

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 24, 2021

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Governor of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Phil Murphy
Governor of New Jersey
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

The Honorable John Carney
Governor of Delaware
150 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd South
Dover, DE 19901

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor of New York
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Brigadier General Thomas J. Tickner
US Army Corps of Engineers
302 General Lee Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11252

Dear Commissioners,

As you know, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) is scheduled to hold a special business meeting on February 25, 2021, to vote on the Commission's draft regulations to ban hydraulic fracturing in the basin. I urge you to oppose these misguided regulations that only serve to deprive local communities of revenue from natural gas extraction, strip landowners of their right to benefit from the value of their property's natural resources, and propagate theories peddled by radical environmentalists in an effort to eliminate natural gas production altogether.

Pennsylvania is the second-largest producer of natural gas in the US, accounting for approximately 20 percent of the nation's natural gas production. Pennsylvania consumers and manufacturers have reaped the rewards of this energy renaissance as residential natural gas prices have fallen by 40 percent since 2007 and wholesale electricity prices have declined 40 percent since 2008. Additionally, the impact fee assessed on natural gas producers has generated over \$1.8 billion since the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed Act 13 in 2012, providing local governments with a valuable source of revenue to invest in roads, bridges, and water and sewer infrastructure.

Unfortunately, communities in Wayne and Pike Counties have missed out on many of the financial benefits associated with natural gas development. Gas companies have paid billions of dollars in royalties to landowners across the state, improving the quality of life for rural Pennsylvanians and buoying local economies. However, shortly after the DRBC's de facto moratorium on natural gas production took effect in 2010, several energy firms ended exploratory leases with nearly 1,300 residents in Wayne County. Approving the draft regulations pending before the DRBC will permanently deny these landowners the benefits that their neighbors in Susquehanna County have enjoyed for over a decade, and target an industry that has not degraded, but, in fact, improved, the environment.

Since 2010, CO2 emissions from Pennsylvania's power generation sector have declined 36 percent as power plants have turned to gas for their feedstock. Additionally, in 2019, the DRBC's neighbor to the west, the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, released its updated water quality monitoring report, which confirmed that natural gas production did not have an adverse impact on water quality in the basin.¹ Regulations that will have such a negative impact on northeastern Pennsylvania should be based on established science instead of political animus and preconceived notions.

I urge you to oppose the draft regulations, as written, and I encourage the DRBC to take a more thoughtful approach to the regulation of energy production going forward.

Sincerely,



Pat Toomey
US Senator

¹ <https://www.srbc.net/our-work/reports-library/technical-reports/316-rwqmn-padcnr-tech-summary-2019/docs/RWQMN-PADCNR-technical-summary-2019.PDF>