

If I had to guess, I would say that reporter Mark Schleifstein is not a fan of manufacturing in Louisiana based on his two recent articles, **Louisiana babies more likely to face serious health risks in polluted, low-income areas: study**, and **Group: Plants get breaks despite pollution**.

Rest assured that babies in Louisiana face more serious health risks due to lack of pre-natal medical care and the mother's lifestyle- not because of the "area" where the child is born. These accusations are retreads from the early 1990s. These accusations are no more accurate now than they were in the 1990s-

It is interesting in the third paragraph of the **babies'** piece, that it reads: "***The study also found elevated rates of low birth weights and pre-term births in neighborhoods with high proportions of very low-income Black residents, even without higher air pollution exposures***".

Additionally, the article read "***Poor birth outcomes also were frequently found in lower-income areas without measured respiratory risk in parishes across northern and central Louisiana.***"

In Mr. Schleifstein's second, most recent article, he retreads a hit piece published by the American Press on the ITEP program offered by Louisiana to manufacturers. This incentive program is often impugned by activists who attempt to correlate tax abatements and disease. What activists fail to share is that Ascension Parish, the parish with a majority of ITEP manufacturers, is the healthiest in Louisiana. Why is this? High-paying jobs, access to healthcare and health insurance associated with these jobs all play an important role.

Next time Mr. Schleifstein publishes an article with an Armageddon headline, read it twice and call your local government representative or your friend that works in manufacturing and ask them how the plants are hurting them and their quality of life.

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