Good Evening, my name is Summer Sandoval, and I am the Energy Democracy Coordinator at UPROSE. Founded in 1966, UPROSE is Brooklyn’s oldest Latino community-based organization. UPROSE is an intergenerational, multiracial, and women of color-led organization working at the intersection of racial justice and climate change through advocacy, community engagement, youth leadership, and cultural artistic expression. UPROSE is located in Sunset Park, Brooklyn- a frontline environmental justice community of over 130,000.

The rapid and uncontrolled expansion and development of e-commerce facilities in our community is an environmental justice issue. The size, density, and cumulative impacts of these giant facilities threaten to negatively impact the environment, health, local economy, safety, and transportation/traffic of the surrounding communities. Last mile e-commerce distribution centers threaten small businesses and industrial retention. If left unregulated, these facilities may perpetuate and exacerbate existing exposure to pollution.

E-commerce facilities are being proposed and developed in environmental justice communities and industrial areas across New York City because the Department of City Planning regards these facilities as “As-of-right” development in industrially zoned areas as they are regarded as “warehouses”. The root of the issue is that “e-commerce” is an undefined industry in land use/zoning so it’s NOT regulated or restricted in size and does not require a special permit.

We’re in a reactive situation. We need to focus on two sets of strategies to approach this issue: short-term mitigation & long-term regulation/enforcement:

- The comprehensive community-developed Green Resilient Industrial District (GRID) Plan requires companies to use electric vehicles (EVs)/charging stations
  - The GRID outlines how to operationalize the “green re-industrialization” of the industrial waterfront to create thousands of well-paid green jobs, workforce development, and supply chain opportunities for local manufacturers
  - It is vital to utilize the industrial sector to build climate adaptation and mitigation, and address the threats and impacts of the climate crisis

- The NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan addresses e-commerce:
  - Prioritize movement of goods via rail and barge with investments in new infrastructure
- Avoid and reduce the use of trucks to decrease air pollution and congestions on roadways
- Explicitly says to move e-commerce freight by water and barge
- Support zero emission port operations & vehicles for last-mile deliveries

- New York State’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)—the most progressive climate legislation in the nation mandates “economy-wide” emission reductions including transportation
- Need to understand the full scope and impacts of e-commerce facilities and operations
- Define the “last-mile”:
  - Vehicle miles traveled
  - Transparency on proposed truck routes & incorporate community demands
  - Enforcement for truck and van routes

There are multiple large e-commerce facilities being proposed and developed in South Brooklyn- NYC’s largest Significant Maritime Industrial Area (SMIA). Reluctant host communities need more than a seat at the table, but a real say in decision-making on facilities that’ll have significant impacts on environmental justice communities across NYC.