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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

November 16, 2010

Mr. Silvan B. Lutkewitte, III
Chairman
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market Street
14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Re: Re: Chapter 78, Oil and Gas Wells
IRRC #2857. EQB 7-459

Dear Chairman Lutkewitte:

We write today to express our support for the Oil and Gas Wells final-form regulations that IRRC will consider at its November 18th meeting. This regulation would ensure that the extraction process from oil and gas wells is completed safely and according to current best industry practices.

As legislators, we recognize the importance that natural gas drilling has on the economic wellbeing of our state. However, it is imperative that we also ensure that our water supplies, as well as surrounding environment, are protected. As drilling for oil and gas is an intensely industrial activity, there exists the possibility that gas migration could affect our water supplies, in addition to public and private property. The well-construction standard proposed in this regulation would bring Pennsylvania in line with standards already in place in other states.

The public comment period for this regulation was closed on August 9th, 2010. During the public comment period, the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) received comments from nearly 2,000 commentators, a majority of them being supportive of the proposed regulations.

The final-form regulations outline improved construction standards for new wells as well as requiring quarterly inspections and annual reporting for operational wells. The final-form rulemaking also requires improved cement and casing standards that will prevent gas migration from the well to water supplies and other properties. Finally, additional wellhead pressure testing, blow out prevention options, and delineating the required response to emergency situations will ensure that drilling in Pennsylvania is performed

with the utmost regard for the safety of the drilling company's employees as well as the surrounding environment.

These regulations will significantly reduce the danger of gas migration. Many of the provisions in the regulation are simply a codification of current industry best-practices. Implementing these regulations will greatly improve the safety of drilling in Pennsylvania. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
GREG VITALI

TIM BRIGGS

Barb McIlvaine-Smith

Tom Houghton

Robert Freeman

H. Scott Conklin

David K. Levdansky

Patrick J. Harkins

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