

*Despite Circumstances, we hope we
remain gracious hosts*

This is a letter that I wrote to Governor Raimondo (on April 14th with still no response) and although it may appear off topic at first, I appreciate your patience as I assure you that it is exactly on topic.

Governor Gina Raimondo

14 April 2016

Good day! I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing on behalf of my adored community, Burrillville, RI. Just as I am wishing you well, please know that while I write this, I am not well. My spirit is terribly frightened for my community's holistic wellbeing. Although currently, I am physically well, this has not always been the case for me. I am just 46 and have already survived ovarian cancer. I am unsure, of course, about your knowledge regarding this horrible disease but to say "I survived" when referring to it, is unfortunately, too rare. But I reach out to you now to say that I am not, nor are my fellow townies, holistically well. Broken spirits will destroy a town and it is for this reason that I write to you today. If you will allow me just a few moments of your limited time, I would relish the opportunity to share with you why I am pleading for you to reconsider a second Power Plant in beautiful Burrillville. As a whole, we all vehemently oppose this for our community but I will speak to you from my heart and on my behalf. I ask that you honor this vulnerability with an open mind.

I never knew why I survived this terrible cancer while every woman I was fighting it with, did not. I was barely 32 but I was unmarried, without children and really was not feeling as if I was making any sort of lasting impression on my world, my country or my community. The women around me (5 of them) were from all walks. They were young, they were older... they were moms and they were dying. You may have heard people say they are given an instant change of perspective when faced with a fatal disease, and for many it may be true, but for me, perspective only grows with time. It came from these beautiful fighters and it came from the love of my family. I knew that my illness was caught early and that all I had to do to survive is go through this treatment for 9 months. I felt like I won the lottery because my cancer was found quite accidently and as I mentioned, quite early. My odds were outstanding. I felt exuberant, an overwhelming sense of joy that over time... turned into a pit of guilt.

There was this young woman in treatment with me that was the same age as me. She was so beautiful. She had three young boys under the age of 10 and she was passing away. Her parents were there for every treatment and they would talk with my mother. I recall, they were genuinely grateful that I would survive, just as they knew their little girl would not. This show of

kindness and love was my first step toward that perspective I'm speaking of. There were a million more of those moments to follow and I imagine I will take these steps throughout the rest of my life. Here is why I tell you this, since this time, every day, without fail, I wonder what my purpose is. Why am I here? Why aren't they? This quest has been torturous in the past. But recently, perhaps with age, I have gained even more perspective and I approach this with now with hope and anticipation. I no longer feel like I have to change the world to deserve this second chance, I only feel I have to be better. I have to be kinder. I have to participate in life and not let anxiety drive my choices. I have to fight for my town and for my friends and for my home. I have to be better. I will settle for no less. I will expect nothing less of myself. I am grateful, eternally grateful for this precious second chance. My family is grateful and they believe I already deserve it. I will be better for them all, for the young woman that lost all of her chances at age 32 and for the boys she left to mourn without their mom.

This is a touch of my story. Just a small touch. This is my second chance that Invenergy is toying with. My odds are already lower and my chances are already fewer. We have literally been poisoned before in my village and we already have an existing power plant. Today, I write to beg you to let me wake up in my own hometown with only anticipation and expectations of doing better. Allow me the ability to pay it forward without the fear of losing everything. My family believes I deserve this and I want to try every day to earn it and to perhaps one day believe it myself. Invenergy should not be able to inject themselves into my story. Invenergy should not be able to sway this board with their smoke, mirrors and empty promises. I should be able to sway you with these genuine please for my small town. Please don't risk my second chance. I implore you. This is our health, our happiness...our holistic wellbeing and right now, we are ill with fear. Because once this is taken from us, it will be gone forever.

Respectfully and with Kindness,

Donna L. Woods
Proud Citizen of Burrillville