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DEQ PUBLIC HEARING FOR
ENVIVA PELLETS SOUTHAMPTON LLC

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

PAUL D. CAMP COMMUNITY COLLEGE
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER, ROOM A
100 NORTH COLLEGE DRIVE
FRANKLIN, VIRGINIA 23851

APPEARANCES**HEARING OFFICER:**

CRAIG R. NICOL, DIRECTOR OF THE TIDEWATER
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR
THE VIRGINIA DEQ AIR, WASTE AND WATER DIVISIONS

SPEAKERS :

MALCOLM ORTON, ENVIVA SOUTHAMPTON
CATHERINE EZZELL, EZZELL TRUCKING
YANA KRATSOVA, ENVIVA
MICHAEL A. LEARY, ENVIVA
TRAVIS COPELAND, ENVIVA
ALEXANDRA WISNER, THE RACHEL CARSON COUNSEL
MAGGI BLOMSTROM, SOUTHWINGS
MICHAEL JOHNSON, SOUTHAMPTON CO.
ROLAND BURNETT, ENVIVA
CURTIS HALL, ENVIVA
HEATHER HILLAKER, SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW
CENTER
EDWARD H. ZIMMER, VDOF
SUZANNE KELLER
PAUL HOWE
TERESA BEALE, FSA CHAMBER
EMILY ZUCCHINO, DOGWOOD ALLIANCE
RON JENKINS, VA LOGGERS ASSOCIATION

1 MARK VICK, ENVIVA
2 KIM CEFASKY, ENVIVA
3 LORRAINE WHITEHEAD, SMART BEGINNINGS
4 RONNIE WRIGHT, RONALD E. WRIGHT LOGGING
5 KIM LLOYD, ENVIVA
6 PENNY GRANT, ENVIVA
7 AARON BOYD, ENVIVA
8 MEGHAN COUNCILL, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
9 ALEX GRAY, GRAY AND SONS CONSTRUCTION, INC.
10 DON GRANT, ENVIVA
11 VANCE WRIGHT, VA LOGGERS ASSOCIATION
12 DAVIS ROSE, ENVIVA
13 DAN HOWE, DOWNTOWN FRANKLIN ASSOCIATION
14 C. K. GREENE, ENVIVA
15 JAIME WISEGARVER, UNITED STATES INDUSTRIAL PELLET
16 ASSOCIATION
17 AARON ANSEEUW, ENVIVA
18 FRANK MYERS, ENVIVA
19 DON BRIGHT, SAWMILLS
20 JC PITTMAN, CMI
21 JAY BRENCHICK, FSEDI
22 GLENN GRAY
23 PETE HANCOCK, ROSEBURG
24 CHRIS BROWN, ENVIVA
25 EBONIE ALEXANDER, BLACK FAMILY LAND TRUST

1 THERON GRIM, ENVIVA
2 KEA TURNER, TURNER FORESTRY LLC
3 GARRY HARRIS, CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
4
5 **IN APPEARANCE:**
6 BRYANT BAYS, VDOF
7 DALLAS O. JONES, SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY
8 JANELL WHEELER, ENVIVA
9 RONNIE WEST
10 CARL J. FAISON, SOUTHAMPTON BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
11 ALAN MCCONNELL, ENVIVA
12 DON JOHNSON, DON JOHNSON FORESTRY
13 ANTHONY RAWLINGS, CELEBRATION CHURCH/SMART
14 BEGINNINGS
15 HUNTER DARDEN III, HUNTER DARDEN FORESTER
16 CONSULTING
17 SHELLY DAUGHTREY, ENVIVA
18 JENNIFER BOTT, ENVIVA
19 RANDY FIELDS, ENVIVA
20 BRUCE PLATT, ENVIVA
21 JUSTIN BAILEY, ENVIVA
22 LEANN HAMM, ENVIVA
23 AMANDA JARRATT, CITY OF FRANKLIN
24 DONNA ROSE, ENVIVA
25 KENNY ALLEN, BATEMAN LOGGING

1 CHRIS WARDWELL, ENVIVA
2 PHILLIP DARDEN, JR., DARDEN LOGGING LLC
3 AARON LEFTWICH, ENVIVA
4 KEN BUFFINGTON, ENVIVA
5 RANDY VICK, ENVIVA
6 MIKAYLA BRAWELL, ENVIVA
7 E. WARREN BEALE, ENVIVA
8 KEVIN MCCORMACK, MICHAEL D. NEAL AND ASSOCIATES
9 REVEREND PURLIE E. BANKS, HICKORY GROVE AME ZION
10 CHURCH
11 CODY EDWARDS
12 DAVID SHELTON
13 KAI SIMONSEN, ENVIVA
14 JEAN SIMONSEN, ENVIVA
15 MARIA MORENO, ENVIVA
16 JUANITA RICHARDS, DOWNTOWN FRANKLIN ASSOCIATION
17 GREG BUNCH, ENVIVA
18 THOMAS HOFLER, HOFLER LOGGING INC.
19 CAROLINE HOFLER, HOFLER LOGGING INC.
20 BRANDON ROBERTS, ENVIVA
21
22
23
24
25

1 **VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

2 **PUBLIC HEARING**

3 **ENVIVA PELLETS SOUTHAMPTON**

4 **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2019**

5 **6:32 P.M.**

6 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** We

7 will let everybody get seated before we start.

8 Can everybody hear me? Is that a yes in the

9 back?

10 **(WHEREUPON, the Hearing Officer called the**

11 **hearing to order.)**

12 **AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Yes.

13 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

14 Okay. It's now 6:30 p.m. Thursday, September
15 12th, 2019. This is a public hearing held at the
16 Paul D. Camp Community College, Franklin Campus.

17 This is the Workforce Development Center
18 Conference Hall A at 100 North College Drive,
19 Franklin, Virginia. The hearing is now called to
20 order. My name is Craig Nicol, I'm the Director
21 of the Tidewater Regional Office within the
22 Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's
23 Air, Waste, and Water Divisions. Today I will
24 function as the Hearing Officer for this meeting
25 and you will be presenting your comments directly

1 to me. Tonight's public hearing is being
2 conducted by the Commonwealth of Virginia DEQ on
3 behalf of the State Air Pollution Control Board,
4 and is in accordance with 9-VAC5-80-1170 of its
5 regulations regarding public participation. As
6 required by law, a public notice announcement of
7 this hearing, along with notification of a forty-
8 five day comment period was published in the
9 Tidewater News newspaper on the 11th of August
10 2019. The forty-five day public comment period
11 will run through Friday, September 27th. The
12 subject of tonight's hearing concern is of an air
13 permit application for the proposed expansion of
14 operations at Enviva Pellets Southampton, LLC
15 facility, Registration Number 61653, located at
16 26570 Rose Valley Road in Franklin, Virginia.
17 The purpose for the permit application is to
18 request an increase in wood pellet production,
19 change the softwood/hardwood percent mixture
20 used, to install air pollution control equipments
21 throughout the facility. This hearing serves as
22 a purpose to allow the public the opportunity to
23 provide verbal comments on the new draft, new
24 source review State major permit for the wood
25 pellet manufacturing facility. All written

1 statements filed with the Hearing Officer tonight
2 will become part of the official record, whether
3 they are read in the entirety or summarized
4 orally. Testimony will be received only on the
5 subject of this hearing. Because this is not a
6 proceeding as in a Court of law, statements not
7 be sworn in, nor will there be any cross
8 examination. Debates between individual speakers
9 will be ruled out of order and will not be
10 included in the official record. Questions
11 presented during this public hearing will not be
12 answered tonight. If you have questions we will
13 record your questions and respond to them at a
14 later time as part of the comment response. I
15 would like now to review the procedures for the
16 hearing. In order to be recognized to speak you
17 must first sign the official register, if you
18 have not done so there is a register outside the
19 door, and indicate that you would wish to speak.
20 You will be given a number and that file card is
21 what you use to come up to the podium to speak.
22 If you have not registered to speak at this point
23 in time, please do so or do so throughout the
24 proceeding. When called upon please give your
25 statement, come forward to the microphone, and

1 speak slowly and clearly so that your comments
2 can be recorded accurately and completely in our
3 record, and an electronic transcript will be
4 taken of all the testimonies presented at this
5 hearing. I will add a side note, as you just
6 noticed with Stan speaking earlier, you must
7 speak directly into the microphone, the closer
8 the better, and you have to speak pretty much
9 directly into it. All individuals who convey a
10 desire to speak and registered, that were given a
11 number will be called in order. We will start
12 with number one. All comments are to be directed
13 to me and I am here to listen. You are requested
14 to state your full name, mailing address, and who
15 you represent if applicable prior to making your
16 comments. This will provide us the information
17 needed to provide you a written or response to
18 your verbal or oral questions and comments.
19 Please limit your comment to a maximum of three
20 minutes in order to insure that all who wish to
21 speak are allowed the opportunity to do so. If
22 your comment has been covered by a previous
23 commenter, it is appropriate to simply state that
24 you agree with a previous commenter's statement.
25 You are encouraged to file any lengthy written

1 material for the record and summarize your
2 statement orally. Additional comment may be
3 summarized in writing and will become part of the
4 public record just as these oral comments will
5 this evening. Are there any elected State
6 officials who would like to speak first this
7 evening? No? Okay. So I have, I think the
8 majority that registered are up here with me so
9 we will go ahead and start with the comment
10 period. It looks like we have approximately
11 forty speakers this evening, so that we are going
12 to limit the time like I said to three minutes
13 per person, so please try to honor that so all
14 individuals have an opportunity to speak in a
15 timely fashion.

16 **FEMALE SPEAKER:** We can just stick
17 this up fifteen seconds before.

18 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** We
19 don't need to do that.

20 **FEMALE SPEAKER:** You don't need
21 it? Okay.

22 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** So
23 will the person who is registered to speak that
24 has number one, please step up to the podium and
25 provide your comments?

1 **MS. YANA KRATSOVA:** Good evening,
2 can you hear me?

3 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** I
4 can, but can others hear?

5 **FEMALE:** You may actually have to
6 hold it, I don't know if it's, yeah.

7 **MS. YANA KRATSOVA:** Like a rock
8 star?

9 **FEMALE:** Yes, you kind of have to
10 eat the mic.

11 **MS. YANA KRATSOVA:** Like so?

12 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Yes.

13 **MS. YANA KRATSOVA:** Can you hear
14 me okay?

15 **AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Yes.

16 **MS. YANA KRATSOVA:** Okay.

17 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**
18 That's much better.

19 **MS. YANA KRATSOVA:** Good evening,
20 my name is Yana Kratsova, I'm Vice President of
21 the Environmental Affairs and Compliance at
22 Enviva. I work at our headquarters in Bethesda,
23 Maryland. I am here to speak on behalf of the
24 company in support of the air permit. First of
25 all we have applied for this air permit for a

1 simple reason, with the demand for our product,
2 which is sustainably manufactured wood pellets,
3 has grown globally and we are increasing our
4 production. The country is leading in the
5 transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy
6 and taking real action to mitigate climate
7 change, they use wood pellets like ours to help
8 them do that. In order to accomplish that we are
9 voluntarily installing the best available control
10 technology to minimize air emissions. It is
11 reliable, top ranked equipment that destroys air
12 emissions with ninety-five percent efficiency or
13 higher. The emissions are both BOCs and HAPs
14 from the plant will be significantly reduced as a
15 result of this permit. For example, in the case
16 of BOCs by as much as three times less, despite
17 the increase in the plant production.
18 Installation of the best air emissions control
19 technology is important to us for many reasons.
20 We are the world's largest wood pellet
21 manufacturer, and we take our leadership role
22 seriously. Once this permit is issued the
23 Southampton facility will be one of the most
24 controlled facilities in the country and on par
25 with our other facilities that we are expanding

1 or building in the southeast of the United
2 States. We operate in this community, all
3 employees live here, we work with so many of you
4 in the room as our partners and interact with you
5 as our neighbors. And we view our job to improve
6 this community, not just economically by
7 providing jobs, which so many of you appreciate,
8 but also insure that our plant operates in full
9 compliance with our environmental laws. To put
10 it simply, that our operations cause no harm to
11 human health. What have we done to demonstrate
12 it? First of all, since the start of the
13 operations in 2016, we have operated our plant in
14 full compliance with the existing permit, have
15 never had any notice of violation or failed a
16 stack test. We tested our plant in April of this
17 year, in 2014, and 2015, and passed every time in
18 full compliance with the existing permit. All of
19 these test results are publically available from
20 Virginia DEQ. And the new permit will require
21 even more stringent testing. References to the
22 HAPS testing, though it was raised here on the
23 Q&A session that we have done or failed at this
24 plant are completely inaccurate. Periodically we
25 run engineering studies, these engineering

1 studies should not be confused for compliance
2 tests, because they are not compliance tests, but
3 they are not done in accordance with the EPA-
4 approved test methods, agency-approved protocol,
5 nor run during the plant's steady or normal
6 operations. And so they do not produce any
7 reliable definitive data for compliance purposes,
8 and are not used for that purpose by regulators
9 or by us. They are used internally for research
10 and development, for safety enhancement, more
11 function troubleshooting, equipment optimization,
12 commissioning, and all other needs that a
13 business like us continues, continuously improves
14 and grow as a business. Lastly, we have
15 performed a comprehensive air modeling to insure
16 that our increased production does not violate
17 the very stringent national ambient air quality
18 standards and Virginia Air Toxics Rule. The
19 results demonstrate that the impacts from the
20 increased plant operations are from seven times
21 less to twenty-three thousand, five hundred times
22 less than the legal standard set for the Air
23 Toxics and confirmed that there will be no
24 adverse impact on human health. All of the above
25 demonstrates that we will put our money behind

1 our words and act on it. Thank you for your
2 time.

3 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

4 Thank you very much. Speaker number two?

5 **MS. ALEXANDRA WISNER:** Is this
6 clear?

7 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

8 Absolutely. Perfect.

9 **MS. ALEXANDRA WISNER:** Great.

10 Thank you for having me here today, my name is
11 Alexandra Wisner, I am here representing the
12 Rachael Carson Counsel as well as myself, and I
13 am based in Washington, D.C. Thank you for
14 allowing me to provide public comment today. I
15 am here today to urge Virginia DEQ to deny the
16 expansion of the Enviva Pellets Southampton
17 plant, as well as request that all future permit
18 applications for expansions and air quality
19 controls are separated, as they are two very
20 distinct issues. Although I now live and work in
21 Washington, D.C. for the Rachael Carson Counsel,
22 I grew up on the coasts of Virginia and North
23 Carolina, and these areas are where I still call
24 home. A year ago Hurricane Florence directly hit
25 my community. Flood waters reached historic

1 highs causing vast destructions to homes,
2 families, and infrastructure. We are still
3 displaced from our family home, and when
4 Hurricane Dorian hit two weeks ago, it increased
5 damage drastically to my community and my home.
6 If Enviva operations in Southampton County are
7 expanded, the critical forests which alleviate
8 disaster stormwaters will be at risk from
9 clearcutting and removal. As climate change
10 worsens every year it is unacceptable to strip
11 communities like my own of the few protections we
12 have left in order to turn a profit. Although
13 they package and advertise themselves as a green
14 solution, Enviva's operations are contributing to
15 worsening climate change. Forests are the only
16 current proven way to take carbon out of the
17 atmosphere in a safe and just way, and Enviva is
18 cutting them down to be burned. The science does
19 not lie. As more carbon is released, storms will
20 only get worse and we cannot afford to continue
21 to buy into Enviva's false solution. These false
22 solutions are worse than no solutions at all,
23 they divert critical resources and take away any
24 will to develop solutions which will actually
25 work. It is critical Virginia DEQ not allow more

1 expansions of this greenwashed industry in
2 Southampton or anywhere, and that you need to
3 insure all air pollution is properly monitored
4 and controlled from these plants in the meantime.
5 Thank you for your time.

6 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

7 Thank you. Speaker number three?

8 **MR. TRAVIS COPELAND:** Hi, my name
9 is Travis Copeland, I am an employee at the
10 Southampton plant, I've been employed for roughly
11 seven and a half years with the company. I
12 started out at Ahoskie four a year and a half
13 while Southampton became operationable,
14 operational, I moved over here and became the
15 lead control room operator. I had a great
16 experience while working with the company, they
17 provided myself and many others from this
18 community with a lot of opportunities that's not
19 really common around these parts, such as career
20 advancement and competitive pay. I feel
21 privileged to be a part of the company that has
22 moral values, and Enviva is a family-oriented and
23 my family and others have been a big recipient of
24 many good deeds that you just don't see anymore.
25 You used to hear about them, but they actually

1 make it happen. And I personally support this
2 permit modification, not only that but it's a
3 movement that's going to have positive impacts in
4 our local community as well as abroad. Thank you
5 for allowing me the opportunity to speak this
6 evening.

7 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

8 Thank you. Speaker number four?

9 **MR. MICHAEL LEARY:** Good evening,
10 can everybody hear me? My name is Michael Leary,
11 I'm the dryer furnace manager at the Ahoskie
12 plant. It's an honor to stand before you and
13 speak on something that I am passionate about. I
14 have had the pleasure of being part of the Enviva
15 family for eight years beginning as an entry
16 level employee. Notably, Enviva Ahoskie is the
17 flagship plant and the success has become the
18 boot print for many plants of various states over
19 the years. As a veteran of the United States
20 Marine Corps I pride myself in honestly,
21 integrity and core values. Enviva represents
22 those characteristics and many more. It is with
23 great confidence that I can say we implement
24 measures daily to insure those values are met.
25 We work together as a team to insure safe and

1 efficient work environment for the community. We
2 implement safeguards to prevent environmental
3 contaminants through the industry's standard
4 machinery and reduce the carbon footprint by
5 replenishing forestation. We value integrity by
6 being honest and transparent, and to higher
7 ethical standards. Begin a world class leader,
8 in everything we do is what makes Enviva the
9 company it is and I'm proud to say I'm a part of
10 this. Thank you.

11 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

12 Thank you. Speaker number five?

13 **MR. CURTIS HALL:** Good evening.

14 My name is Curtis Hall, I'm the plant manage for
15 the Ahoskie facility. I want to just share with
16 you I'm part of this organization for three
17 primary reasons, the first of which is I'm a man
18 of faith, like my colleague I am also a veteran,
19 so words like integrity, candor, mission, they
20 really mean a whole lot to me. I'm a twenty-five
21 year operational veteran, I have worked with
22 various sized companies from GM to Georgia
23 Pacific, and I can assure you that despite the
24 infancy of this organization, our controls around
25 controlling environment quality, whatever have

1 you are on par with far more, I will say seasoned
2 companies at this particular juncture. So that's
3 something based upon my twenty-five years, most
4 of which has been working in wood industries, its
5 rock solid. Two, my father grew up on a peanut
6 and tobacco farm in Ahsokie, so I see this as an
7 opportunity to give back to the community in
8 which I spent a lot of time snapping beans,
9 pulling tobacco when I was a younger man, so I'm
10 fully aware of the significant economic impacts,
11 the positive significant economic impacts that
12 Enviva has had on what I will call my home town.
13 So when I saw the opportunity to actually come
14 back and join this organization and lead a
15 facility, this actually improved the lives of a
16 lot of my neighbors and family, it was a very
17 easy decision for me to join the organization.
18 And third, I haven't spent a number of years in
19 manufacturing, it's no secret if you look the
20 news, manufacturing has been under attack, we do
21 less and less of it every year. Of course, we
22 talk about that in local area politics and
23 nationally too, but it's cutting edge, it's part
24 of a, it's an opportunity to be part of something
25 a whole lot larger, being at that grassroots

1 level and being able to do something that not
2 only improves the lives of those within the local
3 community, but also has a positive and
4 significant impact on just reducing the carbon
5 footprint and all the other things that most of
6 my other colleagues will speak to today. So I
7 stand before you very proud to be part of this
8 organization eighteen months in, and certainly
9 feel privileged to have this opportunity to talk
10 to you this evening. Thank you.

11 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

12 Thank you. Speaker number six?

13 **MS. CATHERINE EZZELL:** Good
14 evening.

15 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Good
16 evening.

17 **MS .CATHERINE EZZELL:** My name is
18 Catherine Ezzell and I am the executive vice
19 president of Ezzell Trucking. We are based in
20 Harrells, North Carolina and our company supports
21 the Enviva permit application at the Southampton
22 facility. We provide the transportation of
23 Enviva's wood pellets from the Southampton
24 location, and from Ezzell Trucking's perspective
25 and experience through partnering with Enviva

1 over the past eight years at their other various
2 locations, they have been an excellent partner
3 which focuses on not only producing an
4 environmentally friendly product, but also
5 dedicating themselves to being a good neighbor
6 through community involvement. The Southampton
7 facility has provided direct community impact
8 through not only its employees in the Southampton
9 County but also those in the secondary timber
10 market in this and surrounding counties, which
11 includes professional truck drivers. More
12 production will lead to more involvement in the
13 local economy, meaning more job opportunities,
14 thereby creating a stronger community. Thank you
15 for the opportunity to speak tonight.

16 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

17 Thank you. Speaker seven?

18 **MR. ROLAND BURNETT:** Good

19 afternoon, thank you for the opportunity to speak
20 this evening. My name is Roland Burnett, I have
21 been with Enviva for eight years. I am currently
22 the plant manager of the Southampton County
23 facility, and so I want to speak a little bit
24 about what my colleagues have already talked
25 about, was that Enviva cares about their

1 employees, we provide a very safe working
2 environment. I have been in wood products, like
3 Curtis, most of my career, thirty years, and I
4 don't think I've ever worked at a facility that
5 was more safety run, more well managed, and
6 environmentally controlled, right we do a really
7 good job. We provide good wages and good
8 benefits to over a hundred employees in the area,
9 that's inside of our plant, and hundreds are
10 working outside and contribute to that economic
11 development. We care about our community and we
12 support our community. We go out and sponsor
13 events like Relay for Live, we donate to schools,
14 I don't know if you've ever gone into a school
15 and talked to teacher who are spending their own
16 money to provide school supplies for their
17 students and given them a book bag, or given them
18 notebooks and see the smile on that child's face.
19 This is something that Enviva does in all of
20 their communities. When Hurricane Florence hit
21 last year we went down to that area, we provided
22 tens of thousands of dollars' worth of aid in
23 terms of generators, fresh water, the labor to
24 help people rebuild, get back on their feet. And
25 let me tell you, this Enviva, the logo on my

1 shirt, I work proudly in the communities. I have
2 never heard a negative comment about our company,
3 I have only heard positive things, the great
4 things that we do, and I wear it with pride,
5 right? And I appreciate everything that Enviva
6 has done for us, both from the community, for
7 people that work inside of our facilities, and
8 for the environment. That's all I have, thank
9 you.

10 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

11 Thank you. Speaker number eight?

12 **ME. MALCOLM ORTON:** Hello, my name
13 is Malcolm Orton and I am part of the quality
14 team of Enviva Southampton. I have only worked
15 here for maybe about a year and a half now, but I
16 had no previous experience in any sort of plant
17 work or anything like that before coming here,
18 but I was still given the opportunity for
19 something much better than I ever honestly had or
20 experienced. The people I work with are great,
21 we watch out for each other every day. I work in
22 a genuinely a very, very safe environment where
23 even something as slight as just a mound of
24 pellets or something in front of the staircase,
25 like would prevent us from doing work because

1 it's too dangerous to climb up there or just
2 climb over it, we could easily step over it, but
3 we would end up getting injured or something.
4 Where I work at I work very closely with, you
5 know, everything that we do in the plant and I
6 have never once felt that anything we do is
7 unsafe, any of the air emissions that we have are
8 genuinely in any way dangerous to the
9 environment. I don't feel bad about anything I
10 do, I enjoy my job, I enjoy the people I work
11 with, I love coming to work every day, most days.
12 But it's the first job I have ever worked at
13 where I feel value as an employee, as opposed to
14 just another cog in the machine. I genuinely
15 feel that if we were given this permit we could
16 do so much more than what we're doing right now,
17 and we would do it very safely, like there's
18 nothing we value more at our job than safety, and
19 our people. I thank you for your time.

20 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

21 Thank you. Speaker number nine?

22 **MS. MAGGI BLOMSTROM:** Hello.

23 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

24 Hello.

25 **MS. MAGGI BLOMSTROM:** My name is

1 Maggi Blomstrom and I live in Norfolk, Virginia.
2 I come here representing myself and Southwings,
3 the organization that I work for. I am here
4 today because I care about clean air, clean
5 water, and my home State of Virginia. I am
6 concerned about Enviva's plan to expand
7 production at their Southampton County facility.
8 I urge Virginia Department of Environmental
9 Quality to deny Enviva's permit for expansion.
10 Additionally, I call on Virginia to each year to
11 decouple Enviva's permit for expansion with their
12 permit for air pollution controls. Enviva must
13 be required to install air pollution controls.
14 The public should have the ability to comment on
15 these two separate issues independent of each
16 other. The wood pellet industry is a disaster
17 for our forests, climate, and communities. The
18 urgency of the climate crisis demands that we
19 dramatically scale up forest protection. Enviva
20 is driving the destruction of nearly nineteen
21 thousand acres of Virginia forest per year. With
22 this permit, Enviva is attempting to increase
23 production by two hundred and forty-six thousand
24 tons per year, this means nearly six thousand
25 more acres of our forest logged each year.

1 Enviva's expansion will mean more pollution to
2 the local community, more clearcuts, more carbon
3 in the atmosphere, less habitat for wildlife and
4 less protection from natural disasters.
5 Virginians cannot afford the increased
6 degradation of our forests. Virginia DEQ has an
7 opportunity to start now to try to address past
8 wrongs. I urge you to deny this permit for
9 expansion, decouple the permit from the air
10 pollution controls and require the installation
11 of air pollution controls. It's what this
12 community is owed. Thank you for the
13 opportunity.

14 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

15 Thank you. Speaker ten?

16 **MS. HEATHER HILLAKER:** Hi, can you
17 hear me?

18 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Um-
19 hmm (indicating affirmatively.)

20 **MS. HEATHER HILLAKER:** My name is
21 Heather Hillaker, I'm an attorney with the
22 Southern Environmental Law Center, commenting
23 tonight on behalf of SELC and the Environmental
24 Integrity Project. Thank you for providing this
25 opportunity for public participation. It is

1 important to acknowledge up front that this draft
2 permit requires Enviva to install much needed
3 pollution control technology at the Southampton
4 facility, controls which have been in use at
5 other wood pellet facilities for years. These
6 controls will reduce the facility's emissions of
7 VOCs and will help the facility come into
8 compliance with its emissions limits for
9 hazardous and toxic air pollutants, which we
10 believe are currently being exceeded. Under the
11 draft permit these controls must be operational
12 within one year after the final permit is issued.
13 While we appreciate a strict construction
14 schedule, in this case where there is credible
15 evidence indicating that the facility is likely
16 emitting hazardous air pollutants in excess of
17 the legal limits for years, it is paramount that
18 DEQ does everything in its authority to insure
19 that the public is protected from these harmful
20 emissions. DEQ should therefore amend the draft
21 permit to include a temporary condition
22 restricting the facility's overall production to
23 levels sufficient to insure compliance with the
24 air toxic limits, at least until the controls are
25 operational. The draft permit also allows Enviva

1 to increase production at the facility by almost
2 fifty percent, which even with the pollution
3 controls will result in emissions increases of
4 NOX, CO, SO2, and PM-10. According to the
5 State's own calculations, the facility's NOX
6 emissions were more than double as a result of
7 the draft permit. NOX emissions directly
8 aggravate respiratory diseases like asthma and
9 also contribute to smog, inhalation of fine
10 particulates, which cause other serious health
11 problems. The draft permit currently restricts
12 NOX emissions from the furnaces to 145.5 tons per
13 year. Although we appreciate the limit DEQ has
14 set within the draft permit, in order for this
15 limit to legally restrict the facility's
16 potential to emit, it must be accompanied by an
17 enforceable operating limit. In this case, DEQ
18 must include a permit condition limiting the
19 total heat input of both furnaces to a level
20 sufficient to reduce the facility's PTE to below
21 the major source threshold, and further to insure
22 compliance with the permit's limit. Finally,
23 turning back to the issue with the hazardous air
24 pollutant emissions. Enviva has represented to
25 the State of North Carolina that they have

1 conducted stack testing at the Southampton
2 facility for hazardous air pollutants in both
3 2013 and 2015. To be clear, Enviva has claimed
4 that this testing, along with others, was relied
5 on for its emissions estimates for its Enviva
6 Hamlet, North Carolina facility, but now as of
7 tonight, Enviva claims that it cannot be used for
8 permitting purposes any longer. I ask the DEQ to
9 officially request the results of these stack
10 tests or engineering studies from Enviva and make
11 those available to the public. Thank you.

12 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

13 Thank you. Speaker number eleven?

14 **MR. MICHAEL JOHNSON:** For the

15 record, my name is Michael Johnson, I reside at
16 31477 Unity Road, Sedley, Virginia in Southampton
17 County. I have served as the Southampton County
18 Administrator for the past twenty-four years. I
19 am joined this evening by several members of the
20 Board of Supervisors and they have asked me to
21 speak in their behalf. I would like to ask that
22 they stand and be recognized at this point. So
23 it's my understanding that Enviva Pellets
24 Southampton has applied for a permit modification
25 to facilitate an increase in its wood pellet

1 production rate from five hundred and thirty-five
2 thousand tons a year to seven hundred and eighty-
3 one thousand tons per year, and to facilitate an
4 increase in the ratio of softwood to hardwood
5 process from ten to eighty percent. I further
6 understand that as part of the expansion project,
7 Enviva Pellets Southampton proposes to install
8 numerous new air pollution controls and to
9 incorporate the best available control
10 technology, along with operational process
11 changes to further reduce particulate matter and
12 control the release of volatile organic compounds
13 and other hazardous air pollutants. I also
14 understand that as part of the permit application
15 process, Enviva Pellets Southampton has conducted
16 a comprehensive air quality analysis, which
17 considered not only their own proposed emissions,
18 but also considered other nearby emissions and
19 incorporated the worst case operational scenarios
20 combined with the worst case emissions profile
21 for each pollutant in their model. I understand
22 that the results of that analysis indicate that
23 the proposed project will demonstrate full
24 compliance with all Federal and State air quality
25 concentration standards and will not

1 disproportionate, will not cause
2 disproportionately high and adverse human health
3 or environmental effects on any resident of the
4 local community or any resident of the
5 Commonwealth. I further understand that the
6 company has completed a toxics analysis which
7 clearly demonstrates that the predicted
8 concentrations for each toxic pollutant not
9 otherwise exempt from State regulations, will be
10 far below regulatory emission standards.
11 Finally, I understand that the Department of
12 Environmental Quality has scrutinized and
13 evaluated every aspect of the proposed project
14 and believes that issuance of the draft permit,
15 which imposes seventy-six conditions associated
16 with process requirements, operating limits,
17 compliance determinations, construction schedule,
18 notifications, and other general conditions will
19 result in full compliance with the Federal Clean
20 Air Act and the Commonwealth of Virginia
21 regulations for control and abatement of air
22 pollution. Accordingly, in consideration of the
23 numerous environmental safeguards contained in
24 the proposed permit and the substantial economic
25 benefits that will accrue to Southampton County

1 residents from the proposed Enviva expansion, I
2 whole heartedly and unequivocally endorse
3 issuance of the draft permit as proposed by the
4 Department of Environmental Quality subject to
5 the proposed conditions.

6 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

7 Thank you. Speaker number twelve?

8 **MS. SUZANNE KELLER:** Thank you for
9 the opportunity to make a comment on the permit
10 for Enviva. My name is Suzanne Keller, I'm a
11 retired epidemiologist from the Virginia
12 Department of Health, where my life's work
13 involved preventing morbidity and premature
14 mortality. I'm going to cut some of this because
15 some of the points have already been made, so it
16 may not be as smooth as I would have been before.
17 I really appreciate the additional controls,
18 pollution controls that are proposed in the
19 permit, we need those, we do not need for an
20 expansion of the facility. According to climate
21 scientists, the Intergovernmental Panel on
22 Climate Change, we have eleven years to take
23 action to avoid catastrophic and devastating
24 global warming. As a public health expert and as
25 a great aunt of three young girls, I'm committed

1 to raising my voice about the climate crisis and
2 to advocate for public health. This permit
3 envisions increasing the air pollution, which has
4 already been mentioned of NOX, carbon monoxide,
5 SO2, and PM-10. Well, it doesn't have an
6 increase of PM to 0.5. Because of the increase
7 of the NOX, there will be more fine particulate
8 matter formed in the atmosphere. One of the
9 problems with the analysis that is done by DEQ
10 and our regulatory regime in general is that you
11 have no analysis of the impact of air pollution
12 on the human body, and on the bodies of the
13 people who live closest to it where the danger is
14 the greatest. Air pollution aggravates asthma,
15 PM 2.5 causes heart attacks. All of these
16 pollutants cause difficulty in breathing and
17 respiratory irritation. I just want to let you
18 know there is a growing body of evidence, there
19 are large studies including one of the Medicare
20 population that demonstrate that there are
21 premature deaths, even when the NAAQS are in
22 compliance. So saying that the NAAQS are
23 protective of human health will soon become
24 something you will not be able to do, because
25 this research is continuing, finding the

1 relationship between this air pollution and
2 morbidity and mortality will become more refined
3 as we gather more data. And then lastly the
4 Environmental Justice Analysis, doing an EJ
5 screen is just not sufficient. The Air Pollution
6 Control Board I think would find it insufficient
7 that something that they are looking at right
8 now, a subcommittee is looking at that. The
9 screen on the EPA website says this is a
10 screening tool, this is supposed to lead you in
11 the direction of greater investigation, to see if
12 there will be disproportionate impacts. So just
13 doing the screen is insufficient. So I hope that
14 you will consider these impacts, environmental
15 justice, climate change, and deny the permit.
16 Thank you.

17 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

18 Thank you. Number thirteen.

19 **MR. PAUL HOWE:** Good evening, my
20 name is Paul Howe, and I'm here this evening as a
21 private citizen to support Enviva and their
22 process of seeking permits. A little bit about
23 myself, I am a forester, I have thirty-five years
24 of experience working with the forest and tree
25 community, forest landowners, and the forest

1 products industry at, at the State level, some in
2 the south and around, around the nation, but I'm
3 here primarily tonight as a forest land owner, a
4 small woodland owner, and family has a tree farm,
5 it's in the American Tree Farm System, so I would
6 like to speak as a landowner. The last twenty-
7 five years I have spent as an Executive Director
8 of the Virginia Forestry Association and during
9 that time I was working with Enviva and I will
10 just tell you when they burst on the scene a few
11 years ago, they were a breath of fresh air. They
12 were coming up with a product that was replacing
13 fossil fuel energy with a source that is
14 sustainable and renewable, and they were in the
15 process of doing that, as a landowner it was
16 important that they were going to use
17 underutilized and low value hardwood, which they
18 have been using up to now. It's my understanding
19 they are going to be adding pine to the mix,
20 diversity is good, and in both cases those
21 sources of wood are, we're growing more than
22 we're cutting, and I know that Virginia
23 Department of Forestry and working with the U. S.
24 Forest Service has a lot of data that would show
25 that we have plenty of source, resource to

1 provide the needs of Enviva as well as the rest
2 of our forest products community. I do want to
3 mention too that as a tree farmer it's a
4 certified system, even though I have retired one
5 of the things I am still able to do is to serve
6 on the National Advisory Group for the American
7 Tree Farm System, and I know they would support
8 what I am saying this evening, too. So it's
9 important as for the landowner's perspective when
10 you put money into your forest land, it's a long
11 term investment, and during that process those
12 forests are providing many environmental
13 benefits, clean water, clean air, wildlife
14 habitat, but at some point it becomes necessary
15 to harvest some of that timber to reap the reward
16 of good management and it's very important that
17 there are as many markets as possible, markets
18 for that landowner to send their wood to, and
19 then to reinvest some of that profit into the
20 land to continue that cycle. So that's why I'm
21 interested in Enviva and certainly support it.
22 You know, the source that they are using, wood is
23 renewable, its sustainable, and when you consider
24 the life cycle of the forest and it's also a
25 carbon neutral energy source, so I will just wrap

1 up by saying again, representing one forest
2 landowner that supports Enviva. Thank you very
3 much.

4 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

5 Thank you. Speaker number fourteen?

6 **MS. EMILY ZUCCHINO:** Good evening.

7 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Good
8 evening.

9 **MS. EMILY ZUCCHINO:** My name is
10 Emily Zucchini and I work with Dogwood Alliance,
11 the leading forest protection organization in the
12 southern U. S., and I'm here tonight because I
13 care deeply about southern forests and the life
14 sustaining things that they provide for all of
15 us. I oppose any expansion in production at the
16 Enviva Southampton plant. Additionally, I ask
17 Virginia DEQ to decouple Enviva's permit for
18 expansion with their permit for air pollution
19 controls. We should have the ability to call for
20 the inclusion of air pollution controls and to
21 separately oppose any expansion in Enviva's
22 production. I have been following this industry
23 for years and I have seen the impacts of this
24 industry on our forests, our climate, and
25 communities. Enviva has a troubling track record

1 of bending the truth to get what they want. They
2 have lied about their sourcing, their emissions,
3 and their pollution. I have heard a couple
4 people tonight speak to some of the good things
5 Enviva has done, and I want to point out that
6 many of these things are a direct response to the
7 work of citizen watchdog groups keeping an eye on
8 Enviva. We would not be here tonight with an
9 understanding of the excess pollution that Enviva
10 has been emitting for years if it were not for
11 the work of organizations who monitored Enviva's
12 pollution. Enviva and their supporters, as we
13 just heard, like to talk about their positive
14 impacts on forests. This couldn't be farther
15 from the truth. The truth is that we are rapidly
16 losing the forest types that make this region so
17 special. In the past sixty years, we have lost
18 thirty-three million acres of natural forests.
19 When you hear industry talk about growing forest,
20 they are talking about these natural forests that
21 have been replaced with fast growing monoculture
22 pine plantations. These don't have nearly the
23 same carbon sequestration or wildlife habitat
24 benefits of a natural forest. Enviva and the
25 industry will tell you that our forests are

1 growing, what they are referring to is board
2 feet, the amount of usable wood that comes out of
3 a tree. This sneaky calculation has nothing to
4 do with acres of forest, which are not growing.
5 Enviva has been caught logging in wetlands and
6 sensitive ecosystems multiple times. Their own
7 track and trace program, which was referenced
8 earlier, confirms that Enviva sources primarily
9 from whole trees and that they source from
10 bottomland hardwoods. And there is evidence that
11 this track and trace program has failed. Just
12 recently Enviva admitted to logging in a
13 bottomland area, an anomaly that they claimed
14 fell through the cracks. They have been
15 documented numerous times logging along the
16 Blackwater River here, a river that has already
17 flooded Southampton County in the past. I have
18 heard a couple people speak to jobs. Enviva will
19 claim jobs at all costs, but the truth is that if
20 industrial logging were the answer to rural
21 poverty, these communities would be some of the
22 richest in the country, but on the contrary
23 poverty rates in many areas where Enviva has
24 facilities have been stagnant or even increased
25 since Enviva came to town. Research shows that

1 they are far more jobs in the restoration economy
2 or in truly clean energy like solar. The ninety
3 jobs that Enviva provides at this plant come with
4 a price tag of increased pollution, illness, and
5 the degraded landscape, and know that there will
6 be no additional jobs with this expansion.
7 Enviva has misled the public for years, now they
8 want to expand production, which would increase
9 logging, pollution, and carbon emissions. I ask
10 the Virginia DEQ not rewards Enviva's past
11 missteps with an allowance to expand production.
12 Thank you.

13 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

14 Thank you. Number fifteen?

15 **MR. RON JENKINS:** Good evening, my
16 name is Ron Jenkins and I'm the Executive
17 Director for the Virginia Loggers Association.
18 The Virginia Loggers Association supports Enviva
19 biomass plans to expand its production and the
20 Commonwealth's approval of its related air
21 quality permit. I would like to thank DEQ and
22 the Commonwealth for the opportunity to share our
23 viewpoints and the Commonwealth of Virginia's
24 open process to engage the public and seek
25 comments and information relevant to your air

1 quality responsibilities. Virginia Loggers
2 Association is a voluntary member trade
3 association composed of logging businesses,
4 mills, and supporting businesses to our forest
5 products industry, and I should say they are also
6 supporters of an environmental stewardship of the
7 quality of life that we all seek and need.
8 Enviva biomass is an important industry in
9 Southern Virginia that provides jobs, pays taxes,
10 purchases goods and services, and gives personal
11 opportunities for people. Enviva biomass
12 supports many community events which help
13 citizens living here in Southern Virginia. The
14 majority of VLA's membership is made up of
15 family-owned smaller businesses whose owners
16 depend upon Enviva biomass and other mills to
17 receive unrefined forest products to make
18 products that almost every household uses. And I
19 would like to take an opportunity and ask all of
20 those members who are with me tonight, many of
21 you are my Board members, would you stand so that
22 there is a presence? Thank you. Our smaller
23 businesses also provide many opportunities for
24 the local community, employment opportunities,
25 revenue generation to the local and State

1 economies and also growth opportunities for
2 people as well. Most business owners are also
3 heavily involved with their communities, support
4 civic activities, and are leaders in their
5 communities. Virginia forest resources are in
6 good shape. There is an estimate by a U. S.
7 Forest Service inventory that we have more wood
8 volume, or timber volume, or tree volume today
9 than we had before World War II. We also see
10 that there are estimates by the latest surveys
11 that show that the rate of harvesting versus the
12 growth of all kinds of growth in the forest is
13 one-half, in other words, growth is two times
14 what we are harvesting. Virginia forest
15 resources are in this good shape to a strong
16 reforestation policy that was envisioned over
17 fifty years ago. It is supported by Virginia
18 government, industry leaders, and forest
19 landowners. The forest products industry pays a
20 self-imposed tax on stumpage so that forest
21 landowners have incentive funds to reforest their
22 lands. The General Assembly supports
23 reforestation by matching the self-imposed forest
24 products tax to make additional dollars available
25 for reforestation along with the private

1 landowners own money. Forest landowners are the
2 key to our strong industry. They are good
3 stewards and manage their forest from multiple
4 benefits that support a healthy, productive and
5 sustainable forest resource for further
6 generations. Our forests are natural and
7 renewable resources that provide many of the
8 items we have in our homes. Wise management of
9 our forests also lead to sustainable forest for
10 future generations with large environmental
11 benefits such as clean water and air. Virginia
12 Loggers Association is grateful for an open,
13 transparent system to express our viewpoints.
14 VLA supports the expansion plan of Enviva biomass
15 and approval of the associated air quality
16 permit. Thank you.

17 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

18 Thank you. Number sixteen?

19 **MR. RONALD WRIGHT:** Good evening.

20 My name is Ronnie Wright. I'm in full support of
21 the application for Enviva. I've been in the
22 logging business, a hauling contractor for
23 thirty-seven years. When I started in this
24 business, a vast majority of what I take to
25 Enviva now was left laying on the ground to rot.

1 It always bothered me, I felt like we were
2 wasting, I was always brought up to believe you
3 didn't waste, the waste not want not theory. I
4 believe in sustainable forestry. I own six
5 hundred acres myself, most of it in forest land,
6 I have a passion for, for using our forests, not
7 just letting them set there and basically go
8 dead. That is a resource that the good Lord gave
9 us and He meant for us to use it. Thank you.

10 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

11 Thank you. Number seventeen?

12 **MR. MARK VICK:** How you doing, can
13 you hear? My name is Mark Vick, I'm here in
14 support of the Southampton facility. I've been
15 with Enviva for about eight years now, I have
16 worked at three different manufacturing
17 facilities, starting out in Ahoskie, North
18 Carolina, then moving to our Faison, North
19 Carolina facility, and now I'm currently the
20 pellet mill area manager at our Southampton
21 facility. I'm very fortunate to work for a
22 company that lives by its values and believes in
23 its people. Enviva has helped me to be, to
24 advance my career and grow as a leader. I joined
25 Enviva to be part of something bigger than myself

1 and to leave the Earth a better place than I
2 found it by displacing culled overgrown trees. I
3 am also a member of my local volunteer fire
4 department, where I have served as Chief for the
5 last five years. Enviva has been a huge sponsor
6 for our largest annual fund raiser for several
7 years. The proceeds from that fundraiser have
8 gone towards the purchase of critical lifesaving
9 equipment to help us better serve our community.
10 Just in response to some of the comments about
11 watchdog groups. In January of 2018 my
12 grandfather passed away. As everyone is aware of
13 having loss, it's a hard time in your life. As I
14 set by his graveside service, I was overwhelmed
15 with emotion while I scanned the crowd and
16 spotted the entire management team from our
17 Ahoskie facility there to support me during my
18 time of loss. Shortly after my return from work,
19 from bereavement we planned to dedicate several
20 trees at the plant site to lost loved one in a
21 memorial garden. For me to say that Enviva
22 believes in its people and the community it
23 operates in is an understatement. I personally
24 support the permit modification and plant
25 expansion. Thank you.

1 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

2 Thank you. Number eighteen?

3 **MS. KIM CESFASKY:** Hi, good
4 evening.

5 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Good
6 evening.

7 **MA. KIM CESFASKY:** My name is Kim
8 Cefasky, I'm the Director of Sustainability
9 Policy at Enviva. I have worked here for five
10 years ever since finishing forestry school in
11 North Carolina, and today I live in Washington,
12 D. C. and work in our office in Bethesda.
13 Climate change is everyone's problem as we are
14 urgently reminded every day each time a new
15 description of the dire impacts of climate change
16 hits the news. We are out of excuses and the
17 world is nearly out of time. Our critics want
18 you to believe that biomass is actually worse for
19 the climate than coal, and they want you to
20 believe that Enviva's an irresponsible forest
21 steward. Nothing could be further from the
22 truth. Here is what our critics aren't telling
23 you, forests in Virginia are growing faster than
24 they are being harvested. As you heard, and that
25 we will hear from the experts at the Department

1 of Forestry, and the Loggers Association, working
2 forests in this state are adding carbon year over
3 year. Yes they are increasing in terms of board
4 feet, but also in terms of area and acres. You
5 really have to check your facts. They won't tell
6 you that the biomass industry is an integrated
7 part of the overall forest products industry.
8 Forest products, inclusive of timber income, are
9 responsible for twenty-one billion dollars of
10 annual economic activity in the Commonwealth and
11 are one of the State's largest exports, and
12 provide over a hundred thousand jobs. Let's turn
13 to climate. Our critics who claim that bioenergy
14 is a false solution definitely won't point out
15 that the same scientists at the IPCC who wrote
16 the report last fall explaining that we only have
17 eleven years to mitigate the worst effects of
18 climate change, include bioenergy in every single
19 one of their pathways and solutions. And most
20 recently in their report on climate and land use,
21 the IPCC concluded, and I quote, "A sustainable
22 forest management strategy aimed at maintaining
23 or increasing forest carbon stocks, while
24 producing an annual sustained yield of timber,
25 fiber, and energy from the forest will generate

1 the largest sustained mitigation benefit."
2 Scientific experts in energy systems the world
3 over recognize that biomass is one of the pillars
4 to a sustainable climate future. And forward
5 thinking countries also recognize this and have
6 turned to bioenergy to meet their climate
7 commitments. In Europe biomass represents more
8 than sixty percent of renewable energy. It's a
9 key part of the strategy for meeting ambitious
10 carbon reduction goals. Here's a really good
11 example from the UK. Ten years ago there, over
12 a third of their electricity was made from coal,
13 while today that number has been reduced to just
14 three percent. They made this happen by
15 increasing the share of wind and solar
16 electricity generation to twenty-three percent
17 and the share of biopower to eight percent.
18 Though it makes up a relatively small share of
19 generation, the use of biomass was critical to
20 this success story. Why? Because it provides
21 24/7 non-fossil base load power and makes it
22 possible for us to use more wind and solar. And
23 finally, I just want to say I'm really proud to
24 work at this company. Enviva is an industry
25 leader in sustainability. I invite you to take a

1 look at our responsible sourcing policy, our
2 commitment not to source from wood from sensitive
3 sites, and to hold us accountable for what we
4 said we should do. We are proud of our record on
5 conserving important forests, investing in
6 restoration, assisting landowners with
7 certification, and we look forward to being a
8 part of the Virginia community for years to come.

9 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

10 Thank you.

11 **MS. KIM CESFASKY:** Thank you.

12 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

13 Number nineteen?

14 **MS. KIM LLOYD:** Good evening, my
15 name is Kim Lloyd, I'm the HR Director for
16 Enviva. I have been here for about four and a
17 half years. I actually live about four miles
18 from our Sampson facility and I've been in HR for
19 about twenty-five years, enough times that we've
20 changed our names about three times from
21 personnel, to human resources, now human capital.
22 So I have to say I am honored and actually kind
23 of at a loss for words to stand here and, I know
24 you may find that to be kind of hard to believe,
25 to hear our associates stand up here and talk

1 about what Enviva means to them is absolutely
2 amazing to me. I see them all day, every day,
3 but to actually hear that and hear that we make a
4 difference in their lives is absolutely
5 outstanding. And I work here because I love the
6 company, I love the people more. The people
7 really makes who we are, and if we have an
8 opportunity to give them an opportunity for a
9 better tomorrow for their family, then that's
10 what we need to do. In addition to we also do
11 support our communities, we always get into the
12 community, you have heard a couple of them talk
13 about some of the things we have done at the
14 schools, some of the things we have done around,
15 but it's all about giving back. I have watched a
16 lot of our associates at the end of the day, and
17 they work hard, very hard, and they do a great
18 job. At the end of the day, you would think you
19 know, they're going to go to the car, they're
20 going to go home, they can't wait, I have watched
21 them sit around, talk, enjoy being with each
22 other, and enjoy being in the environment that
23 they are in. I am absolutely honored to be able
24 to stand here and say that I support the
25 expansion, as a person for me personally and also

1 for the company as well. Thank you very much.

2 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

3 Thank you. All right, number twenty?

4 **MR. AARON BOYD:** Hello, my name is
5 Aaron Boyd, I'm the fiber supply manager at
6 Enviva and I've been here for over seven years.
7 I fully support Enviva's permit revision for
8 increased production and increased pine usage.
9 Enviva is focused on safety in the community.
10 Any safety incidents that are reported to Enviva
11 through the community are dealt with immediately.
12 There's many suppliers that are standing behind
13 me today that are committed to protecting our
14 community as well. In the Mid-Atlantic region,
15 we have over six hundred employees that are
16 indirectly employed through the logging business
17 and over six hundred and fifty truck drivers,
18 that's thousands of families impacted by Enviva.
19 Not to mention we buy over a thousand tracts a
20 year and us landowners that are, families that
21 are additionally impacted. With the increased
22 tons and pine usage at Enviva, that's over
23 sixteen million dollars a year that we're going
24 to put back into the community. As far as
25 sustainability, it's been mentioned here today

1 that Virginia has stated that we're going to,
2 that we cut less than half the forest volume that
3 we grow on an annual basis. From a biomass
4 carbon accounting perspective it doesn't work
5 without reforestation, that's why we're committed
6 to a no land use change policy and demand
7 reforestation. I could give you countless
8 examples of solar farms, agriculture conversions,
9 and many other deforestations that we do not
10 source from. Matter of fact, I could quote over
11 ten thousand acres that we have not purchased
12 from just for that fact. Again, I'm fully
13 supportive of Enviva's permit. Thank you.

14 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

15 Thank you. Number twenty-one?

16 **MS. LORRAINE WHITEHEAD:** Hello,
17 I'm Lorraine Green Whitehead, Executive Director
18 for Smart Beginnings, and forty-three years for
19 Southampton County Public Schools. The families
20 in Southampton County are my families, all of
21 them. Smart Beginnings provides support for
22 Franklin City and Southampton County Public
23 Schools by providing resources for early
24 childhood programs in area families. We also
25 work as a systems builder through our Western

1 Tidewater Early Childhood Collaboration, bringing
2 together all community partners in order to
3 maximize resources for our most underserved
4 populations. Through this means we seek to
5 provide an opportunity for a better life for this
6 and future generations for the citizens of
7 Franklin City and Southampton County. Income is
8 directly tied to an individual's level of
9 education. Minimum wage provides a lifetime of
10 living below the poverty level. Information
11 presented at Virginia's Economic Summit indicates
12 that the problem goes even deeper than that.
13 Virginia's economy now suffers from mounting
14 numbers of citizens who have simply given up on
15 getting a job, creating additional adverse
16 economic and social conditions for communities.
17 Children raised in poverty have predictably more
18 adverse childhood experiences leading to early
19 death, more early death from property than from
20 air pollution exponentially. Our society has
21 created a looping effect, these children raised
22 in poverty then become parents of children raised
23 in poverty. Poverty is the number one cause of
24 adverse childhood experiences which at the very
25 least, substandard housing, lack of access to

1 sufficient medical care, food, and security,
2 distress, and violence in the communities, all of
3 which cause additional economic burden on the
4 community. Our society pays an exorbitant price
5 to restore their mental health, punish them
6 within our justice systems and to deal with their
7 underemployment, and because of many other
8 negative effects that thwart a drive to succeed.
9 We want to raise our children out of poverty.
10 Research determined that the only way to break
11 this cycle is to significantly change early
12 childhood experiences for children. The best way
13 to do this is to provide stable employment and
14 income for their families, thus we partner with
15 Enviva. Enviva supports our community by
16 providing jobs for our families, this puts food
17 on their tables, clothes on their back, and heat
18 for the winter, which by the way also reduces
19 health factors, family stress, and reduces
20 violence in communities. And I have included a
21 chart that shows you the adverse factors in our
22 communities. Enviva is one of Smart Beginnings
23 community partners, they provided funding for our
24 back to school project for our most underserved
25 population in Southampton County. This area has

1 a hundred and ninety-six households, eighty-eight
2 percent in that area are poverty. With this
3 funding, we were able to provide students from
4 Southampton Meadows with shoes, socks, underwear,
5 and clothing for back to school. For these
6 children it's not just stuff, it is hope. In
7 addition, according to the Tidewater News, this
8 expansion would include installation of massive
9 air quality control equipment working towards
10 correcting the air pollution factors cited in
11 earlier articles. However if you note the chart
12 here, the data indicates that there is actually
13 already in the last two years since Enviva began
14 operations in the Franklin/Southampton County
15 area, there's actually already a drop in
16 particulate matter, air particulate matter and
17 it's on this chart. And while everybody knows
18 that trees produce oxygen, they only produce
19 twenty to thirty percent of the Earth's oxygen,
20 most of the oxygen in that, and I have taught
21 this in science class, most of the oxygen
22 actually comes from marine plants, blue-green
23 algae. And thank you very much.

24 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

25 Thank you.

1 **MS. LORRAINE WHITEHEAD:** And
2 please, please we need the jobs. Our children
3 need food.

4 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**
5 Thank you. Twenty-two?

6 **MS. MEGAN COUNCILL:** Good evening,
7 my name is Megan Councill, and I live just around
8 the corner at 209 Meadow Lane here in Franklin,
9 and tonight I am speaking to you as our area
10 Chamber of Commerce President. As
11 representatives for the Franklin Southampton area
12 business community, the Franklin Southampton Area
13 Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors strongly
14 supports economic development efforts that
15 encourage new business investment and provide
16 jobs. We support projects that fit well in our
17 area and are in the best interest of the
18 community. The Chamber Board of Directors is in
19 support of Enviva's permit application. This
20 will allow the plant to add additional air
21 quality control measures and we also understand
22 will allow them to increase production twenty to
23 twenty-five percent. Increasing the permitted
24 percentage of softwoods will benefit local tree
25 growers, loggers, and truckers, which are

1 important to our local economy. The hundred
2 people on Enviva's local payroll contribute to
3 our local economy as well and play an important
4 role in supporting area businesses. Thank you so
5 much for you time.

6 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

7 Thank you. Speaker twenty-three?

8 **MR. ALEX GRAY:** Good evening.

9 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Good
10 evening.

11 **MR. ALEX GRAY:** I'm Alex Gray with
12 Gray and Sons Construction, I'll be here in
13 support of Enviva's expansion. I'm here speaking
14 in terms of me, my family, and my business. Just
15 a little bit about me, I'm a third generation
16 owner/officer of the construction industry, in
17 the construction industry and we are a supporter
18 of forestry, sustainable forestry. The methods
19 of forestry is more less farming at this point
20 and everybody knows that we do farming in our
21 community, and communities, this is a farming-
22 based community, so basically it would only
23 benefit us to increase production, just like as
24 if a farmer increases production in a field so
25 also at that point. Also it is a job supporting

1 community, or a job supporting business that it
2 has run, it helps our economy as well as
3 supporting fundraisers and other events,
4 community events. And that's pretty much all I
5 got, I'm going to keep it short and sweet for you
6 guys. Appreciate it.

7 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** All
8 right, thank you very much. Speaker twenty-four?

9 **MR. AARON ANSEEUW:** My name is
10 Aaron Anseeuw, and I support this permit. I am
11 also here to show support for my company, one
12 that I am very proud of to work for, and to
13 represent my community, coworkers, and friends.
14 I moved to Hampton Roads about five years ago, I
15 have spent over ten years in the shipping
16 industry. I have worked for Enviva for over a
17 year now as support manager of the Port of
18 Chesapeake where Enviva operates their export
19 terminal. One thing that really intrigued me
20 with Enviva when I started and when I was looking
21 at other employment was their integrity and the
22 support they have for their community. As a port
23 manager, I am responsible for all the operations,
24 customer service, and shipments out of the port.
25 As a manager, I also have the responsibility to

1 promote a work environment that is safe, follows
2 practices, and insures my coworkers are treated
3 with respect and have the opportunity for growth.
4 This permit allows the expansion of the
5 Southampton facility, which personally impacts us
6 directly. It means increased shipments through
7 the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River where
8 the State of Virginia has been working hard to
9 grow. In turn, it means more jobs and more
10 investment in multiple companies and communities
11 and will increase tons that we'll be able to
12 ship. Thank you for your time, and please
13 consider Enviva's request for this permit.

14 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

15 Thank you. Speaker twenty-five?

16 **MR. FRANK MYERS:** Thank you. I'm
17 Frank Myers, I'm from Brunswick County, Virginia.
18 I've been practicing forestry in Virginia for
19 thirty-eight years, so I'm going to speak to
20 Virginia, I'm not going to speak to North
21 Carolina. We are very fortunate in this state
22 that our forefathers and our industry years ago
23 established the Seed Tree Law, whether we like it
24 or don't like it, or whatever, it has provided a
25 lot of jobs for the State of Virginia, it has

1 helped a lot of landowners in the State of
2 Virginia. And tonight, I'm representing a
3 landowner, a logger, and a forester. As a
4 landowner, our company owns a lot of land and if
5 these markets are, you know, we are in dire need
6 of markets, the forest products industry has
7 consolidated, we have very few left, we have done
8 a really good job with reforestation and I'm
9 really concerned that if we don't provide these
10 markets going forward, that forest conversion is
11 going to be a problem worse than a lot of the
12 other problems that we have now. And then from a
13 logging standpoint, you know, we, I have sixty
14 employees and we desperately need these markets,
15 I mean we're, we're all on quota, all the time,
16 we are growing more fiber than we're cutting, I
17 mean, Virginia has done a great job and we need
18 to move forward with this thing. Thank you.

19 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

20 Thank you. Number twenty-six?

21 **MR. DON GRANT:** Good evening, how
22 you doing?

23 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Good
24 evening.

25 **MR. DON GRANT:** I'm Don Grant, I

1 live at 117 Wynnwood Drive here in Franklin,
2 Virginia and I'm Enviva's manager of
3 sustainability standards, and thank you for the
4 chance to comment in support of Enviva's permit
5 and expansion. My team manages Enviva's
6 certifications and that provide our customers the
7 transparency they need to meet their regulatory
8 requirements. These certifications are important
9 for market entry and are stringent enough in and
10 of themselves, but at Enviva, we go beyond those
11 standards to insure that we agree harvest is the
12 best outcome for each tract the supplier presents
13 us as a source of wood. In 2015 Enviva asked the
14 U. S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities to
15 look at the area we buy wood and help us identify
16 forest types that may contain areas of high
17 conservation value. The Endowment identified
18 four forest types we should monitor. We would
19 get, one of those gets a fair bit of attention
20 from NGO's and that's the bottomland hardwoods.
21 We developed processes to be sure that we are
22 making the right decisions when we are deciding
23 whether to source a working forest or a special
24 forest. The process has a series of top line
25 filters we use to assess whether a harvest site

1 needs special attention, if one of the top line
2 filters sends up a flag, our foresters perform a
3 physical inspection of the harvest area using the
4 set of specific criteria and report their
5 findings to a review panel to see if harvest is
6 the right thing, and to assure everyone agrees
7 it's appropriate. We recognize that we do have
8 some leverage in the community and with the wood
9 supply system and we only take a fraction of the
10 wood, which is kind of unique to take such a
11 small amount of wood and still have that much
12 impact. And sometimes we can get a landowner to
13 think about their forest a little differently.
14 One of the mechanisms we use to help landowners
15 preserve and serve forests is the Enviva Forest
16 Conservation Fund and we have helped landowners
17 in Southampton and the surrounding area to
18 conserve about fourteen thousand acres of
19 bottomland hardwood. And sometimes they want to
20 go ahead with the harvest and that's okay, it's
21 their right, it's their forest. Most of the time
22 if we say no in that process, and we decide not
23 to buy the wood and we say no, the landowner is
24 probably going to harvest that tract anyway, so
25 it's their choice. And that's okay. It's, its,

1 we made our decision not to participate in the
2 harvest. And we do have examples here in the
3 Southampton County area where we have said no,
4 and those tracts were harvested anyway, that wood
5 went to other markets. I thank you for the
6 opportunity to speak in support of the air
7 quality permit. Thank you.

8 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

9 Thank you. Number twenty-seven?

10 **MR. DON BRIGHT:** I have prepared a
11 few things, but I think I'm going to keep it a
12 little simpler. A lot of good things have been
13 said tonight. One of the things I want to speak
14 about...

15 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Can
16 you state your name first, please?

17 **MR. DON BRIGHT:** I'm sorry. Thank
18 you.

19 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

20 That's all right.

21 **MR. DON BRIGHT:** I'm Don Bright,
22 I'm President of Meherrin River Forest Products,
23 we are a hardwood lumber company.

24 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

25 Thank you.

1 **MR. DON BRIGHT:** Enviva is
2 critical to our business. Enviva came at a time
3 when markets were being lost in the hardwood
4 sector of this area, and they have really allowed
5 us to keep our jobs and keep that area of the
6 business going. One of the things I want to
7 propose to you is I want to ask you if you've
8 ever seen a logging job that didn't grow back in
9 trees. The problem is not the logging, the
10 problem a lot of times is development and urban
11 expansion. Forestry and forest practices in
12 creating the value that Enviva has helped us do
13 allows us to manage timber. I'm a timber owner,
14 our forest land manager, and I manage my timber
15 for many reasons. I do a lot of hardwood
16 practices, I have some pine timber, and the
17 reason why Enviva is so important, it allows me
18 to grow value with my hardwood resource as well
19 as manage for wildlife and other, you know,
20 recreational abilities we do. It is critical to
21 my hundred and twenty employees that you all take
22 this very seriously and approve this application.
23 Thank you.

24 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**
25 Thank you. Twenty-eight?

1 **MR. VANCE WRIGHT:** Good afternoon,
2 my name is Vance Wright, that was my partner that
3 just spoke. I'm a sixth generation landowner in
4 Mecklenburg County, Virginia, just a little bit
5 to the west. Second generation logger, first
6 generation sawmill with my partner Don. I've got
7 a degree in forestry from Virginia Tech, I hunt
8 and I fish, I eat, sleep, and breathe forestry.
9 That's all I do. We need markets in our area. I
10 want you to approve this permit. Franklin lost
11 to IP Saw, Paper Mill about ten years ago, a
12 little more, I don't remember when, there were a
13 thousand jobs lost in this area. That hasn't
14 recovered yet. We still need more jobs. Rural
15 America has the two best ways of growing jobs, we
16 grow food and agriculture, and we grow timber,
17 you don't do that in an urban setting, that's
18 where we bring money to our communities. That's
19 how we can bring our communities up and we can
20 get people out of poverty. There are great jobs
21 in the forest community. Most of my employees
22 make well above minimum wage, none of them are on
23 the poverty level in forestry. They are good
24 paying jobs, good jobs. We've been cutting
25 timber in the State of Virginia for four hundred

1 years, nowhere close to running out yet, and
2 still plenty of timber out there, even in these
3 bottomland forests, there's still plenty of
4 timber cut, we're growing more than we're cutting
5 right now. The biggest environmentalists are the
6 foresters out here, we want to come back and cut
7 again, we want to come back and utilize that
8 forest again, we want to be able to hunt, we want
9 to be able to fish those same places we go and
10 cut, they are places that we love to visit and
11 stay. We are there for generations. We are
12 always looking to improve the land even better
13 than we found it, that's how we were always
14 taught. You know. Everything we do is about the
15 environment. We've only got two places in this
16 world that we can get anything, everybody wants
17 renewable energy, solar and wind are great, but
18 to create those things we've got to grow it or
19 dig it up out of the ground to produce that
20 product, and the product we produce we grow every
21 day, it is renewable, it has continued to be
22 renewable, and it will continue to be renewable
23 whether Enviva expands this permit or not. But
24 we do need those markets because we have less
25 markets today than we did a few years ago, and we

1 still need those markets so we can continue to
2 just sustain the forestry that we have and help
3 continue it to grow so we have more acres in
4 forestry to help alleviate some climate change.
5 If you leave timber to grow and never cut it,
6 it's going to eventually not draw CO2 out of the
7 atmosphere any more, it's going to, that land is
8 going to eventually reach its capacity on what it
9 can do, and it will start putting back CO2 in the
10 atmosphere, it won't be putting enough oxygen out
11 that it could. We want a growing, thriving
12 forest, not a mature stand, those mature stands
13 don't have as much wildlife, less songbirds, less
14 small game. Those young forests are thriving,
15 wildlife thrives with the young forest, so I am
16 in full support of being able to have more
17 markets. Thank you.

18 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

19 Thank you. Didn't even have to call your number,
20 check that out.

21 **MR. GLENN GRAY:** Yeah I went to a
22 major southern university, I can count to twenty-
23 nine. Thank you, Mr. Nicol, my name is Glenn
24 Gray, I live in Surry County, Virginia. I am
25 retired from Enviva. In my role I worked for

1 Enviva was I would make site selections for our
2 facilities, then I would run the projects, and
3 then I would help them start them up and run them
4 for a while, then I, they would move me to
5 another one. I had, did, I that, I had that role
6 for the Ahoskie facility, the Northampton
7 facility, Southampton facility, and our Sampson
8 facility down in North Carolina. And in
9 selecting a site, I was always looking for and
10 what would communicate to the company was three
11 things. Obviously we had to have a sustainable
12 wood supply, I forgot I'm sorry, we have to have
13 a sustainable wood supply, then we would look for
14 labor, is there sustainable labor force in the
15 area, are we going to lose it down the road to
16 other industry coming in? And thirdly, we would
17 look at a quality of life issues, what's the
18 healthcare system like, what's the education
19 system like, what's the recreational activity
20 going to be like for those employees that we are
21 bringing in, our senior managers to run the
22 facilities? We're looking at all those things.
23 And we got here in Southampton County, Franklin,
24 Isle of Wight County, they checked all the boxes,
25 it was just a wonderful ideal place for us to put

1 a facility, and the community has been very, very
2 supportive in everything we have tried to do, and
3 we try to reciprocate in that. You know, there's
4 been any number of comments about the amount of
5 wood and how detrimental that is to cutting. Six
6 or eight years ago when we first started looking
7 in this area, the paper mill was using over four
8 million tons a year. The particle board plant
9 was using over a million tons a year. There was
10 a particle board plant in Waverly which is in the
11 same wood basket, that was using over a million
12 tons a year. The OSB plant over outside of
13 Emporia, Skippers, was using over a million tons
14 a year. The Skippers plant shut down, the
15 Waverly plant is shut down, the particle board
16 plant here in Franklin is shut down, the wood
17 paper mill started back up, instead of four
18 million tons, they're using about a million, a
19 million and a half. When all those facilities
20 were operating, that was between eight and nine
21 million tons a year being consumed. Right now
22 even with the expansion that's, I'm going to call
23 it a million and a half tons, it's a little less
24 than that, Ahoskie, Northampton, you include
25 that, we're using less than five million tons a

1 year. So compared to eight or nine years ago, we
2 are using out of this immediate wood basket area,
3 we are using substantially less tonnage than we
4 were, like I said, six or eight years ago. So
5 thank you for your time, you all be safe going
6 home.

7 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

8 Thank you.

9 **MR. GLENN GRAY:** You want these?

10 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** You
11 can keep it.

12 **MR. GLENN GRAY:** Thank you.

13 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** It
14 proves you can count. Thirty?

15 **MR. DAVIS ROSE:** Good evening. My
16 name is Davis Rose, I'm a lifelong resident of
17 Southampton County, and a third generation
18 logger. Along with my father Jerry, my sister
19 Stephanie, we own and operate Jerry D. Rose,
20 Incorporated Ship Transit and Southeast Fiber
21 Supply. In 2013, Enviva approached us about
22 adding a new chip crew to target hardwood fiber
23 market in our area. My sister and I started
24 Southeast Fiber in October of 2013, which has
25 doubled our previous production. Currently

1 Southeast Fiber has fifteen employees, their
2 families supported by Enviva Southampton mill.
3 Before Enviva opened, the hardwood market fiber
4 in our area was nearly nonexistent. Much of the
5 hardwood was being left behind to rot and create
6 little to no value for the landowner. The
7 majority of our production is mismanaged fifteen
8 to twenty year old stands and hardwood understory
9 and pine plantation stands. Enviva strictly
10 prohibits us from harvesting sensitive wetland
11 areas and land conversation tracts which include
12 solar projects. Through Enviva's track and trace
13 program, every acre we harvest is submitted and
14 monitored by audits and inspections. In my
15 twenty-one year logging career, I have had the
16 opportunity in the last three years to harvest
17 several tracts for the second time. This proves
18 the wood product industry is doing great, doing a
19 great job with reforestation and sustainability.
20 I would like to take the opportunity to thank
21 Enviva for choosing our family for providing
22 chips to the mill and returning, and allowing us
23 to return and support our small town community.
24 We look forward to working with Enviva in the
25 future and watching our children grow in the

logging industry. Thank you.

2 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

3 Thank you. Thirty-one?

4 **MR. JAY BRENCHICK:** Hello my name
5 is Jay Brenchick, and I reside at 408 Crescent
6 Drive, here in Franklin, Virginia. My wife is an
7 advocate for the environment and goes into
8 schools and teaches the community about the
9 importance of clean waterways. My son is a
10 graduate of an environmental sciences program and
11 now studies the effects of aquaculture off the
12 coast of Maine. I am the CEO and Executive
13 Director of the Franklin Southampton Economic
14 Development, Incorporated. I have taken a real
15 long, hard look at this, and that is because
16 economic development is a profession that is all
17 about looking toward the future, it's all about
18 the long game. Short gains, immediate gains,
19 trying to get jobs at the expense of something is
20 really not what my profession is about. So as I
21 look at this subject, I spent time talking with
22 my wife, talking with my son, I started looking
23 at the people who work at DEQ and have found that
24 they come from environmental science backgrounds,
25 they come from advocacy backgrounds that

1 generally speaking the people at DEQ care about
2 the environment. I have also spent some time
3 here in Southampton County traveling throughout
4 the county, meeting with foresters, seeing the
5 cuts, learning about their sustainability
6 practices. The bottom line is it doesn't make
7 any sense for Franklin Southampton Economic
8 Development to support an industry that would
9 destroy our environment, and anything that I have
10 seen lends itself to say that Enviva is not doing
11 that. You can take and run a grocery list of
12 pollutants and say well the VOCs or this, that,
13 and the other thing, all cause cancer or, or
14 other health issues. Well, that's true, but
15 everything listed here, from what I have been
16 told, and what I have read, actually also
17 naturally occurs in the environment. Everything
18 listed here in the fact sheet for the Enviva air
19 permit are at limits that fall well within the
20 standards that DEQ is asking for. So I have
21 talked with my Board, and my Board is made up of
22 people who have lived and worked in Franklin and
23 Southampton communities their entire lives, I
24 have spoken with them as a group and I have
25 spoken with them individually, and every one of

1 us are very much in support of this permit. As
2 long as Enviva continues to work within the
3 parameters that DEQ is asking for, Franklin
4 Southampton Economic Development is in full
5 support. Thank you.

6 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

7 Thank you. Thirty-two?

8 **MR. J. C. PITTMAN:** I'm J. C.
9 Pittman with Clements Mechanical, we've been
10 working with the Enviva group since they started
11 the first plants up. We find, you know, we visit
12 several different mills over the country for
13 Enviva, we also visit, you know, other wood
14 industries from other leading groups like paper
15 mills and board mills and stuff like that, we
16 find the practices at Enviva well exceeds some of
17 the other industry standards and we are in full
18 support of it. Thank you all for your time.

19 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

20 Thank you. Thirty-three?

21 **MR. PETE HANCOCK:** Good evening.
22 My name is Pete Hancock, I'm the timberlands
23 manager for Roseburg Resources Company, mailing
24 address is P. O. Box C, Roanoke Rapids, North
25 Carolina. Roseburg Resources owns and manages a

1 hundred and fifty-eight thousand acres of
2 timberland in Virginia and North Carolina, some
3 of which is located here in Southampton County.
4 All of our property in this area is managed to
5 meet the sustainable forestry initiatives
6 certification standard. Roseburg is committed to
7 sustainability of our natural resources and
8 environmental compliance in our operations.
9 Annually our harvesting operations generate a
10 significant volume and variety of raw materials
11 that supply the forest products industry.
12 Roseburg is a long term owner that makes
13 significant investment in reforestation and sound
14 management that increases productivity of the
15 company timberlands. Trees are a renewable
16 resource. Within this local region private lands
17 provide an abundant and sustainable supply of
18 wood to support both the current and the
19 potential future increased demand as a raw
20 material. Roseburg fully supports the
21 development and growth of the wood products
22 industry in this region. The utilization of
23 forest products has increased when there is an
24 adequate capacity for lower valued categories of
25 wood like pulp wood and residual materials, which

1 Enviva procures. Currently Enviva's mills
2 contribute to the local economy by providing
3 direct employment, utilizing residual material
4 from other wood product manufacturing, and
5 improving the market for lower valued fiber from
6 timberlands. Robust demand for forest products
7 incentivizes more landowners to facilitate
8 advanced forest management practices that
9 increase the productivity and value of timberland
10 in the region. Roseburg Resources supports the
11 permit application for the Enviva Southampton
12 facility. Thank you.

13 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

14 Thank you. Speaker thirty-four?

15 **MR. DAN HOWE:** Good evening, my
16 name is Dan Howe, I live at 100 Gillette Court in
17 the City of Franklin. I've been a resident of
18 Franklin since 1983. I have been the Executive
19 Director for the Downtown Franklin Association
20 for over ten years. The Downtown Franklin
21 Association is a 501(C)3 entity that orchestrates
22 our Virginia Mainstream Program for the City of
23 Franklin and we've been nationally accredited
24 since 1985. Our mission is to exist to grow,
25 nurture, and support the vitality of historic

1 downtown, which is the heart of Franklin. Our
2 vision is to make Franklin the place of choice to
3 live, work, play and grow by procuring economic
4 partnerships and advocating local business growth
5 while enhancing the quality of life for our
6 community and visitors. We have followed Enviva
7 since first operations started in our community.
8 Enviva has made significant investments in our
9 community, supported four hundred and fifty
10 direct and indirect jobs in our community, has
11 supported multiple community programs and events
12 that in line very well so with our mission and
13 vision in our community. Therefore our Board
14 supports Enviva and the permit that has been
15 sustained here. We recognize one other very
16 important fact about Enviva, and that is that
17 they have a genuine and sincere concern for our
18 environment and our community. Just an added
19 note, I spent thirty years in manufacturing
20 before becoming Downtown Dan, as they call me in
21 this community, and I had major oversight of all
22 air quality and water quality, so I came with
23 some credentials. We closely worked with DEQ for
24 many years. I did run the largest manufacturing
25 operation in Southampton County for twenty-five

1 years, and for all indicators that I look for,
2 everything I have reviewed, I do believe Enviva
3 are good shepherds of our community and our
4 environment. Thank you.

5 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

6 Thank you. Thirty-five?

7 **MR. C. K. GREENE:** Good evening,
8 my name is C. K. Greene, I live at 4356 Planters
9 Road, Dolphin, Virginia, Brunswick County. I am
10 a father of an eighteen year old daughter, very
11 opinionated, a sixteen year old son, I'm a
12 twenty-two year volunteer fireman, and I'm a
13 logger. I have land and timber in Southampton
14 County, Brunswick County as well, but I'm here to
15 say yes for Enviva's approval and the permit,
16 it's a good company, we need the industry. I
17 utilize hardwood and the pine material on the
18 tracts I buy and I haul for Enviva, to the
19 Southampton facility and to the Northampton
20 facility. I do things right in the woods, I
21 BMPs, I SMZs, I like it done right, I put a lot
22 of pride in my job. Again, I'm a logger, and I'm
23 real proud of it. Everybody in Southampton
24 County, if you don't own timber, you're, you're
25 real small. Everybody else who does own timber,

1 one way or the other you inherited it, you bought
2 it, one way or the other it's going to get cut
3 somehow and somewhere, we have to have the
4 facility. Enviva is a good facility. I cannot
5 say enough. We need the industry. There is many
6 oversights about logging and the bad things that
7 we do, but very seldom is reforestation spoke
8 about. The first thinnings, the second
9 thinnings, timber stand improvement, BMP, water
10 quality guidelines, my men, I have twenty-five
11 employees, my men are educated, we do things
12 right, we have good standards here in the south
13 part of Virginia, you know, it's, it's good
14 stuff. There is some bashing, but its good stuff
15 and Enviva bring a good portion of the goodness
16 to the table, I'm here to support the permit.

17 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

18 Thank you. Thirty-six?

19 **MR. CHRIS BROWN:** Good evening, my
20 name is Chris Brown, and I'm the community
21 relations manager for Enviva. I live in Wilton,
22 North Carolina and I would like to say that I'm
23 very happy to be a new member of the Camp
24 Community College Foundation Board, thanks to
25 President Lufkin for giving me that honor. I

1 would also, before I really get started I would
2 like to thank everybody for coming out tonight
3 and you know, a lot of these loggers, they're in
4 the woods before the sun comes up and they
5 probably had to get off their equipment early to
6 come out here and be a part of this, and guys, I
7 really appreciate the fact that you guys came out
8 tonight, that's really, really means a lot to me.
9 I've been fortunate to sit down with several
10 local leaders in this community in my role, both
11 economic and spiritual, and they have influenced
12 my comments here tonight. Our expansion project
13 is an eighty million dollar reinvestment in this
14 community, it means direct jobs, it means
15 indirect jobs for those who are involved in the
16 forest products community, many of which you have
17 heard from this evening. We already employ over
18 a hundred employees at our Southampton facility
19 and when you consider the downsizing that's
20 happened in this area with other forest products
21 facilities closing or reducing their production,
22 this is very significant that we are expanding
23 our facility, we are here for the long term.
24 Enviva is very active in the community, we care
25 about our communities, we were proud to be one of

1 the sponsors of Franklin's July 3rd fireworks. I
2 actually had the opportunity to come up here,
3 they had a really cool car show in downtown
4 Franklin and we were really pleased to be a part
5 of that. We are, and we are engaged in the
6 community, we will continue to be engaged in this
7 community through our different partnerships with
8 several people you have heard from this evening.
9 I would like to close with sharing one comment
10 that I received from one of our partners in
11 Hamlet, North Carolina, Pastor David Getz of New
12 Bethel Church, he sent me these comments to share
13 with you tonight, and I quote, "As a community
14 sponsor and constant contributor to the families
15 of Dobbins Heights, Enviva has proven that the
16 families of Dobbins Heights are worthy of the
17 investment of their time and donations. Enviva
18 has proven to be a major contributor to Dobbins
19 Heights on many levels. We appreciate and we
20 thank you, Enviva, for believing in the
21 advancement and upward development of one of
22 North Carolina's fragile communities." So in
23 closing, we care about our communities, we invest
24 in our communities, as we are doing here, and
25 that's what we do, and thank you very much for

your time.

2 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

3 Thank you. Thirty-seven.

4 **MS. JAIME WISEGARVER:** That's me,
5 I read your mind. Good evening.

6 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Good
7 evening.

8 **MS. JAIME WISEGARVER:** My name is
9 Jaime Wisegarver, I'm an attorney with the law
10 firm of Hirshler Fleischer in Richmond, Virginia
11 and I represent the United States Industrial
12 Pellet Association, or USIPA. USIPA is a not for
13 profit trade association that promotes the
14 sustainability and safety practices within the
15 United States wood energy industry. USIPA is
16 based in Richmond and represents large scale
17 producers of sustainable wood biomass across the
18 southeast. Enviva is actually one of USIPA's
19 founding members. The science is clear that
20 sustainably managed forests and the use of wood
21 biomass are key to limiting global warming. The
22 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or the
23 IPCC, which is the United Nations body that is
24 dedicated to assessing the science related to
25 climate change, and is actually widely considered

1 the world's top authority on climate science,
2 continues to underscore the necessity of
3 sustainably managed working forests and wood
4 biomass to limit global warming. In its August
5 report on climate change and land, the IPCC
6 stated that a sustainable forest management
7 strategy that is aimed at maintaining or
8 increasing forest carbon stocks, while also
9 producing an annual yield of timber, fiber or
10 energy from the forest will actually generate the
11 largest sustained mitigation benefit. In other
12 words, sustainable forest management is among the
13 tools that will be the most beneficial in
14 combatting global warming. Wood biomass has,
15 also has, has had a positive impact on the
16 environment, it's a meaningful but small part of
17 the overall forest economy, it accounts for only
18 about three percent of all wood harvested each
19 year across the southeast region. According to
20 data from the United States Department of
21 Agriculture, forest industry and forested area
22 has increased since 1953, that's despite record
23 population growth and urban development in that
24 same period. So in short, carbon storage in the
25 forests of the southeast has actually doubled in

1 the last sixty years. Lastly, the economic
2 benefits to investing in wood biomass are clear.
3 Enviva's presence in Virginia contributes to over
4 a hundred and twenty-five million annually in
5 regional economic impact, and its presence in
6 Virginia also supports about four hundred and
7 fifty direct and indirect jobs. For these
8 reasons, USIPA supports the expansion of the
9 plant and the issuance of the draft permit.

10 Thank you.

11 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

12 Thank you.

13 **MS. PENNY GRANT:** I'm Penny Grant,
14 I live on 117 Wynnwood Drive here in Franklin.
15 I'm here to support Enviva, not just because I
16 have been around it for the last five and a half
17 years, but because I also am a stockholder. I
18 believe very strongly in what they stand for, I
19 believe everything, all the research that I have
20 done on this company, plus being around this
21 company for the last five and a half years, makes
22 me want to be a part of it in any way I can, and
23 I support it. Thank you.

24 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

25 Thank you. Number thirty-nine?

1 **MS. EBONI ALEXANDER:** Good
2 evening, my name is Eboni Alexander and I am the
3 Executive Director of the Black Family Land
4 Trust. The BFLT is one of the nation's only land
5 trusts dedicated to the preservation and
6 protection of African-American and other
7 historically underserved population's land
8 assets. We believe that land is an asset and it
9 should be a performing asset for current and
10 future generations. I am also a resident of
11 Mecklenburg County, tracing my family's history
12 back there to the last 1700's. I am here in
13 support of Enviva, but I want to speak a little
14 bit about their work with what I do at the BFLT.
15 We are part of an organization that works with
16 both the American Forest Foundation, as well as
17 the U. S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities,
18 working on a special program that's designed for
19 the southern part of the country called the
20 Sustainable Forest Land Retention Program. That
21 program is specifically designed to help African-
22 Americans use their land to maintain wooded land
23 to put that wooded land back into production, to
24 also be good stewards of the land and to be able
25 to yield, we are teaching people with Enviva's

1 help, how to be tree farmers, because it's
2 something that many African-American families
3 didn't think that you did, you had a onetime
4 harvest, and that was it. We now are being able
5 to teach people how they can be tree farmers, we
6 have small plots of land, these small pieces of
7 land, Enviva provides an outlet, a market for
8 them to sell their timber. So I won't go into a
9 lot of the other things, but in terms of economic
10 development, when you have a product as a small
11 producer, you always need a market, Enviva
12 provides that market. It also is teaching people
13 good stewardship practices and good management
14 practices for current and future forestry. And
15 finally it is providing organizations like mine
16 and our sister organization in North Carolina
17 with the resources that we need to be able to
18 continue to work with small landowners, to help
19 them retain those land assets, and to put those
20 land assets back in production. For many of our
21 families who live outside of Virginia or outside
22 of the region, being able to see managed forestry
23 as an option for retaining that land for future
24 generations is a win-win for everybody, so we
25 strongly support having Enviva receive the

expansion permits. Thank you.

2 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

3 Thank you very much. Forty?

4 **SPEAKER FORTY:** I'll pass.

5 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

6 Forty-one?

7 **MR. KEA TURNER:** I want to start
8 singing.

9 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** You
10 can sing.

11 **MR. KEA TURNER:** No, no. My name
12 is Kea Turner and I'm a forestry consultant. And
13 those who know me, and many of them are here,
14 know that I am not a fan of Enviva's wood
15 procurement policies and procedures, but we need
16 them. Beside the economic impacts you all have
17 heard, they do have allowed a lot of my
18 landowners to clean up lackluster tracts and to
19 establish more vibrant stands that capture more
20 carbon and release more oxygen. And because of
21 changes in markets, changes in rates of return on
22 investment, and changes in generational values, I
23 now manage more natural mixed pine hardwood
24 stands than I've ever had in my forty-four year
25 career. So, one thing I want to say is we live

1 in a great State, we hope that the DEQ has
2 knowledgeable and competent people, and we rely
3 on your judgment based on science and not the
4 opinions and feelings that you have heard here
5 today. Thank you.

6 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

7 Thank you. Forty-two?

8 **MR. GARRY HARRIS:** Good evening.

9 My name is Garry Harris and I'm the Managing
10 Director for the Center for Sustainable
11 Communities. We are all about making communities
12 greener, cleaner, healthier, safer, and more
13 climate resilient. I am also the founder of the
14 National Environmental Justice Academy, and you
15 know I'm getting a little older these days so I
16 like to go for walks in parks. And I found a
17 great park down in Portsmouth, right beside the
18 Enviva facility at the Port of Chesapeake
19 operating facility there, and I get there and I
20 do three, three to five miles per day and that
21 sort of thing, I'm walking around the facility.
22 But as I'm walking, you know, I see trucks. I
23 see truck, after truck, after truck, after truck,
24 when I'm driving to the park I'm driving behind
25 trucks. I go to the shopping center, I come out

1 after two hours of shopping, I see trucks, after
2 trucks, after trucks, carrying wood pellets. And
3 I'm asking myself, where does all this wood come
4 from? You know, what could possibly source all
5 this wood day after day, after day, after day,
6 almost 24/7 and such, trucks after trucks, after
7 trucks, after trucks. Well if Enviva increases
8 its facility here it's, it's going to expand by
9 more than two hundred and forty-six thousand tons
10 of forest products per year, that's about six
11 thousand acres, trucks, after trucks, after
12 trucks, after trucks, that's going to be logged,
13 with more clearcuts, more, more carbon in the
14 atmosphere, more logging trucks on the road, less
15 habitat for wildlife, less protection for, for,
16 for natural disasters. The wood pellet industry
17 is driving the destruction and the degradation of
18 tons of, of, tons of thousands of acres for
19 forest products per year. And, and that they are
20 also using not only waste wood products, but they
21 are also using products from biodiversity
22 hotspots as well. We have lost nearly thirty-
23 five million acres of natural forest, in part due
24 to the logging operations in part caused by
25 Enviva. And there has been numerous scientific

1 studies showing, confirming the fact that burning
2 wood pellets has more greenhouse gas emissions
3 per unit of power compared to coal, which has a
4 detrimental effect on climate change. The
5 facility's impact to surrounding communities as
6 well, with increased truck traffic on small
7 roads, air pollution, as we talked about here,
8 dust, constant noise, and also they did degrade
9 the landscape as well. In environmental justice
10 communities, those who live with incomes less
11 than the State median income are twice as likely
12 to have these facilities in their communities.
13 So therefore they are facing the pollution, they
14 are facing the increased traffic, and also there
15 is little or no economic benefit to those
16 environmental justice communities and such. So
17 based on these facts, I do not support the
18 expansion of the facility here in Franklin,
19 Virginia.

20 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

21 Thank you. I think I have one speaker left
22 unless there is anyone that has not registered
23 that would like to, or speak, is that, are there
24 any others that would like to sign up at the last
25 moment, if so you can do that quickly while we

1 allow our last speaker to come up. We will skip
2 ahead to number fifty-three.

3 **MR. EDWARD H. ZIMMER:** We good,
4 can everybody hear that?

5 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:** Um
6 hmm (indicating affirmatively.)

7 **MR. EDWARD H. ZIMMER:** Great.
8 Good evening, my name is Ed Zimmer and I am the
9 Deputy State Forester for the Virginia Department
10 of Forestry. I have been a forester for
11 approximately thirty years, I've been with the
12 Department for fifteen of those years, prior to
13 that I was employed by the forest industry, most
14 notably with Union Camp Corporation in a variety
15 of forestry roles, working right here in Franklin
16 and the surrounding forests. My role tonight is
17 to address any concerns related to the forest
18 resources here in Virginia, and what impacts this
19 proposed expansion would likely have on those
20 resources. A little bit about the forests in
21 Virginia overall, the forest land in Virginia is
22 stable and it is comprised of a diverse array of
23 forest types that provide a wide variety of
24 benefits and ecosystem services. Statewide there
25 are almost sixteen million acres of forest land,

1 of which roughly eighty percent of that is
2 hardwood and mixed pine hardwood. The majority
3 of this land is privately held and there are over
4 four hundred thousand individual owners of forest
5 land across the Commonwealth. From comments both
6 here and submitted in advance, I know there are
7 concerns that timber harvesting in general and
8 the additional harvesting associated with this
9 potential expansion, can have a detrimental
10 impact on the environment. I would like to share
11 some facts and figures that would suggest that
12 that is generally not the case, especially in an
13 area with the vast forest resources that
14 Southeast Virginia has. First, when trees are
15 harvested and taken to a processing mill, that
16 land is almost always reforested, either by
17 planting of new seedlings or through natural
18 regeneration. While this harvesting is being
19 conducted, Virginia law requires that any
20 potential water quality impacts be avoided or
21 mitigated, and the Virginia Department of
22 Forestry visits every harvest site multiple times
23 to insure compliance with this law. One useful
24 macro level measure of the health and stability
25 of the forest resources is what we call the

1 growth drain ratio. This is simply the amount of
2 new wood grown in a year divided by the amount
3 harvested in that same area. Any number greater
4 than 1.0 would indicate we are growing more than
5 we are harvesting. Currently for every ton of
6 wood harvested in Virginia, we grow 2.5 tons. In
7 Southeast Virginia we grow roughly 2.4 tons of
8 wood per ton harvested, and that number is
9 similar for both hardwood and softwoods. So we
10 continue to increase our supply of wood, even as
11 we harvest millions of tons of wood per year.
12 This environmentally friendly and sustainable
13 harvesting of the forest resource actually helps
14 maintain land and forest, because landowners can
15 have an economic benefit from their land without
16 having to convert it to another potentially less
17 environmentally friendly use. In conclusion,
18 from a resource perspective, there is little
19 reason to believe that this expansion will have a
20 detrimental impact on the Commonwealth's forest
21 resources. Thank you.

22 **HEARING OFFICER CRAIG NICOL:**

23 Thank you very much. So I will make one last
24 offer, is there anyone else that wishes to have
25 his or her comments added into the record? If

1 so, you are welcome to come to the microphone. I
2 don't see anyone, so I would like to remind
3 everyone that comments on this draft permit are
4 made, that can be made after today's hearing,
5 must be in writing, and they must be addressed to
6 Mr. James White, he's in the back of the room, at
7 the Department of Environmental Quality,
8 Tidewater Regional Office, and received before
9 11:59 p.m. on September 27th, 2019. Let the
10 record show that this proceeding that there are
11 no other persons present that wish to comment at
12 this time. All comments have been made. All
13 statements and questions received are entered
14 into the record and there is no one else who
15 wishes to speak at this time. I hereby declare
16 that this meeting is adjourned as of 8:28. So
17 the hearing is now ended, thank you very much.
18 Please have a safe trip home.

19 **(WHEREUPON, the Virginia Department of**
20 **Environmental Quality Public Hearing was**
21 **concluded at 8:28 p.m.)**

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25

1 CAPTION

2
3 The foregoing matter was taken on the date, and at
4 the time and place set out on the title page hereof.

5
6 It was requested that the matter be taken by the
7 reporter and that the same be reduced to typewritten
8 form.

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER AND SECURE ENCRYPTED
2 SIGNATURE AND DELIVERY OF CERTIFIED TRANSCRIPT

3 I, **JANET ENGLE**, transcriber, do hereby certify
4 that the forgoing matter was reported by stenographic
5 and/or mechanical means, that same was reduced to
6 written form, that the transcript prepared by me or
7 under my direction, is a true and accurate record of
8 same to the best of my knowledge and ability; that
9 there is no relation nor employment by any attorney
10 or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor
11 financial or otherwise interest in the action filed
12 or its outcome.

13 This transcript and certificate have been
14 digitally signed and securely delivered through our
15 encryption server.

16 IN WITNESS HEREOF, I have here unto set my hand
17 this 25TH day of SEPTEMBER, 2019.

18
19
20 

21
22 /s/ JANET ENGLE

23 TRANSCRIBER
24
25

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