

Thomas W. Stephens Collection

Papers, 1978-2003

**12 linear feet
12 storage boxes**

Accession #1747

The papers of Thomas W. Stephens were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in June of 2000 and November of 2003 by Mr. Stephens and opened for research in December of 2006.

The environmental justice movement, forged in the wake of the Love Canal incident, brought a social justice orientation to environmental protection issues. With roots in the civil rights, labor and peace movements, it has enlisted thousands of grassroots groups to fight pollution at its source in low-income, often minority, communities and to advocate for sustainable development.

Tom Stephens began his involvement with environmental justice in 1986 when he became a founding member of the Evergreen Alliance, a group of community activists that coordinated resistance to the construction of the world's largest trash incinerator in Detroit. Unsuccessful in that struggle, in 1991 Stephens, an attorney with the Detroit law firm of Goodman, Lister, Seikaly & Peters, brought suit under the Michigan Environmental Protection Act against the owners and operators of the trash incinerator, seeking a permanent shutdown of the facility.

Stephens convinced the National Lawyers Guild's Maurice and Jane Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice (GLC), headquartered in Detroit, to adopt environmental justice as part of its litigation program and in 1997 served as cooperating counsel in the GLC's Title VI litigation (NAACP-Flint Chapter v. Engler) to stop construction of a wood waste incinerator in a community with a large African-American, working-class population north of Flint, the first civil lawsuit of its kind in the country. Stephens was also a founder of the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition and chaired the National Lawyers Guild's Toxics Committee.

The Thomas W. Stephens Collection consists of correspondence, reports, meeting minutes, legal documents, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, flyers, newsletters and other material related primarily to his environmental justice concerns, but also to other issues, including globalization and trade policy and the potential conflict between environmental justice and economic growth.

Important subjects in the collection:

Brown et al. v. Combustion Engineering et al.
Citizens' Resistance at Fermi 2 (CRAFT)
Detroit trash incinerator
Ecology Center of Ann Arbor
Environmental justice/environmental racism
Environmental justice -- legal aspects
Environmental protection -- Great Lakes
Evergreen Alliance
Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Station
Ford Rouge plant -- Environmental aspects
Green movement -- Citizen participation -- Michigan, Southeastern
Guild Law Center
Hamtramck medical waste incinerator
Incinerators -- Environmental aspects -- Michigan, Southeastern
Jury selection -- Michigan -- Wayne County
Landfills -- Environmental aspects -- Michigan, Southeastern
Michigan Air Pollution Control Commission
Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition
NAACP-Flint Chapter et al. v. Engler et al.
NAFTA
Nuclear power plants -- environmental aspects -- Michigan, Southeastern
Recycling (Waste, etc.) -- Michigan, Southeastern

Important correspondents in the collection:

Neal Bush
Jessie Deerinwater
Lynn Fiedler
Sara Gleicher
Russell Harding
Bella Marshall
Robert P. Miller
Kary Moss
Fr. Philip Schmitter
Harold Stokes

Box 1

- 1-2. AIDS Legal Referral Service of Michigan, 1988-93
3. Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) environmental program, 1995-2003
- 4-5. Brownfield redevelopment, 1990's
6. Cass Corridor, 1988-96
7. Central Wayne County incinerator expansion; community opposition, 1997
8. Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste (CCHW); conventions, 1989-97
- 9-14. CCHW; newsletter, 1987-2000
15. CCHW; publications, 1987-95
16. Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical Contamination (CACC), 1987-2003
17. CACC; Backyard Eco Conference, 1989-2000

Box 2

- 1-14. Citizens' Resistance at Fermi 2 (CRAFT), 1994-98
15. Detroit Area Greens, 1989-91

Box 3

1. Detroit casinos and land redevelopment, 1998-2002
2. Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Project; community opposition, 2001-03
3. Detroit trash incinerator; Canadian lawsuit, 1987-91
- 4-7. Detroit trash incinerator; chronology
8. Detroit trash incinerator; "Clear the Air"—Detroit Incinerator Struggle II, 2001-03
- 9-10. Detroit trash incinerator; community opposition, 1986-92
- 11-13. Detroit trash incinerator; emissions, 1989-95
14. Detroit trash incinerator; environmental impact statement and Combustion Engineering, Inc. air permit application, 1983-84
15. Detroit trash incinerator; EPA hearings on proposed emissions guidelines for municipal waste incinerators, 1990
16. Detroit trash incinerator; hazardous waste collection, 1989
17. Detroit trash incinerator; incinerator ash legislation (Michigan), 1989

Box 4

1. Detroit trash incinerator; lawsuit—affidavits, 1991-92
2. Detroit trash incinerator; lawsuit—affidavits/Richard Cook, 1992
- 3-4. Detroit trash incinerator; lawsuit—pleadings, motions, orders, 1991-92
- 5-6. Detroit trash incinerator; lawsuit—pleadings, motions, orders/summary disposition motions, 1991
7. Detroit trash incinerator; lawsuit—press coverage, 1991
8. Detroit trash incinerator; licensing, 1996
9. Detroit trash incinerator; Michigan Air Pollution Control Commission (MAPPC) meeting, 20 Feb 1990
10. Detroit trash incinerator; MAPPC meeting, 16-17 Apr 1990
11. Detroit trash incinerator; MAPPC meeting, 2 May 1990
- 12-13. Detroit trash incinerator; MAPPC meeting, 19 Mar 1991
14. Detroit trash incinerator; MAPPC meeting 16 Apr 1991
- 15-16. Detroit trash incinerator; press coverage, 1987-93
- 17-18. Detroit trash incinerator; sale/lease, 1990-91

Box 5

1. Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice, 1991-2003
2. Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice; Canflow, 2000-02
3. Dow Chemical Co. incinerator; community opposition, 1988-93
4. Earth Day (Detroit), 1990
5. Earth Day Everyday Network (Detroit), 1990-98
6. Earth Network (Detroit), 1990-91
- 7-9. Ecology Center of Ann Arbor, 1988-2003
10. Economy, Environment and Democracy in the Great Lakes Region meeting (Detroit), Mar 1994
11. Environmental justice; American Bar Assn. directory, 1995
12. Environmental justice; American Bar Assn. resolution, 1993
13. Environmental justice; Clinton administration, 1994
14. Environmental justice; conferences, 1990's
- 15-16. Environmental justice; EPA concerns, 1993-2001
- 17-18. Environmental justice; publications, 1990's
- 19-20. Environmental justice; publications—Challenging Race Discrimination in Environmental Law and Policy Making course materials (Tulane), 1992

Box 6

1. Environmental justice; publications—Essays in Environmental Justice (West Virginia Law Review), Summer 1994
- 2-3. Fast Track and FTAA, 2001-03
4. Florida Alliance for a Clean Environment, 1989
- 5-6. Ford Rouge plant paint shop expansion; community opposition, 1996-98
7. G-8 Summit (Detroit), 2002
8. Great Lakes Health Banner Project, 1993
9. Great Lakes Zero Discharge campaign, 1988-92
- 10-11. Great Lakes Zero Discharge campaign; chlorine, 1992-95
12. Hamtramck medical waste incinerator; community opposition, 1998-2000
13. I-94 expansion; community opposition, 2001
- 14-15. International Joint Commission (IJC); Biennial Meeting on Great Lakes Water Quality, 1993
- 16-18. IJC; newsletter, 1988-98
19. IJC; publications, 1990's

Box 7

1. IJC; publications, 1990's
2. Iraq War; Detroit/Michigan opposition, 2002-03
3. Jobs and the environment; articles, 1978-2001
4. Jobs and the labor movement in Detroit, 1991-2003
5. Jobs and the labor movement in Detroit; newspaper strike, 1995-98
6. Landfills in southeastern Michigan; community opposition, 1987-92
7. Mastio, Dave (Detroit News environmental reporter), 1996-2000
8. Melvindale Environmental Concerns Association, 1990-92
- 9-10. Metro Detroit Alliance for Democracy, 1997-2000
11. Michigan Citizens Against Toxic Substances, 1992-97
12. Michigan Council in Environmental Quality, 1989-90
13. Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality's "dereliction of duty," 2000-02
14. Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources (MDNR); Act 307, 1989
15. MDNR; Air Quality Division, 1989-98
16. MDNR; Air Quality Division—newsletter, 1993-2000
17. MDNR; reorganization, 1991-92
18. MDNR; Southeast Michigan Initiative, 1994-98
19. MDNR; Waste Management Division, 1981-89
20. Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition, 1996-Jun 1998

Box 8

- 1-3. Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition, Jul 1998-2003
4. Michigan Hazardous Waste Management Plan, 1991
5. Michigan Land Use Institute, 1996-2000
6. Michigan Toxic Dumpsites Conference, 1989-92
7. Mumia Abu-Jamal case, 1995-2001
- 8-13. NAACP-Flint Chapter et al. v. Engler et al.; corres. and reports, 1993-98
- 14-17. NAACP-Flint Chapter et al. v. Engler et al.; pleadings, motions, orders, Jul-Sep 1995

Box 9

- 1-16. NAACP-Flint Chapter et al. v. Engler et al.; pleadings, motions, orders, Sep 1995-Jan 1998

Box 10

- 1-2. NAACP-Flint Chapter et al. v. Engler et al.; pleadings, motions, orders, Feb 1998-Jan 1999
3. NAACP-Flint Chapter et al. v. Engler et al.; press coverage, 1994-98
- 4-13. NAACP-Flint Chapter et al. v. Engler et al.; transcripts, Feb-Jun 1997
14. National Conference of Black Lawyers environmental justice and reparations workshop, 1993
15. National Lawyers Guild; Labor and Employment Committee, 1999-2003
16. National Lawyers Guild; Sugar Law Center Environmental Justice Project, 1994-2003
17. National Lawyers Guild; Toxics Committee, 1988-96
18. National Town Meeting Detroit for a Sustainable America (Detroit), 1990
- 19-20. North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), 1991-97
21. Oakland County incinerator; community opposition, 1990-Jan 1992

Box 11

1. Oakland County incinerator; community opposition, Feb-Sep 1992
2. PEOPLE (for Detroit) Convention/Angela Brown for City Council campaign, 1989-93
3. Post-9/11 civil liberties, 2002
4. Post-9/11 civil liberties; Anti-Repression Summit, 2002
5. Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy, 1996-99
- 6-7. Race, Poverty and the Environment newsletter, 1991-2001
- 8-9. Rachel's Environment & Health Weekly, 1994-98
10. Recycling; Detroit Recycling Task Force, 1990-91
11. Recycling; Downriver Recycling Center, 1988-93
12. Recycling; Livonia Citizens for Recycling, 1989-90
13. Recycling; press coverage, 1985-96
- 14-15. Select Steel Mill (Flint) civil rights complaint, 1998-99
16. SLAPP suit legislation, 1996-97
17. Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision, 1998-2000
18. Stephens, Tom; conference presentations, testimony, 1988-2003
[See also: CACC; Backyard Eco Conference]
19. Stephens, Tom; conference presentations, testimony—Cooley Law Review Environmental Injustice Symposium, 2002
20. Stephens, Tom; conference presentations, testimony—Detroit's First Environmental Justice Gathering, 1994
21. Stephens, Tom; conference presentations, testimony—Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, 1996

Box 12

1. Stephens, Tom; educational courses taught, n.d., 1998
2. Stephens, Tom; writings—The Case of Detroit, and the Need for a New Kind of Environmentalism in the 1990s, n.d.
3. Stephens, Tom; writings—Environmental Justice (Michigan Bar Journal), Dec 2001
4. Stephens, Tom; writings—open letters, 1990's
5. Tiger Stadium, campaign to save, 1989-99
- 6-7. Waste Not newsletter, 1991-97
- 8-12. Wayne County Circuit Court jury selection procedures, 1994
- 13-19. Wayne County solid waste management plan; community opposition, 1988-92
20. World Jobs Summit (Detroit), 1994