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Senate of Pennsylvania

June 15, 2020

The Honorable George Bedwick
Chairman
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market St., 14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Chairman Bedwick:

I am writing to express my opposition over the final-form regulation "Unconventional Well Permit Application Fees" (#7-542 IRRC 3206). I echo comments from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee which were submitted during the 2018 public comment period, but remain unaddressed in this final rulemaking. I continue to have significant concerns with a 150% increase for the unconventional permits, from \$5,000 to \$12,500.

The department's current final-form regulation is misguided and should reconsider the allocation of funds to the Oil and Gas Program. Permit times – particularly for crucial earthmoving permits required to drill and construct a well - continue to lag especially in the southwestern part of the state.

The department has a responsibility to protect and guarantee that the residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have clean air, water, and land, now and for future generations to come. However, I have a responsibility as a lawmaker to ensure that we protecting all resources while not pushing away good paying jobs. The current proposal, which will result in Pennsylvania having the highest permit fee in the nation, is unsustainable and comes at a particularly volatile time within the natural gas industry, when hundreds of employees have already lost their jobs and many companies face an uncertain financial future.

It is imperative that the department work with the members of the General Assembly to help identify alternative solutions and support a long-term, sustainable, and equitable funding solution for the Oil and Gas Program. The department should commit to reconsidering this final-form rulemaking and establishing a more equitable permit fee for unconventional operators looking to invest and create jobs in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Camera Bartolotta".

Camera Bartolotta

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