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Mars, Pa 16046

To Whom it May Concern,

As a Pennsylvania resident, landowner and tax payer, I am writing to express concern for the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) proposed revisions to Chapter 78 regulations, and the proposed Chapter 78a. I am from Adams Township, Butler County and my county itself has experienced firsthand the benefits of shale gas development. Between the impact fee dollars coming to our county and township and the revitalization of local businesses, we need to encourage, not discourage, the natural gas industry in Pennsylvania. For me as a landowner and tax payer, I want this industry to succeed.

Because of development on properties like mine, Pennsylvania now produces a quarter of U.S. natural gas supply. This home-grown energy is decreasing our dependence on foreign energy sources at a time when we need to make our country's energy security a national priority. As an immediate result of this abundant supply, our families are saving money on their energy bills. Pennsylvania residents are experiencing energy prices which are more than 40% lower than the onset of significant shale gas production in 2008, saving homeowners and businesses billions of dollars annually. And this industry is putting Pennsylvanians back to work. Shale gas development is supporting and has made more secure over 200,000 Pennsylvania jobs.

However, we cannot take for granted this industry and the immense benefits it has brought our state. Overly-burdensome regulations will jeopardize this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Pennsylvania already has world class environmental regulations that protect my property and my family. I am proud to live in a state where our lawmakers took proactive steps to upgrade the Commonwealth's environmental and safety standards so that I can feel confident that drilling is occurring safely and that strong regulatory oversight is already in place to ensure the protection of my family and our community. Significantly altering the state's regulations with additional costly and burdensome requirements, as proposed, without proper evaluation and analysis, which I've seen no evidence of, does not help me and my family but puts everything we've built our futures on at risk.

Downward gas prices have already reduced activity and curtailed royalty payments. This rule will significantly increase the cost of doing business in the state and drive more investment out of Pennsylvania. Royalty owners and tax payers like me will suffer the brunt of this impact. With that in mind, before proceeding, DEP should conduct a cost-benefit analysis for all of the proposed changes as required by law, with the knowledge that bad economics for producers will directly affect not just me but thousands of other landowners and tax payers across the state.

Shale development and the spin-off economic benefits in our local communities has been a bright spot over the past 6-7 years as the nation continues to emerge from the recession. This is not the time to push overly-aggressive regulations that will harm our economy, local businesses and the citizens you work for. Now is the time to get gas to market and grow Pennsylvania's economy. Therefore, before moving ahead, please consider the impact of these regulations on Pennsylvania families like mine.

As stated above, I want this industry to succeed and based on my knowledge and observations of the industry and their operations in my area, I do not believe that additional costly and burdensome regulations are necessary. The industry and the organizations that represent it are doing a good job ensuring protection of the environment and the communities in which they operate within an already existing stringent regulatory framework. Therefore, I also support the comments being submitted by the Marcellus Shale Coalition (MSC) on these proposed revisions, knowing that they are trying to work cooperatively with DEP to ensure an effective and reasonable regulatory program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Wayne Smith

Mars, Adams Township, Pa.