negatively impacted. The bluebird
7 populations were down 90 percent by the
8 mid-twentieth century. Conservationists led
9 the fight to protect our national treasure.
10 We are now on the cusp of failing them all
11 once, again.

12 Birds exposed to persistent noise of gas
13 compressors show symptoms similar to humans
14 who are suffering from PTSD. Studies show
15 that chronic stress caused by air pollution,
16 including skewed stress hormone levels due to
17 the increased anxiety, distraction, and
18 hypervigilance of birds.

19 Instead of corticosteroid levels being
20 high, the opposite was found. Low
21 corticosteroid can be a sign of intense
22 stress, and that the body dials down the
23 baseline as a means of self-protection.
24 These are for those without a voice.

25 The studies showed that noise pollution

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1 reduces animal's habitats and directly
2 influences their fitness, and ultimately,
3 their numbers. By doing so, making it more
4 difficult for animals to survive. That's a
5 pretty damning picture of what human-made
6 noise can do to the natural population of
7 animals.

8 A Penn State study shows that bluebirds
9 and tree swallows nesting in noisy boxes
10 spent less time incubating their eggs, laid
11 fewer eggs, and produced less young than
12 those in quiet boxes. This demonstrates that
13 compressor noises cause behavioral changes
14 and reducing reproductive success.

15 Unfortunately for our furry and
16 feathered friends, generators, particularly
17 those in industrial settings like data
18 centers, also produce low-frequency noise
19 that can be distressing to -- more so to
20 animals than humans. Pets often perceive
21 these noises as pressure or vibrations rather
22 than just noise. Continuous exposure can
23 lead to anxiety, agitation, and restlessness.
24 Animals are unable to communicate, therefore
25 suffering in silence.

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1 We have a lot of trees and abundant
2 wildlife throughout the beauty of DeSoto
3 County. At the end of the day, this is where
4 we all hang our hats. When xAI leaves, we
5 will be dealing with the repercussions, not
6 only for humans, but for animals as well.

7 Please, please say no the expansion of
8 xAI and their continued pollution of humans
9 and animals.

10 Thank you for your time.

11 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Robert Barnes.

12 Mr. Robert Barnes?

13 Angie Davis.

14 MS. DAVIS: Hi, I'm Angie Davis. I'm
15 new to this, never done anything like this
16 before, but this is something close to my
17 heart, and the things that I have found out
18 have shocked me. And I really hope that you
19 will, at least for now, disallow this -- the
20 permit.

21 I've lived in Southaven since 1997. One
22 of my daughters lives in Colonial Hills. She
23 found out about the turbines, she went
24 outside and she heard hums, so she got on
25 Facebook, found that it was from these

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1 turbines that had been placed in the fields
2 behind her house.

3 And then I discovered, when I was
4 walking her dog along the back of the
5 neighborhood, and I heard a jet taking off.
6 This didn't register for me because I live
7 near Airways. I'm used to jets taking off.

8 The difference was this jet kept taking
9 off. The noise was pretty loud. I saw on
10 Facebook where somebody had gone out in their
11 backyard. I think he's here, and -- okay.

12 And he -- it was this incredible, loud
13 roar. I would be so sad, I thought at the
14 time, to go out in my backyard and have to
15 experience that.

16 I soon realized that noise was just the
17 tip of the iceberg. I did some research.
18 I'm not an expert, but the turbines in my
19 daughter's backyard, where my granddaughter
20 plays, are Titan 350 natural-gas burning
21 turbines. They each produce 35 megawatts.

22 The new -- the now 27 turbines, I
23 believe, now produce enough energy to run a
24 city. I was shocked. And once the 41
25 turbines are put in, I think he said 1.2

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1 gigawatts. So that's -- the Hoover Dam
2 apparently produces 2 gigawatts.

3 So this is -- yeah. So but the Hoover
4 dam is hydroelectric, and this is burning
5 fossil fuels. So I think even third graders
6 learned that fossil fuels produce pollutants.
7 But, as you pointed out, there are safeguards
8 in place.

9 What I'm worried about is, based on how
10 these turbines appeared so quickly and
11 without -- at least in Colonial Hills most
12 people didn't know about it until they heard
13 it. So that seemed kind of not good.

14 And then there's no air permit for the
15 27 turbines that are in there now, and
16 they're burning fossil fuels and producing
17 pollutants. But we don't know how many
18 pollutants, what's in the air.

19 I have -- I did look at what -- the
20 natural gas, when burned, produces the
21 volatile organic compounds nitrogen oxide,
22 carbon monoxide. These have been linked to
23 low birth rates, stillbirth, low sperm count,
24 cancer, as well as worsening the COPD and
25 asthma that we're all familiar with already.

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1 From -- you know, during the summer
2 especially, the news guys will come on and
3 say, if you have these health problems don't
4 go outside.

5 So that's because of Memphis. Memphis
6 is a city. We're a pretty good city right
7 here, so we produce pollution. But now
8 there's another city that apparently has been
9 plopped down in the field between the soccer
10 fields and Colonial Hills. And I can't help
11 but worry about how much pollutants that's
12 going to produce.

13 So I guess I'm asking you to make sure
14 that we are safe, because from what's
15 happening with the no air permit, with the
16 sudden springing up without -- I guess they
17 told us? That this huge plant, I just
18 suspect that this is really being rushed.

19 And maybe our safety is not a really
20 important part of this rush. And I want it
21 to be, because my children live here, my
22 grandchildren live here. They are having
23 children, they're talking about having
24 children, and I want those children to be
25 safe. And I want our community to be safe.

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1 And this doesn't seem like it would encourage
2 safety.

3 So if you could just ensure our safety,
4 ensure the procedures are actually followed,
5 maybe, you know, put off this permit until
6 the community has been educated, we know
7 what's going on, and we know what's going to
8 happen.

9 Thank you for your time.

10 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Joshua Langston.

11 MR. LANGSTON: Good evening. My name is
12 Joshua Langston, I am the elected alderman
13 for Ward 1 in Horn Lake, Mississippi.

14 According to the enviromental surveys,
15 Ward 1 is in one the most dangerous fallout
16 zones from the gas turbines of MZX Tech as
17 they currently stand, and if more are added.

18 As an elected official charged with
19 serving those I represent in my ward, I must
20 raise the health and safety concerns of these
21 turbines and the ones that would be added if
22 this permit is approved.

23 While Horn Lake has not been advised or
24 asked about the installation of these
25 turbines, or the data center as a whole, we

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1 would nonetheless suffer from the exposure of
2 nitrogen oxides, formaldehyde, and particle
3 matter these turbines promise. The
4 pollutants are associated with increased risk
5 of cardiovascular and respiratory illness,
6 and as I see in my child over the last few
7 months, an increase and worsening of asthma
8 and asthma symptoms.

9 Videos from across the north end of my
10 ward already show a continuous roar despite
11 the promise of sound walls, and the assurance
12 from local officials that, "It's not actually
13 that loud."

14 Without taking into account the
15 potential water use and pollution and the
16 implication of recent controversy of
17 artificial intelligence itself, these
18 turbines are currently, right now, a health
19 and safety threat. It's a threat against
20 businesses to the east, residents to the
21 west, communities to the south, cities to the
22 north, and to all residents in between. This
23 is not a city -- a single city issue and what
24 businesses they allow, it is a health concern
25 for all of North Mississippi, Southwest

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1 Tennessee, and if allowed to continue, will
2 be suffered for generations to come.

3 Gentlemen, you opened this by saying you
4 were gathering information, I'm telling you
5 you were given wrong information. This is a
6 threat now. You cannot allow this permit to
7 go through. Thank you.

8 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

9 MR. WHITLOCK: Got to get this one
10 first. I'm going to use the nickname Gray
11 Fox? Could you pronounce your last name,
12 sir?

13 MR. BACHELDER: My government name?
14 Bachelder, it's two words my grandparents put
15 together to make one -- when you want to buy
16 land.

17 But I'm here to tell you, from our
18 experience, that this is dangerous to
19 everybody. Let me give you some words of
20 wisdom from my family: Somewhere between the
21 mountains and the mosquitoes, you will find
22 man. We are just part of the creation. So
23 price cash shall return to roots, a stone
24 vested amount of return. We must base all of
25 our decisions on how they will affect the

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1 next seven generations.

2 I'm here to be not only a voice for our
3 grandchildren's children, but all the rest of
4 creation also. When the last tree has been
5 cut, when that last fish has been caught, and
6 the last drop of water has been poisoned,
7 only then man will realize he can't eat
8 money.

9 (Indiscernible) -- in Texas -- no matter
10 what you do, he's going to violate that just
11 like he did in Texas. So no elected
12 officials should be allowed to sign an NDA.

13 Thank you very much.

14 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Andy Kirk.

15 MR. KIRK: Thank you, Mr. Bland, and
16 your name?

17 MR. WHITLOCK: Jaricus Whitlock. You
18 can say Jay. That's fine.

19 MR. KIRK: Okay. Thank you for taking
20 time to come in here and holding this meeting
21 for us. I appreciate that.

22 Mr. Bland, I wrote you an email
23 previously, but I wanted to share this as
24 well.

25 My name is Andy Kirk. I was born at

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1 Baptist Memorial Hospital just down the road
2 here in DeSoto County in Southaven in 1992.
3 My wife has been a life-long resident of the
4 Greenbrook neighborhood since 1996. So if
5 she's watching this, don't get mad at me for
6 just telling everybody your age.

7 Together we've been homeowners in
8 Southaven Ward 3 since 2021, where we are
9 raising our two sons. Their safety and
10 well-being are that most important factors in
11 any decision that we make, and today I want
12 to introduce you to them.

13 We bought our first home in April
14 of 2021 in Southaven. Our oldest son, John
15 Mikal, who is now 4, who was born and brought
16 home a month later. He currently loves
17 trains, his bike, and our dog, Winnie. I
18 coached his first ever soccer team last fall,
19 and we practice multiple times at the
20 Stateline Soccer Complex, just two miles away
21 from the xAI site.

22 Our youngest son, Lewis, just turned
23 20 months old last week. He was born
24 six weeks prematurely at Baptist DeSoto and
25 spent the first week of his life in the NICU

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1 because his lungs were underdeveloped. When
2 we brought him home, we knew that his life
3 was a precious gift, and that also that
4 throughout his life he would be more
5 susceptible to respiratory health issues,
6 like asthma, RSV, and some others that are
7 have already been talked about today.

8 Both of our boys love playing outside in
9 our backyard, at Central Park, Snowden Grove
10 Park. We visit our friends and family in
11 Horn Lake. We go swimming at their
12 grandparents' house. We love visiting the
13 New Agricultural Education Center on Star
14 Landing Road.

15 And while, you know, I'm sure most of
16 everybody here, like me, spent the majority
17 of their childhoods outside, I'm not sure
18 that I ever imagined that that would be a
19 concern that I would have for my children
20 with spending too much time outside.

21 DeSoto County has some of the worst
22 quality of air in the state of Mississippi.
23 It is the worst quality of air in the State
24 of Mississippi. Memphis has the worst
25 quality of air in Tennessee. And lucky for

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1 us, we are right up close to them. While
2 there are many factors contributing to those
3 facts, those facts are indisputable. And the
4 last thing our city, our county, or our
5 region needs is another contributor to more
6 polluted air.

7 It is an indisputable fact that the 41
8 turbines applied for by MZX in addition to
9 the 27 temporary turbines that are running
10 without permits, and have been doing so since
11 August of last year, have and will
12 significantly contribute to more air
13 pollution in our region.

14 On February 13th, EmPower Analytics
15 Group just published the only environmental
16 impact study to date on this proposed
17 facility. MZX has been operating 27 turbines
18 without permits since August, in violation of
19 Mississippi State law requiring permits for
20 all air polluting equipment; and in violation
21 of the Environmental Protection Agency, which
22 is just ruled recently that even temporary
23 turbines need permits to operate.

24 In this study they found that the
25 residents in DeSoto County will be exposed to

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1 the highest increases in particulate matter,
2 and that the cost we are going to have to pay
3 for the increased pollution is anywhere from
4 \$30 million to \$44 million per year in
5 premature deaths, health care costs, missed
6 work, and missed school days. Over 30 years,
7 the study reports that the total cost to be
8 between \$588 and \$862 billion to DeSoto
9 County taxpayers.

10 This past week, the public records
11 request revealed the most recent water usage
12 bill for this facility. In just 12 days the
13 facility consumed 7-7-million gallons of
14 clean drinking water. If we extend that same
15 30 year period used to calculate the health
16 cost, that would equal 7 trillion gallons of
17 drinkable water used for this supercomputer.

18 The impacts to our environment, our
19 health, and our community greatly outweigh
20 any potential benefits for this project. I
21 join my voice with many of my neighbors here,
22 to ask that you deny this permit and have
23 them revise it.

24 I appreciate your time.

25 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Robert James.

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1 REV. JAMES: Good evening,
2 (indiscernible) and community members. My
3 name is Rev. Robert James. I serve as the
4 president of the Mississippi State conference
5 of the NAACP. Today I stand with our DeSoto
6 branch members, the community of Southaven,
7 and the residents of Memphis, urging you to
8 disapprove the draft permit for the xAI
9 center in Southaven.

10 Any form of pollution needs to be
11 seriously reviewed, especially in communities
12 already burdened by environmental hazards.
13 This facility is not just a data center. It
14 is a mass methane gas power plant. The
15 proposal involves the operation of 41 gas
16 turbines, enough to supply power to a midsize
17 city.

18 Last year we went to Memphis and stood
19 with our brothers and sisters when xAI
20 disregarded the law and powered their first
21 facility. As a result, our community are
22 living near gas turbines that was installed
23 and operated without the necessary pollution
24 control. With this new permit, noise and air
25 pollution would increase, intensify existing

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1 health risks, and prolonging injustice for
2 those who have opposed xAI for over a year.

3 To make matters worse, with or without
4 your permit, they are already operating.
5 That is unacceptable. This draft failed its
6 fundamental duty of transparency. It does
7 not include all the potential sources of
8 pollution, making it impossible for the
9 public to fully understand the scope of the
10 environmental hazard and the health impact
11 across the site. Why should MDEQ consider
12 approving a permit when the application
13 remains incomplete?

14 In any other situation, a permit of this
15 size will have to return back to the drawing
16 board. By ignoring the fact that the data
17 center is already operating without a permit,
18 the process undermines meaningful public
19 participation. A permit that excludes
20 pollution source is not a protected permit.
21 It is a permission slip for further harm.

22 Moreover, the public has requested for
23 more time to engage in this process. MDEQ
24 has denied an extension for further community
25 input. And if MDEQ moves forward with an

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1 incomplete application and disregards the
2 request of additional engagement, it is
3 sending a troubled message to the public.

4 Southaven and the Memphis region are
5 experiencing unhealthy air quality, pollution
6 from turbines, worsening reparatory illness;
7 especially in children, pregnant women, and
8 elderly. Adding a large polluting power
9 plant to these conditions is not only unwise,
10 it's unjust.

11 As the state president, I can testify
12 that Mississippi has a long and powerful
13 history of making decisions, intensifying the
14 environmental harms of black and low income
15 communities, treating our neighbors as a
16 sacrifice zone. The NAACP has fought this
17 pattern from Jackson water prices to all the
18 environmental justice struggles statewide.
19 And we will continue to fight it here.

20 So to approve this permit under these
21 circumstances would be a failure to
22 Mississippians from further harm. We're
23 calling on the permit board to exercise its
24 full authority and responsibility. We urge
25 you to order a cease in operation of the 27

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1 unpermitted turbines until permanent permits
2 are obtained. Withdraw current draft permits
3 and require a revised permit that includes
4 all turbines. Provide a honest accounting of
5 emissions before ending public comment.

6 Our community deserves accurate
7 information, enforceable protection, and a
8 real voice in decisions that affect their
9 lives. We're not opposed to economic
10 development, far from it. We're opposed to
11 development that treats our community as
12 expendable, and our children's health as
13 collateral damage. Mississippi can, and it
14 must, do better.

15 So we urge you to disapprove this draft
16 permit and stand for the public health,
17 environment justice, and the civil rights of
18 the people you serve.

19 Thank you for your time.

20 COURT REPORTER: Mr. Whitlock, will you
21 remind them not to cover over people talking,
22 or I won't be able to get it down?

23 MR. WHITLOCK: I will stress that you
24 please, when anyone is speaking, please
25 refrain from any additional noise, anything,

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1 just so she can accurately get everything
2 that's said on record.

3 I just ask -- it's okay after they've
4 completed it, just while they're doing it.
5 Okay. Thank you for that.

6 Also, please stress -- I want to stress
7 that if at all possible, please adhere to the
8 three-minute time limit. I know I can't
9 force you to, but I know we've got a lot of
10 people, and we are -- I need to be respectful
11 of the facilities and their restrictions as
12 well. So as best you can, 3 minutes.

13 Ms. Natalie Culbreath.

14 MS. CULBREATH: Hello, my name is
15 Natalie Culbreath. I'm a resident of
16 Southaven, a mom of three, and the vice
17 president of DeSoto Central Primary School
18 Parent Teacher Organization.

19 I am speaking on behalf of all the
20 children of DeSoto County and the surrounding
21 area to demand that the MDEQ permit board
22 disapprove the permit allowing MZX Tech to
23 operate. If the permit is approved, the MZX
24 Tech facility would dramatically increase
25 air, light, water, and noise pollution,

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1 directly harming the health of our children.

2 MZX is already operating 27 turbines
3 without a permit. This draft permit fails to
4 account for all the sources of pollution and
5 fails to protect air quality and public
6 health. This permit underestimates health
7 and economic harm. This permit fails to
8 adequately address water concerns.

9 Ultimately, permitting this facility to
10 operate will result in an unhealthy
11 environment for the citizens of this area.
12 For these reasons, I demand that the 27
13 unpermitted turbines be stopped immediately,
14 and that MDEQ deny their permit.

15 It is my moral imperative as a mother to
16 beg you to protect our children's air and
17 water. It is your job, as the Department of
18 Environmental Quality, to deny this permit.

19 Thank you for hearing our comments.

20 MR. WHITLOCK: Danielle Culbreath.

21 MISS CULBREATH: Hello, my name is
22 Danielle Culbreath, and I'm a third grader at
23 DeSoto Central Elementary.

24 I am against the permit for the MZX Tech
25 facility because it's harmful to the

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1 environment that I'm growing up in. Please
2 protect the air and water that I will have to
3 breathe and drink.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Nathan Reed.

6 MR. REED: My name is Nathan Reed. I'm
7 a lifelong resident of Southaven. I was born
8 and raised on Stateline Road. And aside from
9 the years I left to attend seminary, where I
10 met my wife, I've always called the city
11 home.

12 We made the choice to come back here.
13 We chose to build our life here. More than
14 17 years my family has lived in North Creek
15 neighborhood. It's on the west end.

16 We have witnessed development before:
17 Warehouses, distribution centers, commercial
18 expansions. None of this is new. Growth,
19 when managed responsibly, can be healthy.

20 But what has occurred with xAI is
21 categorically different. The scale, the
22 speed, the intensity of this expansion are
23 unlike anything this area has absorbed.

24 This was not thoughtful phase
25 development, it was an industrial surge

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1 imposed on the residents, on our residential
2 community. The impact has been immediate and
3 undeniable: Relentless industrial noise,
4 increased heavy traffic coming through the
5 arteries of our neighborhoods, the
6 denigration of our air quality.

7 I have never experienced chronic sinus
8 issues in my life, and yet now I deal with a
9 persistent cough and a prolonged irritation
10 that coincides directly with the operation of
11 this ramping up. Where residents begin to
12 experiencing new health concerns along sudden
13 industrial escalations, dismissal is not
14 leadership, it's negligence.

15 This is not a theoretical policy debate,
16 this is not partisan theater, this is
17 happening in front -- in our front yards, in
18 our children's bedrooms, in our air we
19 breathe. Families who have built their lives
20 for decades have been forced to observe
21 consequences they were never meaningfully
22 consulted about.

23 Let me be clear, we are not anti-growth.
24 We are not anti-business. We are
25 anti-secrecy. We are anti-rubber stamping.

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1 We are anti-sacrificing the established
2 neighborhoods for corporate acceleration
3 without transparent safeguards. Without
4 transparency, it's exploitation. Growth
5 without accountability is recklessness.
6 Growth without community consent is political
7 malpractice.

8 We are demanding a full stop, full
9 disclosure, every plan, every phase, every
10 environmental assessment -- every projected
11 impact that the residents of the west end
12 deserve -- clear data, emissions,
13 infrastructure strain, long-term expansion
14 and intention, and enforceable protections.

15 Because we deserve that. We live here.
16 We've developed our lives here.

17 We are not asking for favors. We are
18 not asserting -- we are asserting our rights
19 as residents. Responsible development is the
20 minimum standard, not a political talking
21 point. And until transparency and
22 accountability can be enforced and
23 protections are in place, we will continue to
24 demand it.

25 Thank you.

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1 MR. WHITLOCK: Cas Kilroy.

2 MR. KILROY: Good evening, everyone. My
3 name is Cas Kilroy. I live in Southaven,
4 Mississippi.

5 I am here tonight to voice my opposition
6 to the xAI development. Southaven is my
7 hometown, and I don't want my family and I to
8 have to breathe toxic air.

9 Opponents of this development have been
10 accused by our mayor of having a political
11 agenda. If someone wants to characterize it
12 that way in order to diminish our concern, I
13 cannot stop them. I can only say that my aim
14 in being here tonight is to protect my right
15 to clean air.

16 I do not accept the assurance of people
17 with a vested financial interest in this
18 project that it is safe. I'm not a
19 scientist, but I know the system -- I know
20 that systems change when you add to them.
21 The pollution from these turbines is more
22 than I want added.

23 Our environment is toxic enough. Our
24 bodies do not need yet another stress on our
25 health, and my well-being shouldn't suffer so

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1 that some venture capitalists can make money
2 as fast and as dirty as possible.

3 It is in your power to stop this here in
4 DeSoto County. Thank you for your time.

5 MR. WHITLOCK: Okay. Jerry or Jimmy or
6 Jeremy --

7 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

8 MR. WHITLOCK: Suller, or --

9 MR. SALES: Good evening.

10 MR. BLAND: Okay. Say your name for the
11 --

12 MR. SALES: Jerry Sales.

13 MR. WHITLOCK: I couldn't read it. I'm
14 sorry.

15 MR. SALES: I've been a resident of
16 Southaven for over 40 years, and I have been
17 president of the homeowners association for
18 25 years.

19 MALE SPEAKER: Speak into the mic.

20 MR. SALES: So a couple of things. One
21 is, one thing that's not been discussed here
22 is it's not just the xAI plan for Southaven,
23 you've got an xAI plant right across the
24 street in Boxtown. They have the same issues
25 that we're discussing here tonight.

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1 Second, my statement in life is: Not
2 all money is good money. And you've got to
3 know how much money is coming into Southaven
4 for having this xAI plant Southaven, okay.

5 There's big bucks here at the expense of
6 the population, maybe. Maybe if we have less
7 tax dollars -- maybe it's better to have more
8 tax dollars and less pollution, potentially.

9 So where there's -- were there -- are
10 studies performed and completed on water,
11 air, and land pollution before allowing an
12 xAI facility to be constructed in Southaven?
13 Were there? Or was the income dollar figure
14 so big it was decided to proceed without any
15 research?

16 For five to ten years, DeSoto County
17 cities complained about Memphis aquifer that
18 provides the water used and consumed in
19 DeSoto County as potentially being consumed
20 and contaminated by the city of Memphis.
21 What are we doing?

22 While the following is not an xAI story,
23 the point is the potential cost of allowing a
24 facility to operate without determining the
25 potential effects to the public and natural

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1 resources. Are we familiar with what is
2 happening in south Memphis for the
3 Sterilization Services of the Tennessee
4 Plant, AKA SST?

5 This is the facility that used ethylene
6 oxide, which is a poisonous gas that is used
7 to sterilize approximately 50 percent of all
8 medical and dental devices manufactured,
9 which are implemented in humans -- it's not a
10 problem with the implementation problem, it's
11 the gas, the environment, the pollution --
12 some food products, cosmetics, and in
13 industrial applications to manufacture
14 plastics, detergents, and antifreeze.

15 What has happened within a 4 to 5-mile
16 radius of the SST facility in Memphis? Many
17 people in the area for several years were
18 dying from cancer. Now there are lawsuits
19 popping up for the families' losses as we
20 speak today -- a lot.

21 The Clean Air Act lists EtO, which is
22 ethylene oxide, as one of the 187 hazardous
23 air pollutants commonly referred to as air
24 toxins. I visited and toured an EtO facility
25 in 1998 in New Jersey. The facility was not

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1 in an immediate four to five area of
2 residential or school properties. I was well
3 aware of the effects of EtO, having spent my
4 entire work career in a business that
5 required EtO or irradiation for the safety of
6 humans.

7 I questioned the location of the
8 facility in New Jersey at the time with the
9 employees there. The employees were aware of
10 the potential impacts to humans and animals.
11 Point here is, why would the city of Memphis
12 allow an EtO facility in a populated area, in
13 the city of Memphis?

14 While this facility is Southaven is not
15 an EtO facility, the questions are: What
16 might be the long-term effects of having this
17 xAI facility near a residential community?
18 Air, water, noise, land pollution potentially
19 destroying the Memphis aquifer.

20 Where are we going to get our water
21 from? That's drinking water. That's water
22 we use to wash clothes in, to bathe in.
23 Where will the residents obtain water?

24 Will it necessitate building several
25 large water treatment plants? That's going

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1 to cost a lot of money. We have fresh water
2 here now, why are we wasting it?

3 That's all I have, thank you.

4 MR. WHITLOCK: LaTricea --

5 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

6 MR. WHITLOCK: Before you start, ma'am,
7 I'm sorry, is your last name Adams?

8 MS. ADAMS: Yes.

9 MR. WHITLOCK: Okay. Thank you, I'm
10 sorry. Go ahead.

11 MS. ADAMS: Good evening, and thank you
12 for the opportunity to speak. My name is
13 LaTricea Adams. I'm the founder, CEO, and
14 president of Young Gifted & Green, and
15 daughter of Willie Roy Adams, who was born in
16 Senatobia, Mississippi, not too far from
17 here.

18 He died prematurely at 65 years old, a
19 week before Christmas in 2022. And my
20 grandmother, his mother, died from lung
21 cancer six months after. They both lived
22 right across Stateline in Memphis, a place
23 DeSoto County has in common, which is an F by
24 the American Lung Association for air
25 quality.

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1 I am urging the Mississippi Department
2 of Environmental Quality to disapprove the
3 air permit for MZX Tech, LLC -- or xAI,
4 Colossus 2, whatever moniker they have
5 decided to use -- because approving it will
6 be cruel acquiescence of the illegal
7 polluting methane gas turbines that are
8 currently running with no permit.

9 The Clean Air Act is not optional, but
10 somehow xAI is still actively breaking the
11 law. And to be clear, contrary to remarks
12 respectfully made by MDEQ, federal law
13 supercedes state statute.

14 In January 2026 the Environmental
15 Protection Agency reaffirmed that methane gas
16 turbines of this scale are required to obtain
17 proper air permits before operating. That
18 requirement exists to protect communities,
19 not to slow down development, but to ensure
20 it happens responsibly and legally.

21 Beyond legality, this is about public
22 health. Increased emissions of nitrogen
23 oxide and particulate matter are linked to
24 higher rates of childhood asthma, more
25 emergency room visits, and more missed days

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1 of school.

2 As a former K-12 educator of 16 years, I
3 can personally attest to the decline in
4 academic achievement when children missed so
5 many days from school because they are
6 chronically ill from something that's
7 completely preventable.

8 Research from our very own
9 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency shows
10 that air pollution exposure during pregnancy
11 is associated with preterm birth and low
12 birth weight, outcomes that could affect the
13 child's health for a lifetime.

14 We should not accept preventable health
15 risks in exchange for avoidable regulatory
16 shortcuts. Mississippi can welcome
17 innovation and economic growth without
18 compromising the Clean Air Act or the health
19 of our children.

20 The responsible course of action is
21 clear. Require full compliance, protect
22 public health, protect our children, and
23 protect taxpayers.

24 Don't make the same illegal mistakes as
25 the Shelby County Health Department, with a

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1 director that was a coward and resigned.
2 Uphold the law and the dignity of
3 Mississippians and prioritize people over a
4 South African ex-pat billionaire.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Justin Pearson.

7 MR. J. PEARSON: Before my
8 three minutes, could you tell me about the
9 court reporter and how we get access to the
10 comments that you made earlier?

11 MR. WHITLOCK: You mean a transcript?

12 MR. J. PEARSON: A transcript for today.

13 MR. BLAND: Once it's completed and
14 certified, it will be available for just
15 dissemination through our public records
16 office. There is no, I guess, charge or
17 nothing. There's no issue with that. We
18 will easily provide it.

19 MR. J. PEARSON: Okay. So you'll email
20 everybody who signed in today? Is that
21 what -- I'm saying, what's the process for
22 accessing it?

23 Because I heard your comments early on,
24 and some of the things you were saying were a
25 little bit concerning. But I wanted to make

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1 sure we can get access to it. So I just
2 wanted to know -- are you just going email it
3 to us?

4 MR. WHITLOCK: We can -- I will
5 coordinate with my community engagement
6 director to see how we can best provide that
7 to everyone. So, yeah. I'm going to say to
8 be determined.

9 Again, a simple remedy for that is a
10 public records request that can be just
11 easily done by anyone, but --

12 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

13 MR. J. PEARSON: -- information request
14 if you have our information already? We
15 signed in, and we filled out our emails.

16 Can you just email it to everybody? I
17 just want to make sure we all get access to
18 the transcript.

19 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

20 MR. WHITLOCK: So, yes, anybody -- right
21 now, anybody can just do a public records
22 request, as far as just you have it readily
23 available for anyone to receive. Submitting
24 it through email might not work as far as
25 just sending it everyone. But there is a

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1 possibility as far as posting it on our
2 website.

3 So that's why, I guess, I'm not just
4 going to commit to just saying we can send it
5 to everyone at this time.

6 MR. J. PEARSON: Okay. Well, I think if
7 it's posted to your website, that would be
8 fantastic. If you could send an email
9 telling us that it's on the website or a link
10 to it on the website I think that would be
11 fantastic as well.

12 It's a public hearing, but I think
13 accessibility to the information, and what
14 you shared, particularly because this is a
15 live stream, as I understand it right now.
16 Is this being live streamed?

17 MR. WHITLOCK: Yes.

18 MR. J. PEARSON: Because of that, just
19 to give everyone full access to that
20 information. I think if you can let us know
21 when that's posted to the website so that we
22 can read those comments that you are were
23 making at the very beginning in particular,
24 that would be extremely helpful. And I
25 appreciate you having --

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1 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

2 MR. J. PEARSON: Okay. Thank you. I'm
3 Tennessee State Representative, Justin J.
4 Pearson, representing District 86 in the
5 Tennessee House of Representatives. It's my
6 honor and privilege to represent communities
7 all across Memphis, from South Memphis and
8 Westwood and Boxtown, to Harbor Town, all the
9 way up to the Millington area.

10 And I'm asking that MDEQ deny xAI, or
11 its subsidiary, the permit that they are
12 applying. And there are several reasons why.

13 But let's talk a little about our family
14 history. My grand -- my pawpaw actually
15 comes from Marks, Mississippi. We have a
16 deep connection to this state and to the
17 history of this place. And we are seventh
18 generation Tennesseans on my mama's side.

19 And so the fact that this is happening
20 is really connecting our ancestry and our
21 history together. But that ancestry has
22 taught us one thing in particular, that
23 people in corporate positions of power will
24 often exploit those who they think are the
25 most vulnerable to try and gain more access

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1 to resources, despite the implications on our
2 children, on our grandchildren, and on people
3 who are most vulnerable.

4 And what I want to say to everyone who
5 is here is, one, thank you. And also take a
6 minute to look around. The diversity of this
7 room, the power that we are all bringing, no
8 matter what our faith traditions, our
9 political beliefs, and those things like
10 that, to say that clean air is a human right,
11 is powerful.

12 And our work is powerful. I was most
13 disconcerted at the start of this because you
14 were saying that you believe that xAI would
15 actually be able to meet the requirements
16 that are required by Tennessee law and the
17 Clean Air Act. But in reviewing the letter
18 from the Southern Poverty Law Center and our
19 community groups, including Memphis Community
20 Against Pollution, I'm sure you would see
21 some things that they would not be able to
22 do. In particular, as it relates to their
23 PM2.5, particulate matter 2.5 exposure, they
24 only articulated in their permit assessment
25 that their 41 turbines wills emit only

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1 19.5 tons of particular matter 2.5 while
2 generating well over a gigawatt, 1.2
3 gigawatts, of power. This, as a rule, is
4 simply not plausible.

5 The gas turbines at TVA's nearby
6 Southaven plant, which is only 800 megawatts
7 of power relative to xAI's MZX plan, emits
8 315 tons of particulate matter 2.5. And
9 they're only 800 megawatts.

10 So how is it possible that a facility
11 that is producing 1.2 gigawatts of power is
12 going to produce only 19.5 tons of particular
13 matter 2.5? They may have an extremely
14 powerful AI technology, but they are aren't
15 magicians. And it's the responsibility of
16 you all to, not just take what they're saying
17 for granted and at these values, but to do a
18 little bit more research and work to
19 determine whether or not what they are saying
20 is actually plausible and possible.

21 Which is why the research, that I know
22 has been made public by ACLC, by two Harvard
23 epidemiologist researchers, is really
24 important. The consequences of this
25 pollution are going to be in Southaven and

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1 the Horn Lake area, but it's also going to be
2 in Westwood and Whitehaven, communities that
3 I represent in Memphis. We share the air.
4 And pollution doesn't care about the
5 imaginary boundaries that have been written
6 across our states. Which is why we have to
7 have solidarity when we are standing up and
8 when we're speaking up. But the
9 responsibility that we have as elected
10 officials, and the responsibility that you
11 all have as government officials, is not to
12 bend to the power of billionaires, but rather
13 always do what is in the best interest of the
14 people.

15 And I understand, we have a billionaire
16 breathing down your neck, a weak governor who
17 wants to just accept more tax money no matter
18 who it comes from, and a mayor who is not
19 responsible and being responsive to his
20 citizens, that it feels like you have to
21 answer to that pressure.

22 But you have a responsibility to care
23 about the people and the consequences of this
24 plan are real. And if you look at the
25 research and the only environmental impact

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1 study that's been done by two Harvard trained
2 scientists, you will understand the
3 ramifications of your decision are too
4 significant to allow for this permit to
5 happen.

6 I'll wrap up here. But the negative
7 cost of \$30 to \$44 billion per year in
8 premature deaths is -- per year is because of
9 premature deaths, is because of lost
10 productivity and hospitalization, totaling
11 \$588 to \$862 billion dollars over the next
12 30 years.

13 But here's what's important about that
14 research that we have been articulating and
15 we will be continuing to share. That is the
16 conservative estimate. That is using xAI's
17 permit saying that there's actually 19.5 tons
18 of particulate matter that's going to be
19 released every year. In actuality, if we use
20 the accurate number, which is what we expect
21 it to be, which is closer to the TVA's
22 number, which is over 300 tons of particulate
23 matter 2.5, we can expect billions of dollars
24 in damages and a significant increase,
25 likely, in the amount of people who are going

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1 to die because of the pollution of this
2 permit -- because of the pollution from this
3 company.

4 Those are the things that we're asking
5 for you to take into consideration. That
6 people matter way more than profits, and that
7 no matter what these companies or these
8 elected officials are asking you to do, your
9 responsibility is to the health of our
10 community. It's to the health of our
11 children, our grandchildren, the generations
12 that are to come.

13 And so the fact that you started off
14 saying, "It looks like they're going to be
15 able to do this," was wrong. Because they
16 are not going to be able to protect the
17 health of this community. There is no
18 healthy amount of pollution. There is no
19 healthy amount.

20 And y'all really need to interrogate
21 this permit. You to put a pause, give more
22 time for yourselves to study it, as well as
23 give the community more time for input. And
24 with that, I'll stop. Thank you.

25 MR. WHITLOCK: Dr. Kimberly

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1 Owens-Pearson.

2 DR. OWENS-PEARSON: Hello, I am
3 Dr. Kimberly Owens-Pearson. And that was my
4 son.

5 And you can tell because, pretty much,
6 I'm saying the same thing he says. I haven't
7 read it, so I didn't copy. I'm just kidding.

8 But yes, I come before you today because
9 this is a serious matter. We have fought,
10 yelled, and screamed in Memphis about being
11 sold out by our leadership. People who have
12 positions have a responsibility to their
13 taxpaying constituents, instead of selling
14 out to corporate greed.

15 And those of you who have to decide, you
16 have to have an ethical and moral compass as
17 a human, that you take into consideration
18 that little baby who spoke, the -- my son,
19 who just got married. They're going to have
20 kids. And now the impact of losing my
21 mother-in-law, all of these cases of cancer.

22 So they want to go from 27 to
23 41 turbines. And everybody always emphasizes
24 natural gas. Natural gas is methane gas.
25 It's methane. Just look it up. It's

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1 methane. Call it what it is. Stop saying
2 "natural" like it's a good thing. It's not.

3 There are alternatives: Solar, wind,
4 things of that sort. But everybody is trying
5 to kill us. This air will not stop. It
6 doesn't have any boundaries.

7 Harm against any person for profit is
8 harmful to our society. This is a diverse
9 problem. Age does not matter, ethnicity is a
10 nonfactor, and the location has no bounds.
11 Leadership -- leadership is putting profit
12 over people because he's a billionaire. And
13 like the other gentleman said, and I always
14 say it, we can't eat money. We can't drink
15 it.

16 During these times, healthcare is being
17 lost, but there is an increase of health and
18 respiratory illnesses. People can't even
19 afford doctors. They're using emergency
20 rooms as doctor visits.

21 I'm an educator. I have students who
22 have personally come in and say, "Can I plug
23 up my asthma machine and take my asthma
24 medicine?"

25 At this time -- I see 12 seconds.

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1 (Indiscernible.) Oh, it started over.

2 (Indiscernible.)

3 Okay. So at this time, I'm going to
4 wrap it up. At this time, I just want you
5 guys to think, to know that people matter.
6 People matter. Children matter. Literally,
7 you would allow them to build this by John P.
8 Freeman, 500 acres, really? Like, you
9 would -- in the community, like, you would
10 allow this? You're allowing it in our
11 community.

12 And people are here today -- and I'm so
13 proud of y'all for showing up. I'm so proud
14 of us because it's time. It's time for us to
15 join together, speak together, fight
16 together. Because it's about us. They don't
17 care about us. We have to. We have to. And
18 say no to this. You have the power. If you
19 have the position, choose wisely.

20 MR. WHITLOCK: Charly Park.

21 MS. PARK: Hello, my name is Charly Park
22 with the Safe and Sound Coalition.

23 As I sat down to write this statement, I
24 knew how I wanted it to end. However, given
25 the gravity of this situation, I believe that

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1 the ending should come first. Shelby County
2 made a grave error when they decided to
3 overlook MZX's blatant disregard for the law
4 and for public health. MDEQ has a chance
5 here to make the right decision for DeSoto
6 County.

7 I will start with the strawman argument
8 raised, that since Southaven is situated
9 under the Memphis International Airport
10 flight path and adjacent to I-55, a little
11 more pollution doesn't matter. Let me make
12 this clear: We're not talking about a minor
13 amount of extra pollution.

14 The proposed emissions for the xAI power
15 plant are well above the PSD significant
16 emissions rate. The CO₂e, greenhouse gasses,
17 colloquially, projected emissions in
18 particular are especially worrisome. They
19 are 8,548 percent of the emission rate it
20 would take to trigger the PSD.

21 This is not an exaggeration or inflation
22 of the data. This is a real number with real
23 public health consequences.

24 While MEM and I-55 both contribute to
25 the pollution and smog in Southaven, they

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1 contribute net benefits to public
2 infrastructure and transportation. MZX does
3 not and cannot claim a net benefit to either
4 of those categories. MZX does not contribute
5 positively to our community. MZX simply has
6 no business here.

7 I could talk to you all day about the
8 emissions rates and the statistics on
9 ecological damage and climate change, but I'm
10 not going to do that. Instead, I want to
11 call into question the trustworthiness of MZX
12 to do what's best for our community in good
13 faith.

14 MZX has already blatantly violated the
15 EPA and the Clean Air Act. They have a long
16 and sordid history of running their temporary
17 turbines well before permissions were in
18 place for them to do so. They did it in
19 Memphis. And, as expected, they did it again
20 in Southaven.

21 These decisions were not made publicly
22 or with any input from the people who live
23 here and breathe the air. Why should we
24 trust MZX to follow the law set forth when
25 they already believe themselves to be above

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1 it?

2 Though they have been -- there's been
3 excuses made that Southaven gave MZX
4 permission to do as they see fit, state
5 statute does not circumvent federal law. Our
6 air, our water, and our environment were
7 violated without our permission and in
8 violation of the law set forth to protect
9 such resources.

10 Southaven is already suffering from the
11 burden of pollution from Memphis, of which
12 xAI is already heavily contributing to. In
13 fact, DeSoto County has received an F rating
14 in air quality from the American Lung
15 Association. The leadership in Southaven has
16 publicly acknowledged this F rating, and in
17 the same breath stated that it's due to
18 Memphis pollution.

19 Let me once again restate that stacking
20 pollutant on top of pollutant is not a
21 solution to the crisis. According to the
22 CDC, the major killers of North Mississippi
23 are as follows: Heart disease, cancer, and
24 lower respiratory disease, such as COPD and
25 asthma. These health issues have been proven

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1 to be made exponentially worse by the same
2 pollutants that MZX is currently seeking
3 permissions to produce in the area.

4 As someone who has worked in health care
5 for years in North Mississippi, I'm gravely
6 concerned for the patients who are at risk if
7 this decision is made lightly. It's
8 unfortunate that the leadership in our city
9 has decided that our air quality and public
10 health are up for sale, but I and the
11 citizens behind me do not agree. I implore
12 MDEQ to listen to us and to take our best
13 interests at heart.

14 Our environment is another precious
15 resource that threatens to become collateral
16 damage of MZX's activities here in Southaven.
17 Massive land clearing has already been
18 conducted, leading to the mass exodus of
19 wildlife from the area surrounding Colossus 2
20 and the accompanying power plant.

21 As I was speaking to someone who lives
22 in Colonial Hills about the effects they had
23 noticed, they said simply, "All of the birds
24 are gone. They have all disappeared."

25 Clean drinking water and clean air are

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1 imperative to society, and they are our most
2 precious of resources. Allowing a company
3 with a long track record of circumventing the
4 law for their benefit would be a devastating
5 decision for the people of Southaven and the
6 surrounding areas of DeSoto and Shelby
7 counties.

8 It was a mistake for Memphis, Tennessee
9 to trust MZX to keep the best interests of
10 their citizens in mind. We are standing on
11 the precipice of the exact same decision
12 here, and I'm really hoping that you make the
13 right decision. I can only hope that you
14 make the right decision.

15 MR. WHITLOCK: Shannon Samsa.

16 MS. SAMSA: Hi, my name is Shannon
17 Samsa. I live in Southaven. I lived here my
18 whole life. I currently live about two miles
19 from the MZX Tech power plant site. I hold a
20 master's degree in physician assistant
21 studies, and I have completed graduate level
22 public health coursework and thousands of
23 hours of clinical training, and I'm about to
24 begin my career as a medical provider here.
25 I am speaking tonight as someone trained to

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1 recognize preventable harm.

2 Even using MZX and MDEQ's own emission
3 estimates, these 41 turbines are expected to
4 cause measurable health harm. A Health
5 Impact analysis conducted for SELC by public
6 health experts, as a lot of us have discussed
7 here tonight, estimates 30 to 44 million per
8 year in health damages from increased air
9 pollution, including premature deaths,
10 hospital visits, and lost productivity from
11 missed school and work.

12 The modeling also shows that the highest
13 projected increases in fine particulate
14 matter exposure in multiple areas of DeSoto
15 and Shelby County, with annual increases
16 meeting or exceeding 0.5 micrograms per cubic
17 meter.

18 At a population level, that increase in
19 exposure corresponds to an increase in
20 per-person mortality risk comparable in scale
21 to the average annual risk of death from
22 alcohol impaired driving in the US. We would
23 never sit in this room and knowingly advocate
24 for increasing someone's risk of dying in a
25 drunk driving crash, yet that is the scale of

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1 the risk we are being asked to look away from
2 here.

3 Most importantly, as has been mentioned
4 by others as well, this analysis most likely
5 underestimates the total impact. It only
6 evaluates the long-term average PM2.5
7 exposure and does not include additional
8 pollutants, like formaldehyde, nor does it
9 account for the 27 turbines that are already
10 on site. We don't have any studies for those
11 27 turbines already on site because there is
12 no permit for them.

13 But I'm not here to talk about numbers
14 or money. I'm here to talk about people.
15 Because those numbers are not theoretical to
16 me, they represent the people that I expect
17 to care for. That is my community, and these
18 will be my patients.

19 I have personally spoken with residents
20 living near this facility who report
21 relentless noise and vibration from the
22 turbines. They describe headaches,
23 migraines, vertigo, sleep disruption. And
24 these are not imagined or hypothetical
25 symptoms.

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1 Chronic sleep disturbance alone is
2 associated with hypertension, cardiovascular
3 disease, and impaired cognitive function.
4 Persistent stress activation affects the
5 autonomic nervous system. That is just
6 physiology.

7 If a patient with heart failure,
8 emphysema, or asthma comes to me and asks
9 whether the increased exposure from MZX Tech
10 raises the risk of hospitalization or death,
11 the honest answer is "yes." The epidemiology
12 is clear, and the evidence is overwhelming.

13 Fine particulate pollution is linked to
14 increased cardiovascular mortality,
15 respiratory exacerbations, stroke, and
16 premature death. This is recognized by major
17 medical and public health bodies worldwide.

18 So what am I supposed to tell my
19 patients? Am I supposed to tell an elderly
20 patient with heart failure that the
21 additional risk is an acceptable tradeoff?
22 Am I supposed to tell a parent whose child
23 attends Hope Sullivan Elementary School, one
24 mile from the site, that increased asthma
25 risk was simply unavoidable? Am I supposed

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1 to tell my patients to move?

2 Approving this permit would be knowingly
3 adding industrial emissions and sustained
4 environmental stress into a residential
5 community that already struggles with air
6 quality. It means accepting preventable
7 health burden as collateral damage. It means
8 shifting the consequences onto patients and
9 onto the clinicians who will be left managing
10 the fallout.

11 In healthcare, we are guided by a very
12 simple principle. It is, "First, do no
13 harm."

14 You have the authority to prevent harm
15 here. Disapprove this permit. Thank you.

16 MR. WHITLOCK: Krystal Polk.

17 DR. POLK: Good evening, my name is
18 Dr. Krystal Polk, and I am 51 years old and a
19 longtime resident of Southaven, Mississippi.
20 In fact, I've been here since the age of 3.

21 I live and have a house on Stanton Road.
22 My house is currently about 100 miles -- less
23 than 100 yards from the data center. I'm
24 impacted by noise pollution from this site.

25 The noise impact from the plant is a

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1 constant sound that is generated constantly
2 through the day and the night. The sound is
3 a constant roar with periods of high
4 screeching noises. These noises can be heard
5 inside and outside the home. Even when away
6 from the area, I experience a constant roar
7 and ringing in my ears from being exposed to
8 the noise.

9 According to the Journal of Research and
10 Review, June 2020, who did a study on the
11 impact of noise pollution on human health,
12 the study revealed, and I quote, "Negative
13 impacts of noise pollution on health are
14 headaches, sleeplessness, psychological
15 disorders, lack of concentration at work, and
16 other health impacts such as hearing loss,
17 ringing in the ears, and learning
18 difficulties, strokes, hypertension, and
19 reduced quality of life."

20 In addition to the noise, the quality of
21 air near the data center is a violation of
22 the Federal Clean Air Act, which guarantees
23 that pollutants, such as sulfur dioxide and
24 nitrous oxide, are regulated to prevent the
25 exposure in the atmosphere.

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1 Currently, the state of Mississippi,
2 specifically DeSoto County, on our state
3 report, as well as our neighboring cities in
4 Shelby County, where their quality of air has
5 received an F. Therefore, with the plants
6 running gas turbines illegally without a
7 permit, they're causing even more further
8 harmful effects to our air quality. These
9 emissions will only increase with the
10 proposed 41 turbines.

11 I also have asthma and have noticed a
12 significant change in my health, with more
13 frequent visits to the doctor, as well as
14 asthma and/or allergy flare ups. At one time
15 I was able to stand outside, and even sit
16 outside and enjoy a lovely evening. But the
17 smells have now made it uncomfortable to do
18 so without having some form of respiratory
19 issues, such as coughing or shortness of
20 breath.

21 According to the American Lung
22 Association, those who are in danger of
23 effects of air pollution are children, older
24 adults, pregnant women, and people who live
25 near sources of pollution. Since this data

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1 center is already running and polluting the
2 air illegally by violating the Federal Clean
3 Air Act, the people in our communities and
4 surrounding neighbors in their cities, as
5 well as across state lines, are at greater
6 possibility of experiencing short-term and
7 long-term effects.

8 Dr. Steve Cole, who is a board-certified
9 allergist and asthma doctor, who was just
10 currently featured on the news, stated that
11 people should stay away from pollutants
12 because they are known triggers that can
13 cause respiratory problems.

14 A most recent independent Environmental
15 Health and Infrastructure Analysis on Air
16 Quality with the health and economic impacts
17 of the proposed MZX Tech facility showed that
18 the results of emissions from these gas
19 turbines could cost in the millions due to
20 the effects that it would have resulting in
21 infant mortality, premature deaths, acquired
22 respiratory and cardiac disease, and
23 exacerbation of current acute and chronic
24 illnesses.

25 My last and final point is the effect

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1 the pollution or emission from the turbines
2 has on our wildlife. The area, which I have
3 lived in my entire life, was heavily
4 populated with wildlife. Their homes have
5 been disturbed. And they are now making new
6 homes in surrounding areas. With the air and
7 noise pollution, their lives and home are
8 affected, therefore affecting our ecosystem
9 and the environment.

10 In closing, if they're not truthful
11 concerning what they're currently doing, by
12 violating the federal law of the Clean Air
13 Act by running 27 unpermitted gas turbines,
14 then there is a pattern, and that is a --
15 that is -- if they're given approval, that
16 they will not be truthful and abide with the
17 regulations in the future. By approving this
18 permit you are sacrificing people, children,
19 even yourselves with the short-term and
20 long-term air pollution effects. This not
21 only affects the people here, now, in this
22 room, but it will affect your grandchildren,
23 your parents, and generations to come.

24 I'm asking that you take this into
25 consideration and that you deny this permit.

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1 And all due respect, MDEQ, if you do not do
2 your job and deny this permit, then I am
3 afraid that your next job may be a
4 participant for one of these studies that I
5 have mentioned. Please deny this permit.

6 MR. WHITLOCK: Stacey Abraham.

7 MS. ABRAHAM: Good evening. My name is
8 Stacey Abraham and I am a resident of
9 Southaven, Mississippi. Both of my children
10 graduated from DeSoto Central. That was very
11 touching to see (indiscernible) the primary
12 school.

13 I live approximately 1.2 miles from the
14 proposed facility, measured in straight line
15 distance. I am submitting public comment
16 regarding the PSD air permit, with a focus on
17 environmental protection and public health,
18 particularly for residents who live in close
19 proximity to this site.

20 While air quality impacts may affect
21 Southaven broadly, those of us living closest
22 to the proposed facility would experience a
23 disproportionate and concentrated exposure
24 burden. Proximity significantly increases
25 risk related to emissions associated with

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1 large scale power generation, including fine
2 particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and
3 other pollutants known to affect respiratory
4 and cardiovascular health.

5 As a licensed social worker, my
6 professional ethics require attention to
7 prevention of harm, protection of vulnerable
8 populations, and the cumulative effects of
9 environmental stressors. From that
10 perspective, I am concerned that residents
11 living within close range, especially
12 children -- and as mentioned before an
13 elementary school within 1 mile -- older
14 adults, and individuals with asthma or other
15 chronic conditions may be over burdened by
16 sustained exposure time.

17 I'm also concerned about continuous
18 operations and backup generation,
19 particularly during periods of poor air
20 dispersion. When pollutants can concentrate
21 locally rather than dissipate for residents
22 living nearby, these are not hypothetical
23 impacts, but ongoing environmental conditions
24 tied directly to our health and our quality
25 of life.

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1 If this permit is approved, I urge you,
2 MDEQ, to require enforceable emission limits,
3 continuous transparent air monitoring
4 accessible to the public, clear corrective
5 action protocols if limits are exceeded,
6 explicit consideration of cumulative impacts
7 on residents closest to the facility.

8 I respectfully ask the permit board to
9 weigh whether the health burden placed on
10 nearby residents is reasonable or excessive
11 given proximity and exposure risk.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to provide
13 comment and for your consideration of the
14 residents most directly affected by this
15 decision.

16 MR. WHITLOCK: Marquita Bradshaw.

17 MS. BRADSHAW: Hello, my name is
18 Marquita Bradshaw, and I will try my best to
19 squeeze in 30 years of lived experience and
20 research and training into three minutes.

21 My people lived in Memphis and here.
22 And even before the boundaries of Mississippi
23 and Tennessee, the lineage of my people were
24 here before the United States of America. So
25 I speak on the authority of the ancestors,

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1 and today I came to speak for the Memphis
2 branch of the NAACP about health affects.

3 But before we go into that, everybody
4 take a deep breath. Now in that deep breath,
5 what parts of your body does that oxygen and
6 that pollution go to? Just like there's no
7 boundaries when it comes to air, when it
8 comes to bad air quality, it affects every
9 major system of the body.

10 And I'm trying to get through this
11 without getting upset, because I've had so
12 many people suffer with high morbidity and
13 mortality rates of environmental induced
14 diseases.

15 We talk about sensitive populations.
16 Who are the sensitive populations?

17 Well, anyone can experience symptoms.
18 And individuals at risk include children;
19 teenagers; adults over 65; people with
20 pre-existing heart or lung diseases, asthma,
21 COPD; and individuals who work or exercise
22 outdoors.

23 Does that sound like you? Raise your
24 hand.

25 (Audience response.)

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1 MS. BRADSHAW: So understanding the
2 immediate, acute effects of air pollution,
3 and the chronic long-term effects of air
4 pollution, is what this board needs to
5 weight. There is a certain thing as
6 permissible legal pollution that's set by the
7 World Health Organization and the
8 Environmental Protection Agency. But that
9 doesn't mean that there's a safe threshold
10 for anybody.

11 And so when you have a company that
12 continues to operate outside of the legal,
13 permissible bounds, there's no way we can
14 trust them. And I want you to understand
15 that, yes, these -- there are some short-term
16 symptoms like eye, nose, throat irritation;
17 headaches; dizziness; fatigue;
18 (indiscernible) breathing difficulties;
19 wheezing; and chest pain, especially in the
20 sensitive groups, but also exposure to
21 pollutants from the methane gas turbines can
22 cause inflammation, DNA damage, and hormone
23 disruption.

24 And when you look at cognitive health,
25 there are definitely no acceptable or

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1 risk-free levels, as numerous studies show
2 adverse health effects on the brain at
3 concentrations even below the threshold.

4 And as someone who has had a family
5 member commit suicide, suicide rates increase
6 in bad air quality. We talked about
7 cognitive health. Of course, we know it's
8 going to affect respiratory health, and even
9 at the lowest particulate matter that's on
10 this -- this right here permit, this is the
11 reason why it need to be denied. It caused
12 people, not only sickness, but death
13 eventually.

14 And just the risk to reproductive
15 health, not only in women. As someone who
16 has had menstrual cycles last 65 days, bad
17 air quality can cause it.

18 So I want you to look around and
19 understand that this is happening to the
20 women, the children, the fathers, the uncles,
21 the aunts, and all the members of your
22 family. We cannot be silent. And we have to
23 deny this permit just because of human
24 health.

25 There's no amount of tax dollars that's

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1 worth people being sick and dying. And I
2 want to say a whole lot more, but because we
3 have so many elected politicians that don't
4 listen when we talk about the health effects,
5 but they are really concerned about they
6 sperm count. I want to go on public record
7 to say that this decreased sperm count, the
8 particulate matters that are in this permit.

9 And so people who are struggling to have
10 children, this is not the precedent or the
11 future that we want, right now or the future.
12 We deserve clean air. And it's all of our
13 land. It's all of our air. And we can do
14 something about this permit today, and not
15 continue the practice of what Shelby County
16 did, and deny this permit.

17 MR. WHITLOCK: Taylor Logsdon. Could
18 you say your name?

19 MS. LOGSDON: Logsdon.

20 MR. WHITLOCK: Logsdon. Okay. Thank
21 you.

22 MS. LOGSDON: Okay. My name is Taylor
23 Logsdon, and I'm with Safe and Sound
24 Coalition, but I'm coming to you guys as a
25 mother today.

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1 I would like to point out a few things
2 that I'm worried about when it comes to MZX
3 Tech, LLC's power plant that's only 1771 feet
4 from my house.

5 Me and my husband purchased our home in
6 November of 2015, and we have lived there for
7 over ten years. In that ten years we have
8 welcomed three children and had many memories
9 in our yard, and have learned to love
10 Southaven.

11 But since August, we are slowly falling
12 out of love with where we have decided to
13 grow our family. Some of our concerns are
14 the pollutants that are and will be
15 emitting -- emitted from MZX Tech power
16 plant, and the noises that are coming from
17 it.

18 I have done plenty of research on this
19 project -- project since I found out in late
20 August. I have submitted a public records
21 request from you guys to do my own research
22 instead of just blindly following other
23 people.

24 It is my understanding that currently,
25 there is no permitting in place for the

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1 turbines that are in operation and have been
2 since August, due to a loophole. I have not
3 found any pollution studies or air tests on
4 the current state of this power plant, and
5 that seems really irresponsible.

6 The data on pollutants, emissions, and
7 byproducts that were pulled from the public
8 records request comes from a company that is
9 tied with MZX Tech or xAI. It seems like you
10 guys should have conducted your own testing
11 and protocols.

12 In your emails back and forth, you kept
13 imploring MZX Tech to do things like put
14 emission controls on the temporary or
15 portable turbines. But do we know if they
16 really did?

17 On January 9, 2026, the EPA finalized a
18 rule that these turbines are considered
19 stationary and must be permitted for use, and
20 was to be implemented on January 15th. So
21 why are these now unpermitted turbines still
22 constantly running?

23 The permit is only citing 41 turbines,
24 but does not include the 27 that already up
25 and running. So does that mean that before

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1 August 2026, whenever their loophole thing
2 has closed -- does that mean that there might
3 be 68 turbines running at the power plant
4 since they'll be able to run for their
5 12 months?

6 All right. I have three children in my
7 home, and I have noticed some health issues
8 starting to arise. One of my children, his
9 age is nine, he's been in the hospital three
10 times since mid August due to respiratory
11 issues. He missed 22 days of school out of
12 the first six weeks of school. That's
13 22 days out of 30 school days. The cause is
14 undetermined at this time, but it is possible
15 that this is caused by the power plants since
16 we're so close to it.

17 Another one now has an albuterol inhaler
18 that needs to stay with her everywhere she
19 goes. She is seven. And before September
20 she was perfectly healthy.

21 The only child that I have not noticed
22 health issues in is high functioning
23 autistic, and his issue is with the noise.

24 In the past month or so my eczema has
25 been dramatically worse. It has now spread

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1 from just affecting just my hands to now my
2 feet and my scalp. And these areas of my
3 body are severely itchy, and even cracking,
4 bleeding, and scabbing, making it hard to do
5 day-to-day activities, like even just
6 standing on my feet.

7 It has been determined by a
8 dermatologist that my eczema is mostly
9 irritated by formaldehyde, which has not been
10 measured by air testing near my home. But
11 this byproduct is -- but is a byproduct of
12 these turbines.

13 So out of my family of five, three of us
14 have started having negative health impacts.
15 And it's no coincidence that this is
16 happening now. And I feel it will only get
17 worse considering there are only 27 running
18 at the moment.

19 There is nothing off the top of my head
20 that would cause all of this to worsen other
21 than this power plant. The only thing that
22 has changed is the time we spend outside and
23 it is unbearable -- unbearable to be out
24 there because of the noise.

25 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Jason Haley.

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1 MR. HALEY: My name is Jason Haley.
2 I've lived in Southaven for 20 years in the
3 Colonial Hills subdivision. My house is
4 roughly a half mile away from the site, from
5 the xAI power plant on Stanton Road.

6 Starting in August of 2025, the noise
7 coming from the Stanton Road site has had a
8 very negative impact on my life. It's
9 disrupted my peace, my quality of life.

10 The noise is a combination of high pitch
11 noise and low tone noise. The low town noise
12 is heard with -- inside my home. This is
13 heard at night when I'm trying to go to
14 sleep. I'm hearing it when I wake up. It's
15 caused a loss of sleep and headaches. My
16 ears now ring, especially on the nights when
17 it's very, very loud. And there's no escape
18 from this noise. It's torture to be outside.
19 Trying to be outside and enjoy the, you know,
20 time outside, clean my truck out, work around
21 the yard, it's not possible. You're not
22 going to be out there long without being
23 tortured and going back in.

24 So I started voicing my concerns and the
25 problems this was causing in September. And

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1 I was told by our mayor and local officials,
2 "It'll be better next week. Don't worry
3 about it. We're working on it."

4 It continues day and night. It's gotten
5 no better. It's only gotten worse. They
6 have now added a sound wall. It made
7 absolutely no difference in the noise level.

8 The fact that the noise mitigation was
9 not in place before allowing this project
10 shows there's no concern for nearby
11 residents. It's still an ongoing issue. I
12 felt this was an afterthought of noise
13 mitigation more so than the plan.

14 I've asked many times for this project
15 to paused until some efforts were -- were
16 made to, you know, silence the noise, make it
17 better. There's no pausing of this. It's a
18 around-the-clock construction on top of the
19 around-the-clock turbine use.

20 You know, this is a race to see who can
21 get -- to lead the A -- the AI space, and
22 there's no concern for people. To me it
23 seems like they've already expected to -- for
24 MDEQ to approve these turbines because they
25 continue to buy land up back there. They're

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1 continuing to build. They're continuing to
2 expand. And no one knows what their full
3 intentions are there.

4 You know, there are people that live on
5 this same road as this. They're losing
6 sleep. They're constantly having headaches.
7 It's -- it's ridiculous.

8 It just clearly shows a failure --
9 failure in the due diligence process and a
10 lack of concern.

11 So being exposed to constant noise
12 causes sleep disruption, chronic stress.
13 It's very, very annoying. So I've been
14 documenting this noise level with a decibel
15 meter for a while from my backyard.

16 Decibel level A -- decibel reading A, so
17 dBA, ranges from the mid 40s up to 59. For
18 dBC it has a range of 67 to 79. All right.
19 And so when we talk about decibel readings,
20 even though they say these might be in the
21 limits, that's not the only factor.

22 The noise is continuous. Low frequency
23 and tone, it stands out from background
24 noise. The low frequency and tone travels
25 miles away, passes through windows and walls.

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1 I've had reports of people 3 miles away
2 hearing this noise.

3 So just going by the decibel readings,
4 again, doesn't reflect the experience of
5 having -- and having a decibel average does
6 not reflect the overall noise pollution this
7 is causing.

8 If I were to place my refrigerator --
9 I've had comparisons, people say, "Oh, you
10 know, this decibel is no louder than your
11 fridge."

12 I could place every appliance out in my
13 back yard and run it 24/7. People half a
14 mile away are not hearing that.

15 So what they're planning to do, it's not
16 only going to cause more noise, they will
17 never stop. It's going to continue to add
18 pollution to an area that's already failing
19 in air quality.

20 They have told the city officials that
21 MZX and xAI and MDEQ, and whatever other
22 consultants they want to hire, that the noise
23 was never going to be an issue. So it's
24 impossible for me to believe what -- anything
25 else they have said about future pollution

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1 issues.

2 And this is way too close to residents.
3 It's going to cause health issues for us more
4 so than just the noise. This permit should
5 not be approved. This started in August
6 using a loophole in the code calling these
7 mobile turbines. It's not that these
8 turbines are not mobile. They put them on a
9 trailer to get around this. You know, the
10 consultants for MZX Tech look for loopholes,
11 ways to operate, so they're able to rush this
12 project.

13 That's -- that's all it is. They've
14 been rushing it so they don't have to do
15 anything -- not following the federal laws.
16 It's not just Southaven that's being
17 affected. It's having a negative impact on
18 surrounding areas as well.

19 So the short-term and long-term health
20 effects should not be ignored overlooked.
21 The permit for 41 gas fired turbines should
22 not be approved. If MDEQ has the best
23 interests of people and not corporations,
24 this should not be a difficult decision.

25 I have one more thing. Well, I had one

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1 more thing. That puts a damper on this
2 ending. I was going to let y'all hear it
3 because, you know, people keep talking about
4 this noise, but unless you're very
5 experienced in it, you -- you're not going to
6 understand it. And it really sucks that this
7 won't play. All right. So we're not going
8 to hear the noise, which -- y'all are very
9 fortunate not to have to hear this. That's
10 all I have to say.

11 FEMALE SPEAKER: You can go to his
12 Facebook page, he posts them every night.

13 (Audio plays.)

14 MR. HALEY: That's not even the worst of
15 it. That's just (indiscernible). There's a
16 combination of the high pitched too, which is
17 very, very bad. The low tone, like I said,
18 that's what really travels through the house.
19 You hear that all the time. (Indiscernible.)
20 But yeah, it should not be approved. They're
21 not listening any more.

22 FEMALE SPEAKER: What was the decibel
23 reading?

24 MR. HALEY: The decibel readings
25 there -- it varies. But for dBA, I was

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1 ranging from the mid 40s up to 59. And for
2 dBC we're looking 67 to 79. That's -- this
3 isn't just every once in a while, this is
4 continuous, day and night.

5 MR. WHITLOCK: It is 8:00 o'clock, and I
6 will emphasize that at 8:30 there's a hard
7 time that we have to close this. So all
8 those that have yet to speak that still want
9 to -- if you have yeses, and there may be --
10 there may be undecideds that wish to speak.
11 But I just want to recognize at 8:30 we're
12 going to have to stop this. So I just didn't
13 want it to be a surprise.

14 Okay. Mr. Eric Nelson. Mr. Eric
15 Nelson?

16 Ms. Lauren Van.

17 MS. VAN: All right. Thank you for
18 being here today. My name is Lauren Van.
19 I'm a resident of Walls, Mississippi, roughly
20 four miles from the plant in Southaven.

21 The question I want you to consider
22 tonight is this: What need could possibly
23 constitute the harm from the pollution and
24 the disproportionate burden our community and
25 our state, the residents that are sitting

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1 here in this room tonight, will experience if
2 xAI continues to operate unchecked?

3 The mayor of Southaven has been allowed
4 to make a decision, a decision of this
5 magnitude, that affects all of us. The
6 environmental impacts are far-reaching. We
7 all breathe the same air, and the pollution
8 is not isolated to Southaven.

9 The health impacts from xAI's gas
10 turbines are too great to be overlooked.
11 Bottom line, it's an unprecedented amount of
12 air pollution and it's scary. Worse, the
13 pollution that we will experience is
14 compounded by the site in Memphis.

15 I brought with me something to hold on
16 to tonight, this leaf, a physical symbol of
17 our natural world, and a reminder for what
18 we're here advocating for tonight: The
19 environment, the plants, the animals, the
20 habitats, and the areas that we call home.
21 The people of this room are only a small
22 representation of the larger community that
23 the pollution from these gas turbines will
24 impact. And this leaf is only a small symbol
25 of the wildlife and ecosystems that will also

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1 be negatively impacted.

2 I'm calling on this board to do what is
3 right for the community and for the
4 environment and by denying the permit for
5 xAI's operations. Thank you.

6 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Jenkins.

7 MS. JENKINS: My name is Jenkins.

8 MR. WHITLOCK: What is your first name?

9 MS. JENKINS: Devan.

10 MR. WHITLOCK: Okay. Yes.

11 MS. JENKINS: Hello, everyone. My name
12 is Devan Jenkins, and my family has lived on
13 Windsor Road for five generations. I am here
14 tonight to ask you to deny the permit for 41
15 additional natural methane gas turbines next
16 to our homes.

17 I am speaking for my family, for the
18 earth, and for all of our ancestors who were
19 here long before this wave of development
20 arrived. My grandparents have told me about
21 when Stateline Road was a dense forest. It
22 had wildlife everywhere, gravel roads, and
23 trees that acted as a wall between family and
24 industry.

25 Over the years we have watched that

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1 protection disappear piece by piece in the
2 name of progress. Today I stand in my
3 driveway, and I can see the very top of the
4 xAI Colossus 2 facility where the trees used
5 to be.

6 We live with the consequences of that
7 destruction every day. We hear it in the
8 turbines, a deep constant drum that vibrates
9 into our house. It is the strongest in my
10 grandfather's room. He loses sleep over it.
11 He talks about it every day.

12 Can you imagine being elderly and unable
13 to escape the sound of machinery near your
14 home where -- where it was once peaceful?

15 We fear it in the air the water.
16 Emissions from gas turbines are known to
17 include pollutants such as formaldehyde and
18 known carcinogens. When you live right
19 beside these facilities, you can't help but
20 wonder where those pollutants go after the
21 rain -- into the soil, into the puddles, into
22 the water our animals drink.

23 Over the past couple of decades, my
24 family has lost many dogs and several goats
25 to cancer. I cannot prove a direct

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1 connection, but living next to these turbines
2 makes me deeply concerned about the exposure
3 and risk. And the thought of adding even
4 more turbines makes the risk to our animals
5 and family feel even greater.

6 Additionally, my grandmother has stage
7 three COPD. Poor air quality determines how
8 easily she can breathe at home. More
9 emissions means more risk, more flare ups,
10 and more days when breathing is harder that
11 it should be.

12 And beyond all of this, a vibrant,
13 living forest was cleared. Decades-old trees
14 that sheltered wildlife, absorbed pollution,
15 and softened sound are gone. A berm cannot
16 fully replace a flourishing ecosystem that
17 was destroyed.

18 Watching it fall was devastating, and
19 the loss is still felt every day. For you,
20 this may be one permit. For my family and
21 all of us, it is our health, it is our
22 memories, and whether the place we had lived
23 for generations remains livable.

24 How much more are the people who live
25 here expected to take on? I am asking you

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1 please, consider the cumulative impact on our
2 families and our environment before approving
3 more development.

4 Please deny this permit in protection of
5 all of our lives, our futures, and our earth.
6 My family has been here for five generations.
7 Please don't make this the generation that
8 can no longer stay.

9 MR. WHITLOCK: Tina Monteith.

10 MS. MONTEITH: Hi, how are y'all today?
11 I'm just -- my name is Tina Monteith. And
12 actually, I'm just a concerned citizen. I
13 have lived here in Southaven when basically
14 there was nothing but a McDonald's and a
15 Sonic. So I've been here a long time.

16 Now I'm -- I'm not going to repeat the
17 health issues and all this other kind of
18 stuff. I'm going to talk about, first,
19 methane. And I'm just going to verify this
20 is what the turbines are basically burning,
21 this methane.

22 Methane -- you know, I'm -- I'm going to
23 say that methane, even if it's controlled --
24 I don't know if it's burning, or it's
25 flaring. You guys might know that. That's

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1 something that I would like to see when you
2 guys put your report out.

3 If it's burning, it's -- the methane is
4 still going in the air from anywhere from 0.1
5 to 3 percent. Methane, very flammable. So
6 especially as hot as it gets here in the
7 summertime, in the air, it can burn. It can
8 burn trees. It can burn homes, as close as
9 they are.

10 Also, if I'm not mistaken, I read
11 something -- I don't know if it's
12 (indiscernible) -- there was supposed to have
13 been a 30 percent decrease by the year, I
14 think it was 2030, in methane use. So that
15 may be something that you guys may want to
16 check. Just a concern, you know, that's
17 something that I'm very concerned about.

18 I bet you guys are very good, and you're
19 just doing your jobs. But this is
20 something -- especially as close to all of
21 the facilities and schools. Also it has an
22 impact on (indiscernible). And that's one of
23 the reasons why the reduction of 30 percent.

24 I don't know if you guys have ever been
25 to China or seen any of the effects in China

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1 and India. I have. I have traveled over to
2 China, basically looked out my window and
3 could not see the hotel across the street due
4 to factories like xAI.

5 So this is something that you guys may
6 want to consider and take a look at. I'm not
7 going to go into all the different types of
8 health effects because a lot of people have
9 kind of covered that. The only other things
10 that I can add to it is tendonitis. Also
11 it -- we all have hair in our ears that will
12 be burnt out eventually. It will affect your
13 speech. It will also affect your hearing.
14 It will make you go deaf.

15 The decibels that I asked Jason about,
16 and you may want to check with OSHA. The
17 turbines -- it especially, for the turbines
18 that will be coming in, OSHA maxes out at 85.
19 These turbines can go up to 155, okay. OSHA
20 requires anyone that is at high decibels to
21 wear earplugs. And you guys should know
22 that. And basically either that or
23 headphones. They only work there for
24 eight hours. You have to think that the
25 people that are this close and hearing those

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1 noises for -- 24/7, okay. Like they said,
2 you have nerve -- nervous system,
3 cardiovascular, hearing, tendonitis, nerves,
4 all these things are attributed to high
5 decibels. And these are people that are not
6 even working at the plant, they're living
7 there 24/7. They have no type of OSHA
8 regulations where they're wearing earplugs or
9 headphones. So just think, what type of
10 protection do we have? And plus let's say
11 I -- I don't know if anybody has done their
12 research. A plant like this is not going to
13 be really bringing a lot of jobs.

14 They're not going to be paying taxes.
15 Because if anybody looks at most of the
16 corporations that come into DeSoto County,
17 they -- they're tax-free for ten years or
18 more. And this is one of the reasons that
19 basically they picked Mississippi, because
20 any other company, if they came to a state
21 and they're operating without permits, they
22 would either have been shut down or they
23 would have been served a cease-and-desist or
24 been heavily fined or penalized for
25 operating. They would not be operating still

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1 if they were in another state. They have
2 given donations to of city of Southaven,
3 which is -- it's not illegal, but it's a gray
4 area when it comes to evidence. So that's
5 just my opinion.

6 MR. WHITLOCK: Rodney Paullus,
7 Mr. Rodney Paullus?

8 MR. PAULLUS: Good evening. I'm going
9 to try to --

10 MR. WHITLOCK: Excuse me. Can everybody
11 settle down so he can have his time? Thank
12 you. Mr. Paullus.

13 MR. PAULLUS: Good evening. I'm going
14 to try to not talk about the subjects that
15 have been talked about. My name is Rodney
16 Paullus. I'm a resident of Southaven. I'm
17 relatively new the area, I moved here about
18 six years ago.

19 I'm here tonight as one of many citizens
20 who -- one of the many concerned citizens who
21 never -- who was never asked whether or not
22 we wanted these turbines in our community.
23 First and foremost, I want to be completely
24 clear, this is not a political issue. This
25 is a public health issue. And I also want to

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1 state for the record that I have a medical
2 doctorate degree, and that I've worked in
3 healthcare for over 18 years. I'm not -- I'm
4 not an engineer or attorney, but as a medical
5 professional, I can't ignore preventable
6 health issues when I see them happening.

7 Approving this permit without fully
8 counting all the cumulative emissions and the
9 proper compliance to the existing law will
10 place thousands of residents at risk. I feel
11 for the people that live next to the data
12 centers, like Jason Haley. I've driven
13 around the neighborhood behind the data
14 centers, and I clearly heard the noise
15 disruption firsthand. I can only imagine
16 that living -- how living near the data
17 center -- living near the data center, how
18 bad that could be.

19 The extent of the pollutant -- the
20 extent of the pollutants released by these
21 turbines and the consequential -- and the
22 consequent health problems cannot be
23 accurately predicted because we can't tell
24 the future.

25 Burning methane gas produces nitrogen

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1 oxides, which contribute to ground-level
2 ozone. They call it ground-level ozone
3 because they don't want you to realize it's
4 actually smog, right. Ozone exposure has
5 been shown to exacerbate asthma and cause
6 chest pain, coughing, throat irritation, and
7 permanently reduce lung function over time.
8 In addition to all that, it can increase
9 cardiovascular stress.

10 Now, I want everybody to humor me for a
11 minute and just close your eyes. I want you
12 to imagine breathing through a garden hose
13 the size of your index finger. That's kind
14 of like what it's -- what it's -- it's kind
15 of like what breathing is like when you have
16 COPD.

17 Now I want you to imagine breathing
18 through a drinking straw. That's kind of --
19 that thin -- and think about how difficult
20 that would be, and the fear that would set in
21 when you realize that you can't really
22 breathe at all.

23 That's what it feels like during a COPD
24 exacerbation. As an exacerbation hits,
25 that's what it feels like. Imagine that

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1 difficultly. I can guarantee you that if
2 Darren Musselwhite and the city council see
3 an elderly person in a COPD exacerbation
4 turning blue in your office -- or in their
5 office, or had a young child fearfully
6 gasping for air because of a severe asthma
7 attack, they would have fought for the people
8 of DeSoto County instead of selling us out
9 for \$20 million.

10 The statistics you've heard tonight are
11 not hypothetical, they are measurable and
12 predictable. So based on what you've heard
13 here, at minimum, MDEQ needs to shut down the
14 unpermitted turbines, and deny this draft
15 permit, and require full accounting of all
16 pollution sources before any approval is
17 considered.

18 Your singular responsibility is to
19 protect public health, not just today, but
20 for the next 10, 20, 30 years. If this
21 permit cannot meet -- fully meet those
22 standards without full transparency, full
23 accounting, and enforceable protections, then
24 it shouldn't be approved, period.

25 The people of Southaven are not

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1 collateral damage. We are not expendable. I
2 respectfully urge the board to listen to what
3 Dr. Pearson said earlier and do the right
4 thing and don't let this happen. Thank you.

5 MR. WHITLOCK: Mr. Steve Williams.
6 Mr. Steve Williams?

7 Ms. Chelsea Farmer. Farmer.

8 MS. FARMER: It's Chestela.

9 MR. WHITLOCK: Chestela.

10 MS. FARMER: All right. I'm going to
11 get straight to the point on why we're here.
12 To the MDEQ board, I'm speaking to you as a
13 mother, and as a lifelong resident, and as
14 someone whose health is being directly
15 harmed.

16 I have been a resident of Southaven for
17 23 years. I'll be 29 this year, so you can
18 do the math. I grew up here. Southaven is
19 home to me, and it is where I was raised,
20 it's where I raised my children, and where I
21 expected to feel safe.

22 I suffer from asthma, and my symptoms
23 have significantly worsened. The air in our
24 community has changed, and the impact is
25 undeniable. The smell is so strong at times

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1 that it enters my home. Because I live in
2 Colonial Hills, so I'm about 0.5 miles away
3 from the plant. And the one place where my
4 children I should be feel protected.

5 I'm experiencing increased shortness of
6 breath, chest tightness, and more frequent
7 asthma flare ups. Breathing has become more
8 difficult than it should ever be. This is
9 not an inconvenience, this is a health crisis
10 inside of my own home.

11 My family members and my children who
12 stay at home with me are also experiencing
13 increased breathing issues. No parent should
14 have to watch their child struggle to breathe
15 and wonder if the air around them is the
16 cause.

17 My family shouldn't be -- my family
18 shouldn't be forced to live in -- shouldn't
19 be forced to live in fear of long-term health
20 consequences simply because pollution is
21 being allowed to continue and expand.

22 Southaven is not just a location on a
23 map, it is my community. It is where my
24 roots are. I never imagined that after
25 23 years here I would have to fight for the

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1 basic right to breathe clean air in my own
2 house.

3 It is unacceptable for turbines to
4 operate without proper permitting. And it's
5 unacceptable to consider adding even more
6 permanent turbines when residents are already
7 suffering. Increasing air pollution will
8 only deepen the harm being done to families
9 like mine.

10 I am strongly urging this permit board
11 to reject MZX Tech's permit. Our health, our
12 children, and our future must come before
13 corporate expansion. You have the authority
14 to protect this community. Please do the
15 right thing.

16 MR. WHITLOCK: KeShaun Pearson.

17 MR. K. PEARSON: Before my time gets
18 started, I do have a point of clarification.
19 My question is: The folks that we see before
20 us, are you all the deciding -- making the
21 deciding votes, or is there a larger body
22 making that decision?

23 MR. WHITLOCK: There is a -- there is
24 another body that will make that final
25 decision.

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1 MR. K. PEARSON: Okay. And so that
2 would be subsequently after this meeting?

3 MR. WHITLOCK: Yes.

4 MR. K. PEARSON: After they review all
5 the information. You all are not a part of
6 that?

7 MR. WHITLOCK: No.

8 FEMALE SPEAKER: Then why are they here?
9 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

10 MR. WHITLOCK: This is Mr. Pearson's
11 time. Go ahead.

12 MR. K. PEARSON: Y'all, I had some
13 remarks written down, but --

14 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

15 MR. K. PEARSON: I had some remarks
16 written down, but I will forgo using those
17 tonight, because in this exact moment, I am
18 in the midst of the next generation of
19 fighters for our future.

20 Our future is dependent upon us locking
21 arms and continuing to move forward our
22 next-generation in environmental justice.
23 What we know is that Elon Musk, xAI, the
24 greater Memphis Chamber of Memphis, Mayor
25 Musselwhite, Mayor Young, these folks are

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1 complicit in environmentally unjust projects
2 that continue to exacerbate the health issues
3 that we know we are all suffering from and
4 with.

5 I was born and raised in Westwood. And
6 if -- just for a moment, if I can have
7 everybody in here who has either asthma or
8 allergies please raise your hand.

9 (Audience response.)

10 MR. K. PEARSON: I want you to know that
11 that is not normal. And we cannot allow that
12 to be normalized. The continuous pollution
13 that continues to poison our lungs, continues
14 to poison our children, is not normal.

15 This is an MDEQ meeting, but this is our
16 moment. We must continue to push back. We
17 must continue to uphold the projects that we
18 know are the causes of our illnesses, that
19 are the causes of our children suffering.
20 Our entire planet is suffering.

21 There is no dollar amount that is worth
22 this child growing up and not being able to
23 breathe. There is no dollar amount that they
24 can present, or no data available that will
25 affirm that one human life is worth being

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1 sacrificed.

2 This company, this xAI, Grok computer,
3 has sent out nonconsensual photographs all
4 across the planet. It is a deteriorating of
5 our social trust. It is a continued
6 proliferation of evil. This project is bad.
7 It is wrong. It is immoral for us to
8 continue to suffer as it continues to poison
9 our planet.

10 We are suffering worst. The census
11 tracked where there will be the highest level
12 of pollution has 73 percent black people.
13 This is no -- black people will be hurt first
14 and worst most often times.

15 This ain't a black issue or white issue.
16 This is our issue. And what we can't allow
17 is for organizations and billionaires to
18 continue to sacrifice our trust. Elon Musk
19 burned up to 33 methane gas turbines in
20 Memphis without a permit. And then he turned
21 around and received a permit in reward for
22 the illegal activity.

23 Mississippi Department of Environmental
24 Quality, what will you do? Will you reward
25 Elon Musk for illegally operating the 27

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1 methane gas turbines that are currently in
2 use? Are we at a place where oligarchs
3 continue to run over the people and be
4 rewarded for doing so? Or will you meet this
5 moment, like the folks in this room, and
6 remind them that the people matter more? Our
7 health matters more.

8 One company in a solo egregious
9 environmentally unjust act raised our
10 nitrogen oxide levels by 79 percent. One
11 company. And it is continuing to grow
12 throughout our entire region like a cancer.

13 Now is the time. We are the people.
14 And in remembrance of our iconic leader,
15 Rev. Jesse Jackson, you are somebody. I am
16 somebody. I may be black, but I am somebody.
17 You may be white, but you are somebody.
18 Collectively, we are somebody. And that
19 matters. Say it with me one time. Say, I
20 am.

21 (Audience response.)

22 MR. K. PEARSON: Somebody.

23 (Audience response.)

24 MR. K. PEARSON: I am.

25 (Audience response.)

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1 MR. K. PEARSON: Somebody.

2 (Audience response.)

3 MR. WHITLOCK: Paul Klein.

4 MR. KLEIN: I've got to follow that?

5 Good evening, my name is Paul Klein. I'm
6 co-chair of the Climate Reality Project's
7 Memphis and Mid-South chapter. We believe
8 that environmental justice is social justice
9 and that nobody should have to wonder what
10 the air they breathe is doing to their lungs.

11 On your website, I read that the mission
12 of the Mississippi Department Of
13 Environmental Quality is to safeguard the
14 health, safety, and welfare of present and
15 future generations of Mississippians by
16 conserving and improving our environment, and
17 fostering wise economic growth through
18 focused research and responsible regulation.

19 When xAI first came to Memphis, they
20 built Colossus using 35 unpermitted turbines
21 without any pollution controls. And a year
22 later received a permit for only 15 of them.
23 Then they moved the rest of them over here,
24 and they've been running them already,
25 creating air and noise pollution, while they

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1 apply to you for xAI, through MZX, to build
2 and permanently run 41 turbines, potentially
3 making it the largest fossil fuel power plant
4 in the whole state of Mississippi. And not
5 even to provide electricity to communities of
6 people, but only to power xAI's enormous data
7 center, Colossus 2, over in Tennessee.

8 MZX has already violated the Clean Air
9 Act by installing and operating at least 27
10 turbines at the site without the required air
11 permit. And worse yet, most of those
12 turbines are currently operating without air
13 pollution controls that would be required by
14 such a permit, meaning these turbines are
15 emitting hundreds, or maybe thousands, of
16 tons of unlawful and harmful air pollution.

17 And the site is now undoubtedly one of
18 the largest emitters in the state. And all
19 of this is occurring in the county with the
20 worst air quality in Mississippi, where EPA
21 certified monitors showed unsafe levels of
22 smog before MZX began operating here
23 illegally.

24 Furthermore, a recent study commissioned
25 by the Southern Environmental Law Center

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1 found that the emissions from running 41
2 turbines here will likely result in premature
3 deaths, increased hospital visits, and lost
4 productivity in the affected communities.
5 And the largest estimated fine particulate
6 matter increases will be concentrated in
7 communities that are disproportionately
8 black, highly socially vulnerable, and have
9 elevated asthma prevalence already.

10 In other words, xAI's operations at the
11 Stanton Road gas plant, and Colossus 2, are
12 likely to continue to impose substantial air
13 pollution burdens on predominantly black and
14 lower wealth communities in both Mississippi
15 and Tennessee that are already suffering from
16 poor air quality.

17 Now please, live up to the words of your
18 own mission statement. Protect your people.
19 Deny this permit request.

20 In closing, I am honored to also quote
21 the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who passed this
22 morning. May he rest in peace.

23 "We must never surrender. America will
24 get better and better. Keep hope alive.
25 Keep hope alive."

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1 (Indiscernible crosstalk.)

2 MR. WHITLOCK: So at this time, it is
3 8:31. Unfortunately, we have reached the
4 end. I know there were several who expressed
5 a "yes", and there were several that were
6 undecided.

7 We have reached the point, though, where
8 we have to end this. I thank you all for
9 coming out and showing tons of passion. And
10 given that a lot of you have written
11 comments, I still ask that you submit them,
12 either in writing out front before you leave
13 or -- excuse me. Excuse me.

14 Okay. The comment period does not end
15 until 12:00, midnight, tonight, which may be
16 done digitally. Any comment that you wish to
17 submit digitally, please come see us, and we
18 will provide that contact information.

19 All of these comments, we appreciate and
20 we will duly evaluate all of them. And then
21 our preparation of all documents that we will
22 present before the permit board will
23 incorporate these comments.

24 Other than that, I thank you all and
25 have a great night.

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1 (Time Noted: 8:33 p.m.)

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3 ORIGINAL: JARICUS WHITLOCK
4 COPY: SHANNON G. LYNN

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1 CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

2 I, Christa Sherman, Court Reporter and
3 Notary Public, in and for the State of
4 Mississippi, hereby certify that the foregoing
5 contains a true and correct transcript of the MZX
6 TECH, LLC PUBLIC HEARING as taken by me in the
7 aforementioned matter at the time and place
8 heretofore stated.

9 I further certify that, to the best of
10 my knowledge, I am not in the employ of or related
11 to any party in this matter and have no interest,
12 monetary or otherwise, in the final outcome of
13 this matter.

14 Witness my signature and seal this the
15 22 day of February, 2026.

16 
17

18 CHRISTA SHERMAN, CCR #1964

19 My Commission Expires: October 19, 2027
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21
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