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Office of the President Pro Tempore



Senate of Pennsylvania

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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SECRETARY'S OFFICE

Environmental Quality Board
16th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to request, to the greatest extent possible, that shallow gas producers be granted substantial relief from the proposed oil and gas drilling regulations recently proposed by PA DEP.

The economics of shallow well drilling are much different from unconventional drilling, and it is not clear that the proposed regulations make that distinction, nor are the impacts of shallow well drilling of the same environmental magnitude as deep, unconventional oil and gas wells. The purpose of Act 13 was to address issues associated with unconventional, horizontal well drilling, and not intended to regulate shallow gas or conventional oil drilling in the same manner.

Because many shallow oil and gas wells produce only small quantities of oil and gas, the cost of the proposed regulation, in many cases, will make these wells economically unfeasible. The result will be an increase in the number of abandoned wells, creating a whole new set of environmental challenges to the Commonwealth.

In addition, the proposed regulations are wide-ranging, creating confusion within the industry as to which regulations apply only to Marcellus operators and which apply to shallow wells. The hallmark of good regulation is simplicity, allowing the regulated community to know what is required of them, and the proposed regulations have only created confusion within the shallow oil and gas industry by their apparent complexity.

In view of these concerns, I believe it would be in the best interests of the Commonwealth to limit the proposed regulations to addressing issues associated with unconventional horizontal drilling of deep wells. I trust that comments you receive from the shallow oil & gas industry will lead you to the same conclusion.

Sincerely,

Joe Scarnati

State Senator - 25th District

cc: Honorable Christopher E. Abruzzo