Dear Senator or Representative……….

I will try to be as brief and as concise as possible and am available to answer whatever questions you may have.  There is much more detailed information on our website, SaveTwinKnolls.com.

The Twin Knolls neighborhood is currently destined to suffer the consequences of 8-12 years of aggregate mining.  The Twin Knolls is a beautiful 130-foot mountainous landmark, home to native flora and fauna and is surrounded by a long established neighborhood. The plan is to destroy the knolls for the benefit of the property owner, John Oertle, dba Twin Knolls Land Two LLC/Etal and Custom Landscape Materials, LLC, a company located in Buckeye AZ who has leased the land to destroy it for the purpose of aggregate mining under Land Use Permit LU20190040.    The property in question is located at 8436 East Apache Trail, Mesa, Maricopa County, Parcel #218-39-005 and 218-26-013.  The owner has refused requests for discussion. Custom Landscape has also refused communication although he was present at a Public Meeting where he made false and misleading statements.

As your constituent, I am seriously concerned for me and the thousands who will be affected by noise, pollution, decrease in home values for years to come I am writing in hopes we stop this ridiculous plan. There are multiple studies done that reflect potential damages to those in the surrounding areas to aggregate mining sites.   We are especially concerned because this will be an above ground mine, and there is NO WAY to contain dust and PM2.5 and PM10 particulates.  No mining has ever taken place in the middle of an established neighborhood before and should this move forward, it will be precedent setting.

Arizona Revised Code 11-812 states that any mining, … cannot in any way be restricted if on county land.   That is the nightmare.   Our little slices of heaven that we call home happen to sit in the middle of the city of Mesa but our community is considered a county island and thus is county property ruled by ARS 11-812.   Mind you, there are numerous houses very close to the base of the knolls, some as close as 80 feet.   If indeed we were in the City of Mesa, this would not be happening.  We also believe if we were in a more affluent neighborhood, this would not be happening.   And I ask how can a law prohibit the public from protecting their land, home and well-being?

Having contacted multiple state government agencies and legislators, none believe the law was intended to have this result.  It appears the mining industry was successful in bringing this law about without thought to our community. We also find a conflict of interest between the Mine Inspector’s Office and the Attorney General’s Office (AG) with the AG having ruled that the Mine Inspector’s Office did not fail in the required notification process under ARS 27-1229 when they very clearly failed.

We also argue the legal aspect of County Ordinance P-23 which is the Noise Ordinance.   We believe that this planned activity does not fall into any exemption and Custom Landscape must comply with the ordinance, which in turn would basically not allow for the plan to move forward.

There are thousands who live in this well established neighborhood, your constituents. We are a mixture of mobile homes and single family homes. There are many Latinos who speak no English and thus still have no idea what is being planned.   There is a mixture of employed and unemployed, many are retired. Many have young children.   We have a mixture of young and old, some with serious medical issues.  Many are veterans who may be suffering health issues to include PTSD. There is intended use of explosives in the project.  We have mobile home parks with a view of the beautiful Knolls that draws winter visitors. They will likely never return if this moves forward. Home values are expected to plummet 10% – 40% based on research.

There is no lack of aggregate in Arizona so why must thousands suffer devastation of their home life and potentially their health to help make a few who are already well off, even more so.

Our focus now is the air quality as the landscape company has recently submitted for the air quality permit to the Maricopa County Air Quality Department.  The permit itself seems generalized and does not take into consideration the closeness of the homes and the occupants of same.   There will be increased emissions and pollution that will affect everyone within a 2-mile radius if not farther.  We do not even want to get to that point where we have to be more concerned about our non-attainment status of air quality that Maricopa County already have!

[Coronavirus on Dust Particles | Midwest Industrial Supply](https://blog.midwestind.com/coronavirus-on-dust-particles-dust-suppression/)

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And I recently was sent the above article so not only do we have to be concerned about heart and lung issues, Valley Fever, now Covid-19 is now a HUGE concern.  Also, MSHA has no rules on staying safe from silica which can be deadly. How can we the general public remain safe when this organization does not even have rules for safety for their employees?  The EPA needs to step in and evaluate the situation in hopes of stopping the issuance of the permit to Custom Landscape so the mining will not even begin.

Since the air quality permit is the last permit before mining can begin, as a United States citizen, voter and constituent, I respectfully plead for you to engage the EPA to look into this situation.

Sincerely,