

Esteban De La Rosa

Hello, my name is Esteban and I'm 13 years old. Recently, I was diagnosed with juvenile arthritis. It's something I'm still learning to live with, and some days are harder than others.

My sister also has health issues. She's had problems with her heart since she was born. That means our family has always had to pay extra attention to her health, her breathing, and the environment around her.

We don't know exactly what caused my condition or my sister's. I'm not here to say that air quality is the only reason. But I am here to say that the air we breathe matters, especially for kids who already have health challenges. Clean air can make a difference. Dirty air can make things harder.

When we talk about concrete batch plants and all the pollution they omit, we're not just talking about businesses.

We're talking about children's bodies.

We're talking about our lungs, our hearts, and our ability to grow up healthy.

And that's why I'm confused and honestly disappointed — that TCEQ isn't doing more to protect kids like me and my sister.

Texas should be a place where children's health comes first.

Where clean air isn't something you have to fight for.

Where state agencies don't wait until communities are suffering before they act.

Even as a 13-year-old, I understand something simple:

If we know that certain industries can make air quality worse, then the rules should protect us more, not less.

Better regulations aren't about stopping business.

They're about making sure kids with asthma, kids with arthritis, kids with heart conditions, and all kids in Texas have a fair chance at a healthy life.

So I'm asking TCEQ and our state leaders to listen:

Listen to families.

Listen to doctors.

Listen to the kids who are living with health challenges every day.

We need protections that put children first.

We need air monitoring, permits, and regulations that actually keep us safe.

We need decision-makers who understand that children's health is not optional — it's essential.

I may be young, but I deserve clean air. My sister deserves clean air. And every child in Texas deserves it too.

Thank you .