

I support House Bill 3372. The Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) current practice of not holding violators accountable and responsible for their citations and fines is unacceptable. These are companies that have a proven record of non-compliance with environmental laws and have put communities at risk as well as caused severe damage with their poor behavior. Permit applicants that refuse to pay fines for prior infractions or provide substantiated evidence of process changes to prevent future harm should not be allowed to operate. Any new permit applications should be reviewed with the upmost scrutiny and the DEQ should feel empowered to protect residents, schools, parks, environmental habitats, rivers, etc by refusing to grant the permit. The burden should not be on residents near the operating facilities to gather enough data and proof to convince the DEQ of violations for applicants with a known history of noncompliance.