We cannot wait another day! Every hour that passes without action, more malefic poison seeps into our beloved waterway. Our children's future is being terminated by the inimical pollution. We start not tomorrow, not tonight, but now!

Envision walking towards our community river, and instead of seeing pristine water, you see a graveyard of plastic waste. As you get closer you notice a toxic sheen of spiteful oils. You can feel the ethereal chains around your brain tighten as you gaze as mounds of waste mercilessly jostle naive roots further into the tapestry of muck. Bottles, bags, and broken fragments as far as the eye can see. This isn't some dystopian future this is our reality right now! Each of us in this room has contributed to this crisis. Each disposable coffee cup, each plastic grocery bag, each single-use water bottle has added to the mountain of waste that is choking our environment and poisoning our wildlife. The tranquil playlist of gushing water and birds chirping has been replaced by an eerie silence which is only disturbed by the much to occasional bleak thud of yet another piece of pollution adding to the monstrosity of waste. But together, we can change this! Together, we can say NO to plastic that will outlive our grandchildren. Together, we can choose reusable alternatives. Together, we can pressure businesses and government to prioritize our planet over profit and convenience.

I feel rage when I think about the corporate executives who make decisions from sterile boardrooms miles away from the communities they poison. I feel heartbreak when I see children reading 'No Swimming' signs where their parents once played. And I feel shame that we have allowed this to happen on our watch.

I still remember when my own daughter collected water samples from Parkside Creek for her science project three years ago. Today, she would need hazardous material protection to conduct the same study.

Some will say we can't afford to fix this problem. I say we can't afford NOT to. Some will say jobs might be lost. I say what about the jobs that clean water would create? Some say it's too late. I say it's never too late to do what's right.

Could we afford to wait another month if your family relied on Parkside Creek water? NO!!

Today, we must commit to action, not just words. Today, we must stand together against environmental injustice. Today, we begin the work of healing our community's lifeblood—its water. Join me! Sign the petition, attend the council meeting on Thursday, and let your voice become a mighty current that cannot be ignored!