

# THE DAILY TEXAN

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## Sematech accused of dodging toxin issue

**Francine Bosco**  
Daily Texan Staff

A Saturday meeting between Sematech officials and East Austin community leaders was either a success in relations between the corporation and the surrounding neighborhood, or a slap in the face to concerned residents — depending on who you ask.

Members of Campaign for Responsible Technology, an umbrella organization for

local environmental, neighborhood and labor groups, met with Sematech representatives to discuss a list of recommendations concerning environmental safety that the group presented to the company last month.

Sematech, a research consortium for semiconductor technology, receives funding from the UT System and the federal government.

Susana Almanza, a member of Campaign for Responsible Technology, said the point of the meeting was to discuss handling and

disposal of toxic chemicals as well as to devise a neighborhood emergency evacuation plan. But Sematech shifted the meeting away from environmental issues to focus on sponsoring community activities, she said.

"They made money the issue when toxics in the environment and the workplace is our point," she said. "It was a tactic to divide the community."

Almanza said the greater part of the meeting focused on Sematech's contributions to Adopt-a-School, sponsorship of

Little Leagues and its career awareness programs.

She said Sematech also diverted the focus of the meeting by inviting members of the Montopolis community who were not previously involved with the issue.

"I was intended as the community spokesperson for the meeting, but Sematech invited new people to the meeting who knew nothing about the agenda," she said. "They were throwing a monkey wrench in by inviting people who didn't know what was going on."

And while the others were invited so as not to "step on any toes," Almanza said officials from Sematech "treated them like illiterate children."

"They said the same chemicals they use were the same we use at home. A lot of those people don't know about chemicals," she said.

But Scott Stevens, communications manager for Sematech, said the intended agenda was properly discussed and that the

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# Historic Teamsters meeting stirs catcalls, controversy

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — A Teamsters convention got off to a raucous start Monday, with the boos of delegates drowning out a video talk by President Bush and remarks by outgoing union president William McCarthy.

Also Monday, the son of the late Teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa defused a potential conflict over the constitution of the nation's largest union by throwing his support to one of the top candidates for brotherhood president.

Attorney James P. Hoffa, 50, announced he was joining forces with R.V. Durham, a longtime union activist from North Carolina. Durham is considered the front-runner among those seeking nomination Thursday for a historic secret-ballot election for Teamsters president in December.

Federal officials told Hoffa earlier this year that he could not run be-

periving the convention of 2,000 delegates at the Walt Disney World's Dolphin Hotel to make sure the union lives up to its agreement to clean up its affairs and cut its ties with organized crime.

Delegates overwhelmingly passed a measure Monday expressing their displeasure with the agreement. The vote has no legal significance.

"It doesn't stand for democracy, it stands for tyranny," said Chuck Mack, a union official from California. "This agreement has allowed the government to occupy our international union and many locals and joint councils like a conquering army for the last two years."

Bush, who received the Teamsters' support in 1988 while the rest of the trade union movement backed Democrat Michael Dukakis, declined an invitation to attend the gathering. His short videotaped message went practically unheard because of continuous booing and catcalls.

that could be heard.

McCarthy, suffering from the effects of a stroke, also was booed, particularly when he praised Bush.

"I don't know why the hell you all boo, I'm getting out anyway," McCarthy said in his rambling talk at the opening session.

The delegates applauded, however, when he declared that he told Bush and Congress members that "we're going to bury them" if they don't vote for a bill outlawing the practice of permanently hiring workers who cross picket lines to replace union strikers.

Rep. William Clay, D-Missouri, and Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, who were guest speakers, expressed strong support for the proposal.

Clay also struck an emotional chord when he told the convention delegates that they had a right to be angry about the consent agreement.

"The tyranny of government in placing your union in trusteeship

## Sematech

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other community members had asked to be included.

"The agenda was based on things [Almanza] asked, so we felt like we were honoring her request," he said. "Meanwhile other groups in East Austin had called and asked why they weren't invited."

The issues on the agenda included implementation of a "Good Neighbor Policy" to provide emergency evacuation plans, a program to increase the number of minority

employees at Sematech and adoption of a "Bill of Rights" to ensure community involvement in implementing these programs.

Stevens said minorities make up 20 percent of the Sematech work force and account for \$4.8 million pouring into the East Austin community. But Almanza said she found that number hard to believe.

"If they're pumping in \$4.8 million, why does East Austin look like this?" she said.

As for an emergency evacuation, Sematech has filed plans with "the proper governmental agencies," according to a letter to Almanza from

Frank Squires, chief administrative officer of Sematech.

Stevens said the people who attended the meeting and toured the facility were impressed with the company's commitment to environmental safety. Sematech officials assured the residents that chemicals used in the company's research would not impact on the community.

"We're very into recycling. We recycle everything from paper to acids used in research," Stevens said. "They were surprised that we have a much cleaner operation than they thought we'd have."

## Mercado

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of the freeway," he said.

The League of United Latin American Citizens, South Austin Mexican-American Democrats and several citizens endorsed the arts market instead of the mercado.

Garza said Capitol Metro simply wants to create jobs in the area. "Our perspective is very clear. We support development of that land in a manner that creates jobs and protects the integrity of the community."

Garza said Capital Metro and the city would be partners in any development project for the area, but he added that Capital Metro is not obligated to build anything besides the depot.

"Until we get some better consensus from the community about what they support, we're on standby," he said. "So far all I hear is they don't want anything there."

But Gavino Fernandez, who coordinates El Concilio — a council composed of representatives from four East Austin neighborhood associations — said the community does not oppose the development ideas.

Currently preparing to lobby the City Council to scrap the mercado plan. "We want to start back at square one and come up with an economic development corporation concept."

The development corporation would include residents and business owners who could plan a project of their own for the area, Fernandez said.

Fernandez said that the community wants to consider other development options such as a shopping center or low-income housing.

But Garza said it would be illegal