

# HUDSON DEMOCRATS

August 4, 2022

To: The Common Council  
Mayor Kamal Johnson

The Hudson City Democratic Committee (HCDC) writes in full-throated support of the petition submitted to the Council by one of our members, Abdus Miah, the official elected by the Second Ward to represent their interests as County Supervisor.

The petition, signed by numerous residents of the Second Ward, urges the Council and Mayor, among others, to consider the harmful impact on Second Ward residents of heavy trucks using the ward's roads. The petition makes the point that exhaust from the trucks poses a serious health risk to the large number of children and senior citizens who live on Columbia Street, pointing to evidence that soot particles contribute to high levels of asthma in neighborhoods used by heavy vehicles.

The HCDC views the high number of heavy trucks on Columbia and State Streets as an egregious example of environmental injustice. For the last seven or eight years the low-income residents of the Second Ward have suffered from the injustice of these trucks using their neighborhood as a thoroughfare, and they have finally found their voice. Hudson needs to address this injustice.

Hudson should also address another form of injustice mentioned in the petition: the high cost of damage to city streets by Class 8 trucks. The harmful impact goes beyond potholes and ruts, and extends to the high taxes paid by city residents, who must pay for the constant maintenance and repair to streets not built for such heavy axles. We understand—and an engineer could no doubt attest—that a Class 8 truck does hundreds, if not thousands, of times the damage to the roadbed as does a passenger car. As we read the City budget, CHIPS money to compensate for this expense is budgeted for, but has not actually been received, for the past three years.

The solution is to refuse to spread the harmful impact of these heavy trucks to city streets west of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. None of the streets west of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, including as well as Warren, Union, and Allen Streets, are on the City's Truck Route. The City Code is clear that trucks belong on the defined truck route and must not use roads off the truck route except for local delivery. In 1969, the Council put in place a provision that makes clear that trucks over 5,000 pounds must use the truck route exclusively. Section 305-1 of The Code / Part II, General Legislation / Vehicles and Traffic, gives the Police the authority to:

“Establish a system of truck routes upon which all trucks, tractors and tractor-trailer combinations having a total gross weight in excess of 5,000 pounds are permitted to

travel and operate, and exclude such vehicles and combinations from all highways except those which constitute such truck route system. Such exclusion shall not be construed to prevent the delivery or pickup of merchandise or other property along the highways from which such vehicles and combinations are otherwise excluded.”

The heavy trucks spewing soot along Columbia Street were never entitled to use that road and could have been ticketed for straying off the truck route, which goes no further west than 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. They are not making local deliveries in the Second Ward. Instead, they are delivering to a dock in the 1<sup>st</sup> ward via a private road, and choosing to go through the 2<sup>nd</sup> ward for their return trip, instead of via the private road. We understand that there is ample space for the space for the trucks to turn around for the return trip, which was contemplated by the zoning restriction in place when Colarusso acquired the property.

We urge to City to address an injustice too long oppressing Hudson residents who live west of the Truck Route. We are pleased that the Council has formed an Ad Hoc Committee to consider the problem of heavy trucks on our streets and will be following its work with great interest. We offer any help we can provide in achieving that result.

Respectfully,

/s/

Dorothy Heyl, Acting Secretary and Treasurer, Third Ward

Verity Smith, Vice Chair, Fifth Ward

Kate Treacy, Chair, Fourth Ward

Randall Martin, Second Vice Chair, Fifth Ward

Revonda Smith, First Ward

Nick Zachos, First Ward

Abdus Miah, Second Ward

Dewan Sarowar, Second Ward

Shershah Mizan, Third Ward

Bill Hughes, Fourth Ward