

The Brewton Standard

Your letters

Action to fight landfill encouraged

I am writing this letter to encourage thinking people to speak out and take action to fight a mega-landfill proposed for Conecuh County at a site just north of the border with Escambia County. I learned from friends that the out-of-state developers who have targeted our area are pushing to persuade people in Conecuh County by any means they can that this dump will be a good thing.

They show examples of landfills in Florida and Michigan and have charts and checks with large dollar signs and promises that they will safeguard our health and economy.

It all looks great on paper. It all sounds really good as they spell it out in their own terms. But ask yourself, have you ever been paid to take something that turned out to be a good thing? If it is all they say, why do they have to wine and dine and convince us to take large amounts of money-large for rural Alabama counties-to allow this thing here? In a day when most areas are offering big tax cuts and incentives to lure industry, why is it they are trying to buy us off?

What do industrial recruiters say? Most who will talk say it's not a good idea to open your communities to landfills. It is seen as selling out your present and your future economically. No clean industry will want to locate its workers near a mega-dump. Most labor-intensive industry wants to open mills where resources are available and quality of living is high. Landfills do not help us sell our area. Allowing this just sends a message that we can't do better. And there will be more where this one came from. The message will be clear: We don't think any more of ourselves or our children than to sell out. How many people do you know who move across the country to be near a dump? To get a job at a dump? It normally works the other way. And for good reason.

Look at Timberlands in Escambia County if you really want to see how this will be. Timberland, and the name is ironic, all around that landfill is so contaminated by toxic leachate that the timber can't be harvested. Just ask the landowners if you doubt it. People living nearby who have wells have had their water tested. State officials warned them not to drink it. Who knows what they have already done to their health.

Ask doctors in Escambia County. Several I have spoken with are concerned about the effect the existing landfill might be having right now on people who live nearby. Some suspect cancer rates there are increasing, and the landfill could be one factor in that

frightening trend.

Evil does indeed triumph when good people sit idly by as greed and outright lies spread by opportunists rule the day. Stand up! Let thinking people win the day for once! My children deserve better and our future is at stake. Now that the steel mill will happen, state leaders are already directing industry prospects to Conecuh, Escambia and Monroe Counties to support the steel mill. Why would we be so foolish as to allow a dump that would ruin the landscape, our health and economy just when we are on the cusp of prosperity?

Call your neighbors, call county and state leaders and tell them we do not want a dump of this magnitude anywhere near us. In this one issue, be heard and keep evil from winning the day.

Leza Nelson

Brewton resident