

Eli Rodriguez

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Hello, my name is Eli Rodriguez and I have been a resident of Waukegan for more than 15 years. **It was only until this summer that I discovered that my family I have been living near the Waukegan Coal plant and I've learned the effects it has had on my community.** I am 20 years old and I represent many of the youth when I say I believe in industry accountability and can see a future for clean energy that leads to a clean environment.

One of the main reasons it took so long for me and other community members to find out about the coal plant is **because of the lack of language access.** When you have a community that is over 60% Spanish-speaking, it would be logical to inform those people that their health is at risk. Going forward with decision making, I urge to have information published in Spanish and include thorough instructions on how to stay informed (i.e Section 845.260(b))

The final rules should include requirements for both Illinois EPA and industry to meaningfully engage non-English speaking populations, including requirements that, if requested, interpreters be present at the meetings, hearings, translation of permit materials. As proposed, there is only one isolated requirement for translating anything in the rule. That is simply not enough.

It's extremely important that our community knows how to be informed, how to stay informed, and how to stay active. But there tends to be many elements that limit us from knowing more, and it's not that we don't care, it's that we don't know.

Thank you for your time, I hope to see more language accessibility moving forward.