

Citizens
For The
Preservation OF
Middletown
VALLEY

Citizens for the Preservation of Middletown Valley
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Feb. 28, 2011

Testimony in Support of HB 852

Citizens for the Preservation of Middletown Valley was formed in 2008 in response to an application by Dominion Transmission Incorporated to build a gas compressor in a Rural Legacy area adjacent to the South Mountain Battlefield in western Frederick County. More than 300 residents managed to attend a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission hearing for which very limited and short notification was given.

Though that particular application was set aside temporarily while salt cavern issues are being addressed in Pennsylvania, we continue to work together as citizens concerned about oversight of rapidly growing natural gas operations. Though our primary focus is the proposed gas compressor station, we support the Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Act of 2011, particularly provisions that would avoid the kind of fast-track permitting made in Pennsylvania that has failed to protect rivers and ground water from contamination. In addition, we believe gas companies (drillers or utilities) must be responsible for creating emergency response mechanisms for possible accidents.

We strongly support a requirement that the Department of the Environment consult with the body of local governments when evaluating permits. Local governments are aware of potential ramifications of particular sites in terms of environmental sensitivity, historical significance and potential safety issues. Such knowledge should not be ignored.

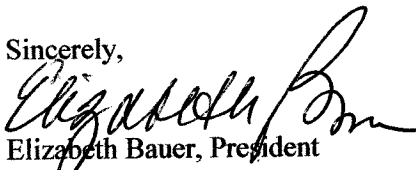
While the regions where drilling is likely to take place are Garrett, Allegheny and Washington Counties, we, as residents of western Frederick County, want to register our concern that underground resources are shared. Our region might also be affected.

Since residents in rural regions are on well water, sustainable water quality must be protected wherever gas extraction or gas compression takes place. A baseline of quality must be established and monitored.

We are learning of deadly gas explosions across the country. Citizens must demand effective emergency response capabilities and fast response times. Local emergency responders must be trained, and equipment must be provided, for such devastating events. Local residents must receive remediation for contamination, injury, property damage, or long-term pollution caused by such accidents.

We support the development of clean energy and the infrastructure to deliver it, and we want to see rural residents benefit from the gas industry and the jobs it provides. We would like to see a win-win result and hope our representatives can work to preserve our safety and quality of life, while developing the energy resources we all use.

Sincerely,


Elizabeth Bauer, President
CPMV
Frederick County, Maryland