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April 11, 2011

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Honorable Michael Krancer  
Acting Secretary, Department of Environmental Resources  
16<sup>th</sup> Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Dear Acting Secretary Krancer:

Let me begin by congratulating you on your appointment by Governor Tom Corbett as the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection. In accepting this duty, you are undertaking an enormous responsibility for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at a time when the development of Marcellus Shale is at the forefront.

I would also like to acknowledge the Department of Environmental Protection for the valuable contributions it has put forth in regulating the natural gas industry and in enforcing environmental policies that protect the natural resources of our Commonwealth. With that said, it has recently come to my attention that a policy shift has taken place in the Department, requiring Notices of Violations against natural gas development companies to be reviewed and approved from your office.

I realize that claims of inconsistency are the impetus for this policy shift and I appreciate your interest in trying to apply regulations fairly; nevertheless I find this shift disconcerting. While I applaud your effort to find consistency, there are environmental issues surrounding natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale formation that need to be addressed PROMPTLY. Requiring Notices of Violations to be reviewed through the department's central office in Harrisburg will unnecessarily mire the regulatory process in red tape, and potentially lead to unaddressed environmental misuse.

This new policy, at best, is questionable to me. Is this policy going to be applied to all violations or only specified ones? How do you intend to uphold this new policy and continue to address violations with the punctuality necessary to enforce regulations effectively?

It is my desire to see the Department maintain consistency while continuing to allow inspectors the autonomy to address violations promptly. I also want to alert you to legislation I authored and introduced, House Bill 1263, which would once again allow county conservation districts to become a part of the process. For me it is all about oversight.

Honorable Michael Krancer  
Acting Secretary, Department of Environmental Resources  
April 11, 2011  
Page 2

I represent a Marcellus Shale region and ask that you seriously consider and address my concerns. I believe that this brave new world of energy is on the cutting edge, and, as a result must be appropriately regulated.

Sincerely,

  
KAREN BOBACK, Ph.D.  
State Representative

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