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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION**Tate, Michele**

From: Karin Fullam [ksfullam@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, November 26, 2009 8:54 AM
To: EP, RegComments; Mike Fullam; Jkeaton@pahousegop.com
Subject: outdoor wood furnaces

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you because I do not know if I will be able to attend the hearing you are having on proposed regulations regarding outdoor wood furnaces, which you so conveniently scheduled during deer season in the middle of the afternoon.

We purchased an outdoor furnace a year ago October from a Mennonite gentleman who liked his so much he decided to see if he could supplement his income by selling them. It was NOT an insignificant purchase. At almost \$10,000 for purchase and installation, we thought long and hard about whether we could afford it in the present economic climate, in which my husband's business was hit very hard. With oil prices what they were, we decided it was a cost-effective way to heat our house, and would pay for itself in a couple of years.

We had supplemented our oil heat for years with an old small inefficient wood stove, and thought buying an efficiently burning outdoor furnace would fulfill several of our needs. Since we had always used wood anyway, the fact we had to put the effort into cutting and stacking and using firewood all winter was not that formidable a task. In addition, it would permit us to keep all the wood-boring insects present in firewood out of our house, and would eliminate the need to drag inside armloads of firewood every day. We could stack the wood where we used the wood. We also found that we didn't have to put the effort into splitting it into such small pieces, since the burner will take large chunks of wood. It can also burn multiple species, including softwoods, which cannot ever be burned in an inside wood stove, lest the creosote cause a chimney fire. As you should well know, house fires that start in the chimney cause many deaths every winter across the state. We never have to worry about a chimney fire with this furnace.

This wood burner heats evenly our entire house to a temperature we have not seen for many years due to the cost of fuel oil. My 76 year old mother came to live with us two years ago and last winter was the first during which she had actually been warm. She cannot tolerate anymore the sixty-two degrees to which we used to set our thermostat to conserve energy and save money when we used our oil burner.

You should be aware that wood is a comparatively inexpensive renewable resource readily available in our state. As graduates of the State University of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse, we, of course, are well aware of the myriad benefits of wood.

We are also aware that our state government cannot tax wood that we cut ourselves, transport, stack and use, and we speculate that you would rather have us use expensive fuel oil, propane or electric heat which is easily measured and taxed.

We have an enormous problem with the penchant for DEP to make regulations retroactive. We became well aware of that tendency when we heard we will be required to PAY A FEE to allow a bureaucrat to wander around our property to check our septic system. With that in mind, we do not trust DEP in the least to be logical, reasonable and fair to those Pennsylvanians who have, in good faith, already made

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the significant purchase of an outdoor wood furnace and had it installed according to industry recommendations.

Since we live in the boonies, the only people who smell wood smoke from our wood furnace is us, and since many people who live near us also heat with wood, it seems to me more than ludicrous to propose such ridiculously long distances from property lines and from buildings. We have also noticed, over the past year, that the smoke from our efficient wood furnace is less than the smoke from the indoor wood stoves and inserts in our area.

In addition, maybe you should consult an engineer regarding the height of chimneys on a furnace which had been designed to operate efficiently with a chimney a fraction of the height you propose. What we'll get is condensation in the chimney, and after that, the inevitable result of condensation, which is rust.

What you are actually doing is creating regulations so onerous as to effectively prevent homeowners and farmers for purchasing outdoor wood burners. It is my opinion you do not want to regulate them, you want to ban them, and this is the way you intend to accomplish it without actually legislating it.

The inevitable result of these regulations proposed by nameless, faceless, unaccountable bureaucrats in Harrisburg, is to destroy an entire industry in a state which, in this economy, can ill-afford losing ANY industry.

We moved here from New York State twenty-five years ago, where invasive government regulation is the norm. Moving to Pennsylvania was a breath of fresh air after the stench of intrusive government, until now.

I highly resent the ever-increasing intrusion in my life of government at all levels, and if it is your intent to follow the federal government in proposing regulation after regulation and expense after expense until the everyday citizen becomes completely overwhelmed and frustrated, you are on the right track.

What bureaucrats believe is good for suburban Harrisburg and Philadelphia is just plain stupid for the rural areas in the greater part of our state. Individual municipalities should be the ones to handle regulations on wood burning furnaces at the local level, since that strata of government seems to be way more practical and logical.

Sincerely,

Karin S. Fullam