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PA DEP Chapter 78 Oil Gas Regulation Changes, Public Comment Submission

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I part owner in a family owned Oil & Gas Field Supply house. From safety PPE, environmentally spill containment and clean up supplies, to natural gas processing filtration to tools and more. My wife and I started the business in 1980, we now have our two children working in the business. We are all Pennsylvania born, raised and working tax payers all due to the O&G Industry. I believe the implementing of the DEP Chapter 78 regulations will threaten our business and our way of life.

I would like to state the facts that the Oil & Gas Industry in Pennsylvania over the last 6 years has helped our business and our employees grow and prosper. We have worked hard to learn a new industry as well as providing supplies to the O&G Companies. We have grown from 5 employees to 16 in 5 short years, along with an average of a 50% increase in our average employee's median income. Why the drastic increase in pay you might ask? The O&G Industry pays well and if I want to keep good experienced employees I in turn need to pay them a competitive salary. The O&G Industry has provided many family sustaining incomes across the state and there are more to come with future downstream businesses from the Southwestern PA gas fields all the way to Philadelphia refineries and manufacturing. The O&G Industry is the catalyst that will grow our Commonwealth into prosperity. However, we cannot continue to unjustly over regulate and discriminate against just this one industry. Honestly, if you over regulate and tax the O&G Industry it will shrink, downsize and move away which will kill our business.

The DEP Chapter 78 proposed regulations are singling out the O&G Industry as if they are thugs! It is a crime the way the DEP has abused the regulatory process in shortening the public comment period. I urge our state leadership to look into these abuses. The DEP is abusing the regulatory process by inserting a wide array of brand new provisions into the final draft rulemaking. By doing so, DEP is precluding the legislative oversight committees and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission from formally submitting comments and objections. With many of the new regulations far exceeding the legislative intent used to justify them, these checks and balances that the department is sidestepping are all the more critical.

PA already has world class environmental regulations that have been a model for states across the nation. These regulations have been reviewed and praised by the independent STRONGER board (State Review of Oil and Natural Gas Environmental Regulations). I have worked with this industry for the last 6 years, and I believe they want to do it right and not harm the environment. I believe we can harvest these resources responsibly.

I urge you to **not pass the Chapter 78 Regulations.**

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Battista