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PRESS RELEASE

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DOCTORS TO ASK CLLRS TO REVIEW INCINERATOR PLANS TO REDUCE DEATH, DISEASE 'YOU WILL SAVE MORE LIVES THAN WE WILL IN OUR ENTIRE CAREERS'—GP

LONDON, 25 JUNE 2020—Today doctors, MPs, councillors, and campaigners will be asking the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) to reconsider plans to build a large incinerator in Edmonton, statements released in advance of an NLWA board meeting show. MPs Kate Osamor and Iain Duncan Smith are among today's speakers, who are expected to highlight various issues of concern, such as the risks a new incinerator would pose to people's health, social justice, the environment, and financial stability—amid fears of a deep post-Covid recession.

'We are asking the North London Waste Authority to pause and review their plans to build a new incinerator in Edmonton as air pollution and the climate emergency are preventable causes of disease and death,' Dr Rebecca Redwood, a GP in Waltham Forest, is to tell the 14 board members of the waste authority, who have the power to draw up plans that are more in line with climate emergency declarations, commitments to 'build back better' following the pandemic, and North London's actual waste management needs.

Dr Redwood will be speaking on behalf of a group of doctors who, in a signed statement to the NLWA, underscore that 'air pollution causes around 40,000 deaths per year in the UK' and costs taxpayers 'more than £20 billion every year'. They also refer to 'evidence that increased air pollution allows pathogens such as coronavirus to spread further' and that the incinerator 'will release ultra-fine particulate matter (PM1 and PM0.1) that cannot be filtered' and for which there is 'no safe threshold below which no damage to health is observed'.

In recognition of the NLWA's plans to ship waste into North London to ensure the 700,000-tonne incinerator works at capacity, Dr Redwood is expected to warn the board members that 'moving the waste into North London will produce additional carbon emissions and road congestion with its own negative effects on health'. She is to note that 'over the next 50 years, the proposed facility would produce as much CO₂ as all of London does in two full years'.

The GP's closing remarks: 'As doctors we work daily to save lives. By making a decision to pause and review this incinerator you will save more lives than we will in our entire careers. It's easy to clap for the NHS. We are asking you to actually support the NHS by pausing the incinerator and so reducing rates of preventable death and disease.'

Osamor, the MP for Edmonton, is expected to focus on health and social justice concerns among her constituents, who live in wards that are among the most deprived in the country and suffer from Covid death rates that are nearly twice as high as the average for England and Wales. She is to speak about the dangerously high levels of air pollution in Enfield, recent calls on the government to review its air quality strategy, the correlation between poor air quality, social and economic deprivation, and racial inequality, and the need for clarity regarding emissions.

In addition to speaking about the NLWA's failure to meet recycling targets, Duncan Smith is expected to argue that the incinerator would produce energy inefficiently and that the NLWA conducted inadequate public consultations, during which it failed to inform residents that waste would be imported from outside North London.

Other presentations to the board will be made by London Assembly member Caroline Russell, councillors from Camden, Enfield, and Haringey, the Pinkham Way Alliance, and a North London resident. The meeting will begin at 2:30 pm today and will be streamed live on YouTube at councilmeetings.camden.gov.uk. Statements submitted in advance of the meeting are available at <https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/Supplementary%20Agenda%2025.06.2020.pdf>.