

Drown out the noise. Kicking.  
Screaming

FIGHT  
FOR LIFE



Use this template to write letters to your local officials. As civil servants, they work for you!

(Your name and address)

Congressman Jose Serrano  
1231 Lafayette Avenue, 4th floor  
Bronx, NY 10474

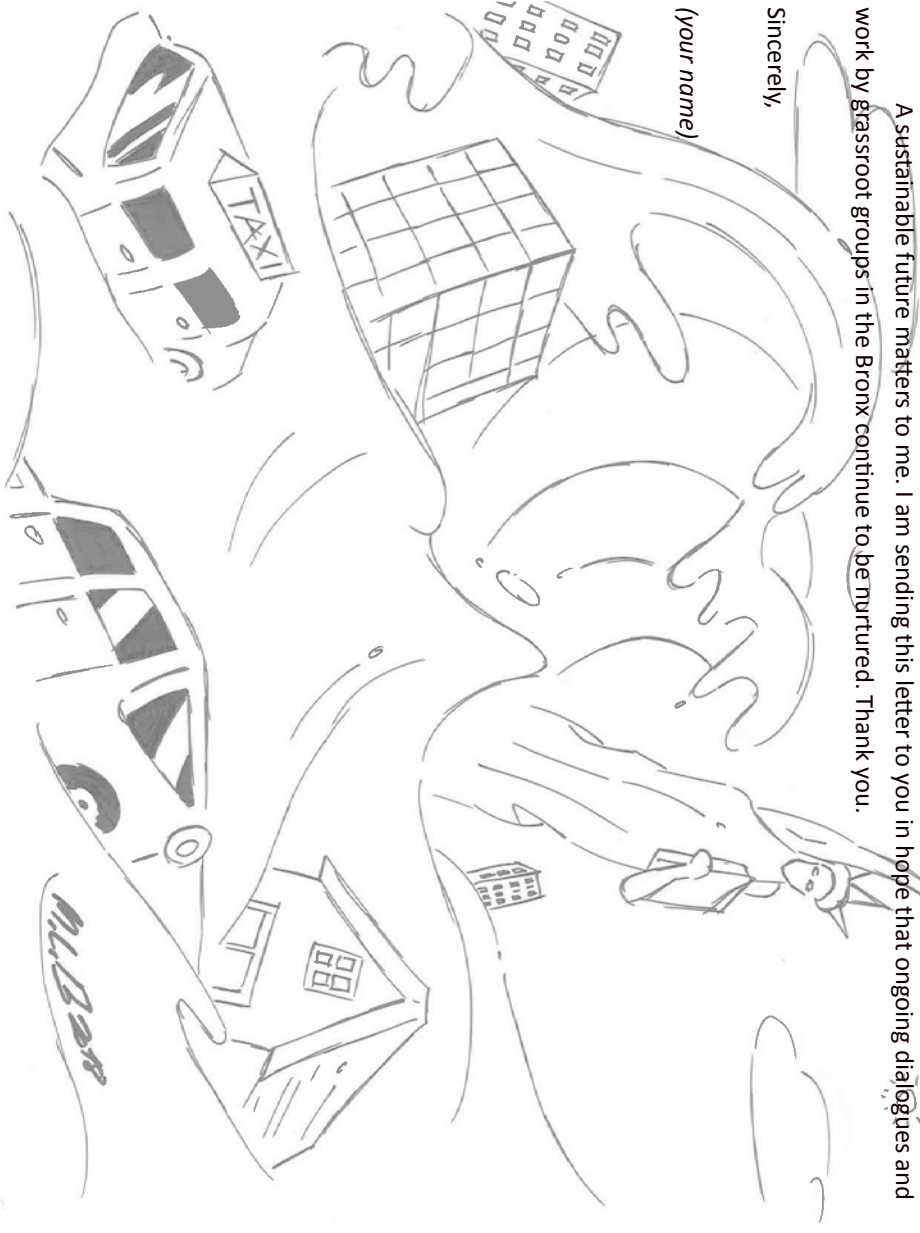
(date)  
Dear Congressman Serrano:

I am writing you today to urge congress to increase budgets to fund work and research to sustainable alternatives to current combined sewer overflow (CSO) system in New York City. As climate change becomes a reality we must contend with, solutions that are healthy and in the true interest of the people are greatly needed.

One of the weaknesses of CSO is that in times of heavy rains the sewage treatment plant may not be able to keep up with the amount of water coming into it. Although the sewage may be comparatively diluted at that point, the backup of raw sewage has no place to go. This is critical to the area where the Hunts Point Waste-water Treatment Plant is. If the tide is high and pipes are covered, sewage cannot run out into the river. Raw sewage will potentially back up to the streets causing a serious health hazard. Yet, having raw sewage flow into our rivers is not an answer as they pose a danger to very successful projects like the oyster restoration healing our natural coastal reefs and bringing back wildlife. Some solutions could be recycling water, keeping it separate from our drinking and bathing water, as well as decentralizing our wastewater system.

A sustainable future matters to me. I am sending this letter to you in hope that ongoing dialogues and work by grassroots groups in the Bronx continue to be nurtured. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
(your name/



Mobilize and connect

Hunt's Point Wif- 940 Garrison Avenue, Bronx  
NY 10474. thepoint.org/free-hunts-point-wif

People Power Movement- 2011peoplepower@gmail.com,  
facebook.com/2011peoplepower, Instagram @ people-powermovement

Mothers on the Move- Housing and advocacy,  
1158 Intervale Avenue Bx 10459, 718-842-2224

Kelly Street Garden- Food Justice/Urban Farm/  
Community Garden in Longwood 924 Kelly  
Street Bx, NY 10458 Saturdays 9-1 volunteer

Bronx Climate Justice North- Climate & Food Justice  
in North West Bronx https://bronxclimatejusticenorth.wordpress.com

Take Back the Bronx- Anti-gentrification and housing  
rights in South Bronx. On Face Book Take Back the Bronx

BLK Project/ Libertad Urban Farm- Food Justice  
in Longwood. On twitter @TheBLKProject

Why Accountability- Know your rights in the  
Bronx. On Face Book Why Accountability

Decolonize this Place- action-oriented around indige-  
nous struggle, black liberation, Free Palestine, global wage  
workers and de-gentrification. decolonizehisplace.org

New York Garden Coalition, http://nygcc.org

Black Urban Farmers, www.blackurbanfarmers.org

Drown out the noise. Kicking.  
Screaming

FIGHT  
FOR LIFE



## PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit held on October 24-27, 1991, in Washington DC, drafted and adopted 17 principles of Environmental Justice. Since then, The Principles have served as a defining document for the growing grassroots movement for environmental justice.

### PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF COLOR, gathered together at this multinational People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, to begin to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities, do hereby re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles in healing ourselves; to ensure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and, to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our peoples, do affirm and adopt these Principles of Environmental Justice:

- 1) **Environmental Justice** affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.
- 2) **Environmental Justice** demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.
- 3) **Environmental Justice** mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.
- 4) **Environmental Justice** calls for universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food.
- 5) **Environmental Justice** affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples.
- 6) **Environmental Justice** demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.
- 7) **Environmental Justice** demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.
- 8) **Environmental Justice** affirms the right of all workers to a safe and healthy work environment without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment. It also affirms the right of those who work at home to be free from environmental hazards.
- 9) **Environmental Justice** protects the right of victims of environmental injustice to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.
- 10) **Environmental Justice** considers governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law, the Universal Declaration On Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.
- 11) **Environmental Justice** must recognize a special legal and natural relationship of Native Peoples to the U.S. government through treaties, agreements, compacts, and covenants affirming sovereignty and self-determination.
- 12) **Environmental Justice** affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and provided fair access for all to the full range of resources.
- 13) **Environmental Justice** calls for the strict enforcement of principles of informed consent, and a halt to the testing of experimental reproductive and medical procedures and vaccinations on people of color.
- 14) **Environmental Justice** opposes the destructive operations of multi-national corporations.
- 15) **Environmental Justice** opposes military occupation, repression and exploitation of lands, peoples and cultures, and other life forms.
- 16) **Environmental Justice** calls for the education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.
- 17) **Environmental Justice** requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to ensure the health of the natural world for present and future generations.

I  
I am a poor black teenager  
by being poor.  
I mean being susceptible to anything  
that makes my rent lower  
like in Florida  
children wear masks to school  
like I wear my headphones  
like a means of safety  
Or a tool to ignore the outside  
to drown out the noises  
to forget the fact  
that you are poor and black  
that your life  
is in the hands  
of government officials  
who could give  
two licks of a stick about you

I mean I wish they would care more  
But if they don't  
It's okay  
Being poor and black  
means that you can  
have corporations in  
your backyard though  
I mean you can't do  
nothing about it though  
Poor black communities  
are in industrial zones  
Like Hunts Point  
15,000 trucks come in and out my  
neighborhood  
on a daily but that's okay  
20% of the kids in my neighbor-  
hood  
got asthma  
21 times as likely to be hospitalized  
for respiratory problems  
in the BX and Harlem  
And It's normalize  
And you are three times as likely  
to die from asthma in the South  
Bronx  
And it's okay though

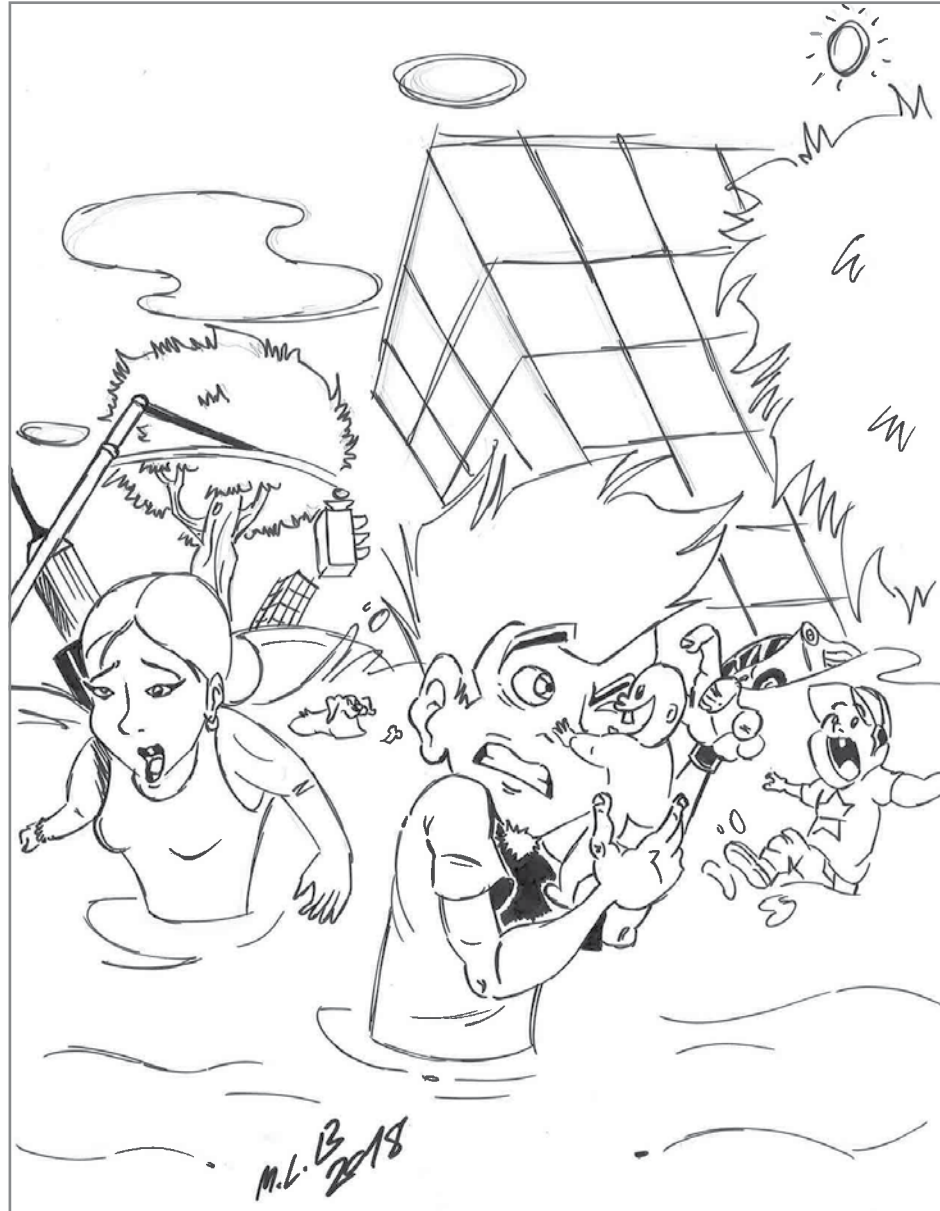
Because when you're poor and  
black  
It means you are a  
Second class citizen right?  
Corporations can have they hand  
out  
demanding your life  
And you give it to them  
I mean  
You can't afford life anyway  
I mean  
You weren't going to make it to fifty  
anyway  
So why should it matter  
That air is killing you  
That there aren't enough trees in  
my hood  
to clean the CO2  
That I expel from my lips right now  
Ain't it funny  
by being poor and black  
you could die from so many things  
who knew that by breathing  
such an insignificance to life  
the first thing you do in this world  
could be the cause your last breath

I mean  
When you're Poor and Black  
your life is the same amount  
as the commas on a check  
that you ain't never going to see  
And the environment around you is  
killing you  
And you the only one who cares  
So you go marching down the  
streets  
Black fist up in the air  
demanding someone to give a demand

# SURGE

that your people are dying in the  
streets  
from breathing  
Ain't it funny  
Because aren't you breathing  
Ain't your neighborhood breathing  
My hood is breathing  
And screaming  
And kicking  
wailing

just your prints on a crime scene  
that will never be covered by the  
New York Times  
no one cares about these hooligans  
Half naked black folk killing each  
other  
Running around like the savages we  
are  
Skirts up like the heathens we are



And fighting  
for us  
Because these poor black neighbor-  
hoods are breathing  
And we don't ever plan on stopping

II  
Fort Apache crumbles at the feet of  
my oppressors  
I don't even have a spear to throw at  
them to insure  
I take one of them for every 20  
brown nosed little kid  
no proper education to ask for their  
justification for why they left me for  
dead  
no excuse for my body parts  
Blame my mourning on gang vio-  
lence  
lose the g add the b for bang vio-  
lence  
no residue on these hand

embrace the wildness of this jungle  
of the ghetto streets with Arizona  
bottles as tumbleweed  
plastic bags roll past as reminders  
Chicken bones as love ones  
songs fill crack concrete  
creates a unity between these sav-  
ages  
togetherness across boundaries  
naked bodies against colonizers  
holding hate in their hands  
love falling at their feet  
empty timberland boot is evidence  
we were once here  
skeleton hands crack out of these  
broken streets  
ghosts haunt these cracked brown-  
stones  
turned into squatter housing  
Lazy lounging of these loaded  
killers  
skin itching victims

these ratchet stoned out future  
criminals  
stay yelling  
spares in hands  
stay taking every body you left  
draining; making them martyrs  
these burned out kids live reckless  
butt ass naked  
with your lies on our tongues  
yelling in our non american lan-  
guage  
whisper in our go back to where you  
come from tongues  
Holler proudly in the shame we  
brought upon our country, my  
nation

III  
This is America  
don't catch none of these black  
boys  
tryin' to get their money  
catch Mr.Drumpit with his mistress  
on top  
of the Paris Agreement  
Draws on the Nuclear codes  
Bodies draining the clean air from  
my lungs

Don't catch me trippin' over  
my two feet trying  
cleanup the mess of White America  
again  
Won't catch me slippin'  
had my head straight on  
looking for ill' Johnny's witness  
Can't catch me sippin' any  
of your whitewashed history

Yup, I do remember  
Bronx was supposed to be a park-  
ing lot  
Concrete over my ancestors  
could've been, should've been  
dead bodies, lost heritage, hanging  
by a string culture  
And I won't forget it  
Mr. Glover said This is America  
And you won't catch me slippin'  
can't catch me trippin'  
unlaced Jordans running done  
Hunts Point Ave  
like 'Can I get a witness?'  
because White America is tryin' to  
smoke us out again  
tryin' to unintentionally kill us  
again  
tryin' to take break down our villag-  
es again

Don't know nothing about these  
poor black teenagers  
Nothing about these savages  
Nothing about naked hoodlum  
victims  
Nothing about these sirens  
switched on death sentences  
Nothing about this atmosphere  
gastric 0 to life sentences  
Nothing about these martyrs  
we run off those dead bodies

They know nothing about us  
how we flip our black fists  
like they flip middle fingers  
stone cold faces  
looking down the barrel of our  
adversity  
They know nothing about what we  
will  
over come  
know nothing about our resiliency  
that runs through  
our blood

- By Aaliyah Daniels, 16