

ALABAMA STATE CAPITOL
600 DEXTER AVENUE
SUITE S-105
MONTGOMERY, AL 36130



(334) 242-7200
FAX (334) 242-4993
WWW.SOS.ALABAMA.GOV
JOHN.MERRILL@SOS.ALABAMA.GOV

JOHN H. MERRILL
SECRETARY OF STATE

April 30, 2020

Greater-Birmingham Alliance to Stop Pollution
Attn: Michael Hansen
2320 Highland Ave. S., Ste 270
Birmingham, AL 35205

Dear Mr. Hansen:

During these times of unrest and uncertainty, Alabamians understand the importance of protecting jobs firsthand and maintaining the resources that fuel our economy.

That is why it was disheartening to hear the news that the Greater-Birmingham Alliance to Stop Pollution had taken advantage of a global pandemic to promote its political agenda by threatening the economic livelihood of Alabama businesses. Recently, your organization joined the San Francisco-based Sierra Club to file a lawsuit against the state over air and water permits for Plant Barry, an electric generating plant north of Mobile.

You should be aware that Plant Barry is one of the state's largest power plants and a significant source of electricity for families and businesses across the area. The plant provides power to major industrial operations in south Alabama, as well as to national defense contractors such as Austal. Today, Plant Barry is complying with all air and water rules set forth by state regulators. Despite this, you have taken a legal action that threatens south Alabama's largest source of electricity and the jobs of 300 Alabamians who work at Plant Barry generating the electricity that customers in their community need.

Alabama has a long history of supporting its industries and the jobs they create, especially in times when they are critically needed. In short, your group's targeting of our state's infrastructure and the jobs of essential employees is both troubling and inconsistent with Alabama thinking and values.

Your group has advocated for years to shut down coal-fired power completely. You have also rebuked the burning of natural gas as well, arguing earlier this year to the Alabama Public Service Commission that the state's largest utility, Alabama Power, should not be allowed to expand its power portfolio to meet customer demand in the winter.

This is a time to work together to address issues and solve problems, not to promote political agendas. In the days ahead, I encourage your group to work cooperatively with industries that are critical to our economy instead of targeting them with unnecessary lawsuits.

Sincerely,

John H. Merrill
Alabama Secretary of State