

My name is Lori Bernier, I am one of the original 18 residents of Graniteville collectively known as Neighbors for Healthy Communities (Neighbors) who joined together in late 2011 in opposition to the North East Materials Group (NEMG) crusher and asphalt operations locating in the heart of our two Graniteville villages.

I am also a lifetime resident of the Upper Graniteville village where I have lived for 57 years. Since 2012 our collective group, Neighbors, have participated faithfully in the ACT 250 process as well as the ANR technical proceedings in an attempt to safeguard our residents from negative impacts the NEMG projects brought to our neighborhood.

Neighbors opposition to the projects, was not a blanket opposition to the crushing of aggregate or the production of asphalt, we recognize the importance of these resources to our state's road systems, the objection was to the siting of these industrial lands uses being placed between two residential villages, and the negative impacts it would bring to the community.

I am here today to offer testimony suggesting the need for stronger tarp laws for commercial trucks or creating improvements to tarp laws that may already be in place as I am aware of the provisions in 23 VSA 1454. Our experience is that this law does nothing to protect the residents of the two Graniteville villages from the unreasonable impacts from material that falls off the trucks passing through the villages, especially Lower Graniteville through which most of the trucks travel.

I would like to briefly share some of the characteristics of our village.

According to the US Census some 700 people live in these two villages.

Our Lower village contains a store, Playground, Post Office, Senior Residence, multiple School Bus Stops, a Bike Path, Church, General Store, all stretched along the Graniteville road which is the main artery that connects the two villages.

The Upper Graniteville village is home to the Barre Town Forest which hosts many recreational activities including the Millstone Trails. Both villages are described as highly dense residential areas. The vast majority of the trucks haul to sites not only in Washington County but elsewhere throughout the state, and travel through the Lower Village with lesser trucks being received through the Upper village.

One of the concerns residents have continuously had with the NEMG crushing

operation, is the spilling of aggregate and dust along the roadways from the commercial trucks. This occurs while the many and frequent large commercial trucks from throughout the state, travel up and down the Graniteville Road to the NEMG crusher site to purchase aggregate. I am sure many if not all of us have likely experienced a rock to our vehicles windshield thrown up by the wheels of a passing vehicle and can affirm the great force upon impact as it hits. The aggregate continuously spilled onto our main road system through Graniteville creates that same danger to vehicular as well as pedestrian traffic, "including" on state roadways that the trucks may travel making this a state wide issue. In the photos I have to present to you today, you will see the varied sizes of aggregate; various dates and locations proving this is not an isolated incident; some substantial in size enough to cause major damage to an oncoming vehicle or cause serious injury or harm to a pedestrian if hit by a flying rock. This aggregate is begin hauled to all areas around our state, making is a state wide issue.

**\*Please view the photos sent to the committee.**

It has been the position of NEMG during the District Commission and Environmental Court hearings, that it has no control over independent haulers trucks coming or going to NEMG to purchase aggregate materials. No clear or effective permit conditions were placed in the ANR technical permits to address how this would be controlled. There needs to be a source of protection somewhere!

This is why I am here today requesting your Committee to implement a State wide tarp law mandate, with language that is clear; requiring all commercial trucks leaving an industrial site to not be overloaded and be tarped and secured before exiting any aggregate supplier site.

I believe most good business works to be a beneficial part of our state. And by giving them a working tool in a tarp law, it is likely it will resolve the issues I brought in front of you today. I mention OMYA as an example of that, a marble supplier operating in our state implementing tarps in order to benefit everyone.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present my concerns here to you today, and hope I will see working and enforced tarp law for our state in the near future.

Lori Bernier, Neighbors for Healthy Communities.