

From: Benjamin Pauli<mailto:bpauli@kettering.edu>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 10:23 AM
To: Michael Mascarenhas<mailto:mascarenhas@berkeley.edu>; Pomilia,
Curtis<mailto:curtis.pomilia@uky.edu>; Nickels, Ashley<mailto:anickel5@kent.edu>;
Gasteyer, Stephen<mailto: [REDACTED]>; Carrera, Jennifer<mailto: [REDACTED]>;
 [REDACTED]; Kosnoski, Jason<mailto:kosnoski@umflint.edu>; Kyle Powys
Whyte<mailto: [REDACTED]>; Rebecca L Rutt<mailto: [REDACTED]>
<mailto:jevgeniy@ifro.ku.dk><mailto:jevgeniy@ifro.ku.dk>
Subject: Re: Follow-up on letter

Hi everyone,

Just a quick update. First of all, as you may have already seen, the support letter went live (totally coincidentally) on the very same day that the attorney for three Flint/D.C. water activists announced that Edwards was suing his clients for \$3 million, alleging that they are behind the residents' letter: <https://medium.com/@BillMoranWrites/virginia-techs-marc-edwards-sues-for-3-million-over-flint-residents-complaint-letter-in-an-26a0011b6f9d><https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__medium.com_-40BillMoranWrites_virginia-2Dtechs-2Dmarc-2Dedwards-2Dsues-2Dfor-2D3-2Dmillion-2Dover-2Dflint-2Dresidents-2Dcomplaint-2Dletter-2Din-2Dan-2D26a0011b6f9d&d=DwMFaQ&c=nE__W8dFE-shTxStwXtp0A&r=rHOuTsrubmT8EP2jshdv2w&m=sxLTSsqwF27DWF8Kw2logBZqoQGdyEnbmBHeT0fEkAU&s=iEW0oqNc2YPMB9tlElgBl_cU0oi3iaen2WMPjyKdlnk&e=>>. Although we didn't anticipate this development, it has only made the letter that much more important. The premise of the lawsuit is that the residents' letter is the product of a conspiracy by a couple of crazy social scientists to brainwash people in multiple cities into thinking that there is something wrong with Edwards' way of operating (it's apparently unthinkable that anyone would come to this conclusion independently). For academic voices to be speaking out and affirming the seriousness of residents' concerns--and their right to speak and be heard without intimidation--disrupts that narrative powerfully. For the three activists named in the suit, the stakes could not be higher. If Edwards succeeds in dragging them to Virginia--a state that is apparently at the avant-garde of aggressive libel lawsuits brought by agenda-driven right-wingers--to stand trial before an unsympathetic jury, they face the prospect of being indebted to him for the rest of their lives (incidentally, two of them are unemployed). It is conceivable that they would opt for prison over that humiliation.

Even if every word of the residents' letter was a lie, it is hard to see how anyone in their right mind could think that what Edwards is doing is appropriate. There are already signs that this latest outrage is opening up cracks in Edwards' reputation, even with

sympathizers. It is an absolutely critical moment of opportunity to change the narrative--which of course will be to the benefit of not only these three activists (it could even help get the lawsuit dropped!), but to every signer of the letter and anyone else (inside or outside of the community) who wishes to speak out.

I hope that aside from spreading the word we can continue collecting signatories for the academic support letter. Max Liboiron (<https://maxliboiron.com/><https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__maxliboiron.com_&d=DwMFaQ&c=nE__W8dFE-shTxStwXtp0A&r=rHOuTsrubmT8EP2jshdv2w&m=sxLTSsqwF27DWF8Kw2logBZqoQGdyEnbmBHeT0fEkAU&s=wDVae0a5Nalhx1APe8b6LsIPvyVmo--njJf7t1C-Wc&e=>>) has already expressed a desire to sign. I am waiting to hear back about a couple of other folks. Anyone who is interested in signing can send a name/institutional affiliation to infoflintaccountability@aol.com<<mailto:infoflintaccountability@aol.com>>.

Thanks everyone,
Ben