

and we've decided to keep it as is, if that's OK). Note that the first footnote includes links to the three responses that the residents' letter has received thus far. A brief word about them:

- The first is from Maya Trotz, Chair-elect of AEESP. Maya is considered (I am told) the "queen" of community-engaged engineering, and is supposedly a leading champion of environmental justice principles within the engineering world. She is also, however, a friend and staunch defender of Marc, and someone he enlists to intervene and back him up whenever he comes under criticism. One way she does this is to trot out citations of VT publications (as she does in the response) as if they self-evidently negate residents' concerns. I hear through the grapevine that, without even having looked into the concerns expressed in the letter, she has already determined them to be "without merit." It is clear that she has bought completely into Marc's interpretation of the situation (I am not aware of her ever having spoken with a Flint resident). She has also acted in some other truly shocking ways that have compromised people who are trying to speak out about Marc. How she reconciles all this with principles of "community engagement" or "environmental justice" is beyond me.

- The second, from Andrew Rosenberg of the Union of Concerned Scientists, is the most sympathetic. But it implies that the only means of redress available to residents is to go through Virginia Tech.

- The problem with that approach is illustrated very clearly by the third, totally dismissive, response, from the Senior Associate Vice President of University Relations at Virginia Tech, which suggests that the residents' concerns have nothing to do with Marc's employment at VT. It's worth noting, as if it isn't already obvious, that Marc's work in Flint has been conducted under VT's banner, touted incessantly as a triumph by VT's PR people and honored by the university in various ways (including by asking Marc to deliver VT's commencement speech), funded in part by VT grants, and resulted in millions of grant dollars from which VT has profited. If this work has nothing to do with Marc's employment at VT, I don't know what does....

Hopefully we will be ready to go live very soon. In the meantime, I wonder if folks would consider who they might reach out to that would be willing to endorse the support letter once it is live. (Hopefully we are not getting too "meta" here by asking for support for a support letter!) The initial list of signatories is special because it consists of people who know Flint better than the average academic and can therefore speak with special authority. But I think we also need a second wave of support from other academics who can see well enough that something is wrong and that residents need support, or at least respect your judgment to that effect. The bigger that wave is, the better: more names will make a bigger impression, of course, but will also help to diffuse visibility. Once we're confident that we've lined up a respectable number of supporters, we can add a feature to the website that allows more people to sign (I don't want to do this until we're sure people will use it).

OK, enough for now. More soon!

Ben

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