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Public Safety Concerns

Placing a lithium-ion battery production facility near homes, schools—especially agricultural institutions—and farmland poses serious and unacceptable health and environmental risks.

The manufacturing and disposal processes of lithium-ion batteries involve hazardous substances such as cobalt, nickel, and lithium, which are known to be toxic. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, these batteries can be classified as hazardous waste, with the potential to leach heavy metals into the soil and groundwater. When such contamination occurs near agricultural schools or farmland, it threatens food safety, crop viability, and the health of students and farmworkers. Children, who are especially vulnerable to toxic exposure, face long-term developmental risks if exposed through air, dust, or water.

In addition to chronic contamination, battery facilities carry a high risk of acute chemical fires and explosions. Thermal runaway events can release toxic gases such as hydrogen fluoride, which can cause severe respiratory damage or death. If such an event occurred near a school or residential area, evacuation would be difficult, and emergency response efforts could be overwhelmed.

The proximity of such a facility to populated and agricultural areas eliminates the protective buffer zones typically required to manage industrial risks. It places vulnerable groups—children, families, and food producers—at unnecessary and potentially irreversible risk.

While clean energy production is critical, it must not come at the expense of public health. Lithium-ion battery facilities must be located well away from schools, homes, and farmland to protect community well-being, environmental integrity, and food safety.