

## Religious leaders join opposition against proposed concrete plant by LBJ Hospital

By [Claire Hao](#), Staff writer. Feb 25, 2024

Religious leaders have joined other local leaders in organizing against a planned concrete crushing plant next to Houston's Lyndon B. Johnson Hospital in Kashmere Gardens.

Texas Coastal Materials applied for an air quality standard permit from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to construct the plant at 5875 Kelley Street in July. Despite [vocal pushback against the planned construction](#), which community members fear could exacerbate noise and pollution in predominantly Black neighborhoods near the site, the TCEQ [approved the permit in January](#). Texas Coastal Materials couldn't be immediately reached for comment.

Residents and public health officials are also concerned that the plant, which would break down slabs of concrete, could endanger the health of staff and patients at LBJ Hospital, which serves many low-income and insured residents. In November, voters [overwhelmingly approved a \\$2.5 billion bond proposal](#) in part to upgrade LBJ Hospital to make it the third Level 1 trauma center in Houston and the first outside the Texas Medical Center.

Now, community organizers are asking Gov. Greg Abbott and other state politicians to overturn the TCEQ permit. The Metropolitan Organization of Houston, an association of local churches, has encouraged people to ask fellow churchgoers, family and friends to send letters voicing their opposition. TMO, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and the Harris Health System, which owns and operates LBJ Hospital, have organized the sending of 1,600 letters of opposition to Abbott, [as reported by Chron](#). (Chron and the Houston Chronicle are both owned by Hearst Newspapers but run as two separate newsrooms.)

"This just doesn't make sense," Sister Maureen O'Connell of the archdiocese told Chron. "Why are we going to do this to people who are already at risk?"

Earlier this month, TMO clergy and leaders [held a press conference](#) reiterating their concerns. Pastor Charles Turner of New Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church said the planned concrete plant contradicts the will of the voters to invest in the work of LBJ Hospital.

"This is a bad idea. This is a bad investment. We want to preserve life in our community," Turner said.

Reverend Father Martin Eke of St. Francis Church, located near LBJ Hospital, also spoke against the planned concrete plant, [according to Houston Public Media](#).