



# NEW VIRGINIA MAJORITY

DEMOCRACY. JUSTICE. PROGRESS.

## Please Support *HJ32*

### *Coal dust blown from moving trains. Patron: Del. Joseph C. Lindsey*

- The dangers of coal dust are commonly known. Coal dust particles include a mixture of metals such as lead, cadmium, and arsenic and are highly toxic.
- Coal dust is linked to low birth rate, premature births, neuro-developmental delays in children, lung cancer, pneumonia, emphysema, bronchitis, asthma attacks, black lung, heart disease, strokes, and premature death.
- Lamberts Point in Norfolk is historically and continues to be a community largely populated by African-American, working class families. Residents of Lamberts Point are heavily impacted and harmed by coal dust.
- In the early 1990's, the General Assembly initiated informal and formal studies to address ways to reduce emissions from coal-carrying railroad cars. The General Assembly did so in response to the concerns of citizens in various parts of the Commonwealth about the detrimental effects of coal dust emissions on their quality of life.
- For several decades, Virginia's General Assembly has been allowing companies like Norfolk Southern to self-regulate, yet coal dust and the harm that it causes persists.
- In 2013, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) reported that 88,000 lbs of dust is released annually from terminal operations excluding rail cars. Each coal car is estimated to release coal dust at one pound per mile from mine to port. Approximately 200,000 coal cars travel to and from Lamberts Point per year. The DEQ inspects the facility once every five years.
- DEQ assumes no pollution problem at less than 55 million tons per year. For this reason there is no agency monitoring coal dust; leaving the only reported data to come directly from Norfolk Southern or third parties funded by NS such as the 2015-2016 Annual PM10 monitoring report by Simpson Weather Associates.
- Those reports ignore the capture and analysis of PM2.5 which is atmospheric particulate matter that have a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometers, which is about 3% the diameter of a human hair. Particulate matter consists of inhalable particles of dust.
- We can find no comprehensive disease registry in the city of Norfolk beyond cancer and asthma. The Virginia Department of Health is relying upon Norfolk Southern's reports to determine whether to look further into the matter.
- For years, organizations like Sierra Club and now NVM have worked arduously to have meaningful dialogue with Norfolk Southern to address the coal dust issue but Norfolk Southern has refused.
- For these reasons and more, we ask that you support HJ32 .

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