

# Marcellus Protest

# Strategic Messaging

# Toolkit

For use by anyone working to counter the claims of the oil and gas industry about the destructive practice called “*High-Volume Slickwater Horizontal Hydraulic Fracturing*” (also known as Hydraulic Fracturing, Hydro-Fracking, Horizontal Drilling, Fracking, or Fracing.)

*Written by the Marcellus Protest  
Strategic Messaging Committee*

Visit [www.marcellusprotest.org](http://www.marcellusprotest.org) for more information and resources.

# Table of Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page #</b>
1. Background	3
2. Strategic Messaging Frames Table	4
3. Strategic Messaging Frames List	6
4. Appendices	
A. Values Statement	7
B. Sample Letter to the Editor	11
C. Sample Press Release	12
D. Sample Public Speech Excerpts	14
E. About Marcellus Protest	24

# 1. Background

In our movement, we have all the facts on our side. Every time a scientific study is conducted without biased industry funding, it shows that the fracking process is harmful to people and disastrous for the environment.

However, the history of movements like ours makes it clear that **facts are not enough**. We need to communicate our values and speak in ways that are memorable and convincing.

The reason the oil and gas industry has been successful in convincing citizens over the last decade is that they have crafted language that appeals to people's emotions and makes false promises. We are all too familiar with the examples:

- “energy to fuel our future”
- “clean-burning and abundant energy source”
- “economic stimulus from natural gas development”
- “My Range Resources”

To do this, the industry has paid millions to public relations firms to develop their commercial messages. For our part, we formed a committee in 2011 to study strategic messaging and to assemble a list of so-called *frames* which are effective when used to develop literature, images, slogans, speeches, press releases, commercials, social media posts, and other materials.

It's time for us to use language that is **true**, that is **convincing**, and that asserts our **values** for a clean and sustainable future. We ask that you review the attached examples, use this language, and make it your own.

## 2. Frames Table

- The phrases in bold (frames) are useful when writing, speaking, or making visuals/art.
- The bulleted sentences beneath each phrases are possible contexts in which to use each frame, but the bolded frames convey meaning in whatever context you might use them.

See the Appendices of this Toolkit for more samples of ways to use these frames.

# Strategic Messaging Framing for Opposing Hydraulic Fracturing

<p><b>“TOXIC FRACKING”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>All parts of the extractive process are toxic.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“STATE FORESTS AND PARKS ARE PUBLIC LAND”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The state government is taking OUR land for private profit.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>“COMMUNITY”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Harming many while rewarding a few literally fractures our community bonds.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“STEWARDSHIP”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What is our responsibility to each other? To the environment?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>“GOOD NEIGHBORS”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Distant corporations are not good neighbors.</i></li> <li>• <i>Good neighbors care about their community.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Toxic fracking creates a boom-bust cycle.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need sustainable energy solutions.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>“WHO DECIDES?”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Corporations or you?</i></li> <li>• <i>Big government or local government?</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“OUR LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We care about what we leave for future generations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Clean Air, Clean Water, Clean Soil; all are needed for life.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>“QUALITY OF LIFE”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Do we want profit for a few, OR quality of life for all?</i></li> <li>• <i>Fracking causes serious illness, contamination, &amp; decreased property values.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“PENNSYLVANIA’S OUTDOOR HERITAGE”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Pennsylvania is known for hiking, fishing, hunting, boating, skiing, and camping.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>“CORPORATE GREED”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Corporations are not people.</i></li> <li>• <i>Corporations will not feel the effects of pollution in PA.</i></li> <li>• <i>The top 1% seek special rights over the interests of the 99%.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“OUR RIGHTS VS. THEIR PROFIT”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Special rights given to corporations have violated people’s rights.</i></li> <li>• <i>PA Constitution, Article I, Section 27 guarantees clean air &amp; water.</i></li> <li>• <i>Profits and Gas are exported; contamination remains.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>“DANGEROUS PIPELINES”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Gas flows OUT of Pennsylvania.</i></li> <li>• <i>Dangerous pipelines are imposed on your land.</i></li> <li>• <i>They take the profit; we take the risk.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“DEFEND OUR FREEDOMS: BAN FRACKING”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Big governments and greedy corporations want to take control of our communities and our lives.</i></li> <li>• <i>An increasing number of communities have banned fracking.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>“INDUSTRIAL SITE”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Modern shale gas drilling requires acres of cleared land.</i></li> <li>• <i>Toxic fracking necessitates a web of industrial sites, which combine to create unprecedented air pollution.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“REAL ENERGY INDEPENDENCE”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Extraction requires massive amounts of fossil fuels &amp; clean water.</i></li> <li>• <i>Shale gas is NOT green, NOT clean, and NOT sustainable.</i></li> <li>• <i>U.S. is falling behind other countries in sustainable energy.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>“ENDANGERING THE FOOD SUPPLY”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Healthy food needs clean soil and clean water.</i></li> <li>• <i>Fracking jeopardizes a growing organic food industry.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>“WATER, AIR, AND LAND ARE VITAL”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We need drinkable water, breathable air, farmable land.</i></li> <li>• <i>We Can’t Drink Money; We Can’t Breathe Money.</i></li> </ul>

# 3. Strategic Messaging Frames

## List

- “Toxic Fracking”
- “State Forests Are Public Land”
- “Community”
- “Stewardship”
- “Good Neighbors”
- “Long-term Sustainability”
- “Who Decides?”
- “Our Legacy for Future Generations”
- “Quality of Life”
- “Pennsylvania’s Outdoor Heritage”
- “Corporate Greed”
- “Our Rights vs. Their Profit”
- “Dangerous Pipelines “
- “Defend Our Freedoms: Ban Fracking”
- “Fracking Makes People Sick”
- “Industrial Site”
- “Real Energy Independence”
- “Endangering the Food Supply”
- “Water, Air, and Land are Vital”

# Appendix A: Strategic Messaging Values Statement

## Our Mission Statement

Marcellus Protest is an alliance of western PA groups & individuals building a broad movement to stop the destruction of our environment and communities caused by Marcellus Shale gas drilling; we are committed to supporting communities affected by fracking.

## What we value

### *Pennsylvania's Outdoor Heritage*

Pennsylvanians' have long enjoyed the forests, fields, mountains, and waterways of our beautiful commonwealth. We value the rights of nature, and we have the responsibility to be good stewards of the land.

### *Future Generations*

Future generations deserve a Pennsylvania with clean air and water where they can safely live, work, and raise families. We care about what legacy we leave for our children and grandchildren.

### *Our Constitutional Rights*

Article I, Section 27 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania guarantees a clean environment:

"The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come."

The Federal Constitution also guarantees the "Blessings of Liberty" and specifies that they should be preserved not just for the current time, but also into the future:

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves **and our Posterity**, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

### ***Health and Safety***

People have the right to clean air, water, a secure food system, and a safe and healthy environment. In addition, workers have the right to healthy and safe working conditions.

### ***Community Self-Determination***

We affirm the right of members of each community--not corporations--to have an equal voice in deciding what does and does not affect the quality of their air, water, land, and lives.

### ***Environmental Justice***

All people have the right to a clean, healthy, livable environment, regardless of the region in which they live, or the fossil fuels that may lie beneath their land. The rights of any property or mineral owner should not supersede the rights of their neighbors to safe and healthy living conditions.

### ***Sustainability***

We affirm that humans have the right to live in a society which is sustainable in terms of the things which are necessary for life: water, air, soil, plants, and animals. In addition, we support sustainable jobs in industries such as education, health care, manufacturing, tourism, and agriculture. We are proud of Pennsylvania's place in the burgeoning organic and local food industry and its vital role in providing a sustainable future.

## **How these values are threatened**

### ***Greed and Consumerism***

The greed of a few powerful groups and individuals has created conditions where natural resources are traded on a global market without regard to the needs of people and of communities. Consumerism creates a global demand for fossil fuels, including shale gas. This demand for fuel creates the incentive to extract natural resources at a high human and environmental cost, as long as the financial return on investment is higher than the cost.

### ***Rights for Corporations***

Unjust legal decisions have awarded corporations the free speech rights of actual human persons. Corporations use these "rights" to accrue power and money, to purchase favorable legislation through campaign contributions, and to intimidate and defeat actual persons with legal action.

### ***Government Represents Corporations, not Citizens***

Because corporations are permitted to purchase political favor through contributions, government officials have served the wishes of monied interests while ignoring the demands of constituents. Although organized citizens can still influence political decisions, an uneven playing field allows for laws that

effectively preempt the basic constitutional rights of individual citizens and local municipalities.

### ***Special Treatment***

While citizens must go through rigorous permitting processes to make even the smallest improvements to their properties, extractive industry is assisted in every step of their destructive activities, and when fines are assessed for violations, these penalties are too insignificant to deter even deliberate violations in many cases.

In addition, at least one drilling corporation has been granted a special status as a utility, as though its for-profit work was in the public interest of all residents. Eminent domain, in the few cases where it is used, is intended to be in the interests of an entire community, not for private profit.

### ***Industrial Destruction of the Environment and the Economy***

As these corporations buy up leases, drill and frack wells, and build the supporting infrastructure, our communities and farmland are industrialized. Our water and air is contaminated, and the gas (which is now theirs) is exported. People get sick, property values go down, and disastrous and deadly accidents occur. By diverting resources to the development of unconventional gas, we are enabling a boom and bust cycle at the expense a sustainable society.

## **Why we must all become involved**

### ***Natural Gas is an Unacceptable Energy Source***

Shale gas is not a clean fuel; it is not even a bridge fuel. It is as harmful, or more harmful, than oil, coal, and nuclear power. Natural gas is produced and marketed by many of the same profiteering corporations who traffic in these other unacceptable sources.

To provide all people with affordable, reliable, safe, and healthy energy, the only solutions are conservation and renewable resources, such as solar and wind. Countries all over the world have come to this realization, yet our United States of America lags sadly behind.

### ***The Environmental Issue of Our Time***

For many communities in Pennsylvania and other areas of the United States, hydro-fracking for shale gas has quickly become the single biggest threat to health, safety, a sustainable economy, and quality of life. The question of “Who decides?” has quickly become the environmental issue of our time in these areas.

### ***Our Future***

Our future hangs in the balance. When soil, air, and water are contaminated, there is no easy solution. For many, the best option would be a refugee status where stability is left behind. Our children deserve better; we deserve better.

### ***The Issue Can Be Won***

In just a few short years, activists and organizers have raised awareness tremendously across Pennsylvania and the region. The number of citizens opposed to this practice grows every day, and eventually, the number of voices will increase to the point where even corporate campaign contributions will not be enough to continue the destruction. We need to continue building a sustainable movement on local, national and international levels.

## **What YOU can do**

1. Educate yourself and others about the dangers of fracking.
2. Make our positions and our presence known – in other words, be visible through media, demonstrations, and talking to our neighbors.
3. Join Marcellus Protest or another existing organization, or start a local group in your community, town, or county.
4. Help to pass community rights ordinances in communities near you.

# Appendix B:

## Sample Letter to the Editor

- The following is a sample Letter to the Editor that can be edited and sent to any publication.
- Remember to a letters to the editor short (under 200 words), tightly focused on recent articles and events, and send it to the newspaper as soon as possible after the referenced article is published.

### **New study establishes link to pollution**

In the [date] article “[Fracking Linked to XXX]”, [author] wrote that XX% of new cases occurred within XX feet of a Marcellus well. While our state moves ahead with hydraulic fracturing, scientists must play a difficult game of catch-up.

Industry representatives tell us that fracking is safe and that Pennsylvanians will only see positive benefits. When asked about illness and contamination near sites, their response is that no proof of harm exists.

Is this the standard we would use with our families’ health? I would say that the burden of proof should those who bring industrial sites into our communities and our treasured public lands. The very nature of underground drilling makes it hard to study in a scientific way. However, in December 2011, the EPA found toxic fracking chemicals in an aquifer in Wyoming and [cite new research].

Unfortunately, our state and federal government have put the burden on us, the people. With quality of life pitted against industry profits the real question is: “Who gets to decide? I hope more communities follow Pittsburgh’s lead: assert constitutional rights and ban fracking until it can be demonstrated to be done in a safe way.

# Appendix C:

## Sample Press Release

Writing guidelines:

**Length: Keep it short.** Your press release should be no longer than a page. Use a decent-sized font, and include white space.

**Style: Write like a news reporter.** A press release should read like a newspaper article—not a blog post, promotional material, or advertising.

**Content: Who, What, Where, When & How.** The lead paragraph includes the who, what, when, where and how of the story. If the reporter were only to read the lead of a good press release, he/she should have everything needed to get started.

Tips for incorporating messaging frames into your press release:

**Pick & Choose.** You can't include every frame into your press release. Think about those most relevant to your event/story. What do you want to focus on?

**Think about your audience and their needs.** What do you want readers to take away from your story? A story about an educational event, such as a *Gasland* screening, might focus on frames that discuss the hazards of fracking, whereas the press release for a march in Harrisburg might focus on frames like “big corporations” and “big government.”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11/15/11

Contact: [Robert R.] xxx-xxx-xxxx or [Estelle E.] xxx-xxx-xxxx

**Anti-Fracking Activists [Protest Gas Industry Convention]**

Pittsburgh, PA—[November 15, 2011] Local anti-fracking activists protest oil and gas industry convention.

Outside the [David Lawrence Convention Center] anti-fracking activists gathered to protest the [DUG East Convention], one of the largest gas industry conferences. Activists expressed their concerns about the negative impacts of fracking. One group held a banner that read “**We Can’t Drink Money; We Can’t Breathe Money,**” while other protestors held signs referencing **the Pennsylvania Constitution, quoted as guaranteeing citizens the right to clean air and water.**

Protesters situated the anti-fracking movement within the broader struggle for economic justice against **corporate greed**. “**These corporations will not feel the effects of pollution in Pennsylvania. The oil and gas executives, like the big bankers, are seeing record profits while we bear the cost to our health, safety, and quality of life,**” said [Susan S. of Pittsburgh].

[Frank F. of West Mifflin] pointed to the influence the industry has over all levels of the political system, “The hundreds of millions of dollars that the oil and gas industry spends on lobbying and campaign contributions each year, has bought them nearly full exemption from federal laws, including the Clean Air Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act. **Their special rights violate the rights of the people.**”

Activist [Timothy T. of South Park Township] captured the concerns of many of the protestors, “**The profits and the gas are exported, but we’re left with the contamination.** Federal and state government is not protecting us. **They want to take control of our communities and our lives. We need to defend our freedoms by banning fracking** at the city- and municipality-level.”

###

# Appendix D:

## Sample Speech Excerpts

- The following are excerpts of speeches that could be delivered by concerned at any of the many public meetings and hearings on the topic of hydraulic fracturing.
- Wording in [brackets] is time-based and will change in the future. Be sure to update this language as part of writing your speech.
- Remember that changing the policy of the panel holding the hearing is only one possible goal. Informing other attendees and generating helpful press coverage are also possible if a speech is written and delivered effectively.

### Sickness

We should learn from Dish, Texas, a place that has experienced toxic fracking ahead of us and learned the painful that **fracking makes people sick**. Residents have dealt with respiratory ailments and headaches, brain disorders, pre-cancerous lesions and impairment of motor skills. These are just a few of the many health effects which have been associated with chemicals identified from natural gas production and processing (condensate tanks, compressor stations, etc.) since widespread drilling began around 2000. A study done in Dish, Texas reports: “Laboratory results confirmed the presence of multiple Recognized and Suspected Human Carcinogens in fugitive air emissions present on several locations tested in the Town of DISH.” The Town of DISH has virtually no **heavy industry** other than the compression stations. There is no other facility with the capability to produce the volume of air toxins present within miles of the Town. Fugitive emission sources of hazardous air pollutants emanating from the oil and gas sector include emissions from pumps, compressors, engine exhaust and oil/condensate tanks, pressure relief devices, sampling connections systems, well drilling (hydraulic fracturing), engines, well completions, gas processing and transmissions as well a mobile vehicle transportation emissions. Along with hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) and known carcinogenic compounds, air toxic compounds that contribute to smog formation were identified and are a known emission of gas industrial exploration, compression, processing and distribution.”

How much clearer do these results need to be before we realize that **toxic fracking** and its related industries **makes people sick**, ruin **quality of life**, and destroy **communities**? Calvin Tillman, the mayor of Dish, Texas now travels the country telling his story and urging citizens and governments to prevent the fracking of their communities.

The **toxic fracking** industry makes great promises about benefits that extracting natural resources from under our feet will bring us in our communities. Do these fast-moving extraction companies make for **good neighbors**? Ask the residents of Dish.

## Water Pollution

In December of 2011, the EPA, which is no enemy of hydraulic fracturing, found fracking chemicals in a Wyoming aquifer. This result shows that the **toxic chemicals** dumped deep into the ground don't stay in one place as drilling corporations have promised, but can migrate to drinking water sources.

Now, it doesn't matter whether you get your water from a well, or from a municipal water system, because you can't control where water flows. The EPA study shows that when you pump water laced with sand, corrosive salts, radioactive elements, known carcinogens, and other poisons into the ground, it will end up in our water supply. And we know from Texas and Wyoming and now also communities in northeastern and southwestern PA that have suffered from the gas industry that you can't keep the value in your home if you don't have a drinkable water supply. Considering all of this, do we really want this **toxic fracking fluid** anywhere near our **vital water** resources? Stop **endangering** our water supply and that of **future generations for short-term gain; BAN FRACKING.**

## Air Pollution

In July of 2011, at least 22 toxic chemicals, including four known human carcinogens, were found in nine separate air samples taken near natural gas drilling operations in a scientific study, analyzed by a certified lab.

“Carcinogenic chemicals like benzene and acrylonitrile should not be in the air we breathe – and certainly not at these highly alarming levels,” said Dr. Mark Chernaik. “These results suggest neighboring communities are not being protected and their long-term health is being put at risk.”

With results like this, it is not surprising that physicians are seeing more and more people with respiratory and other ailments, and some have publicly called for increased caution and regulation to protect our **vital water, air, and soil resources**. We deserve to be able to maintain our **quality of life**, and our neighborhoods must not become **industrial zones**, where **toxic fracking** chemicals can be freely sent into our air and water.

## Effects on Plants and Soil

If anyone doubts that these chemicals really are harmful, in July of 2011, a U.S. Forest Service study showed that **toxic fracking** fluid, when dumped on forest land, kills all ground plants within two days, and half of the trees within two years.

Now, we live in a state where farming is a significant part of the economy, and we Pennsylvanians eat a substantial amount food that comes from our own soil. We value to the safety of all the food that comes from our state, and the growing organic farming movement is especially vulnerable to pollution. Do we really want this **toxic fracking fluid** anywhere near our **vital water, air, and land** resources? Stop **endangering** our forests, our fields, and **the food supply; BAN FRACKING.**

## Long-Term Sustainability

When you get the facts, you see that there's no such thing as cleanly-obtained Marcellus gas, just as there's no such thing as clean coal. These are mythical creatures, like Hobbits and Unicorns; the false idea of safe Marcellus gas is a product of **corporate greed** and highly-paid public relations firms that puts billboards up in our communities, runs ads on TV and radio, and sponsors [our hockey broadcasts.]

Besides being unsustainable itself, this industry harms industries that are **ACTUALLY** sustainable in PA, such as the rapidly-expanding organic farming movement and tourism, which is currently Pennsylvania's highest-grossing industry.

Consider also that the shale gas industry's practices are not sustainable in the short run, let alone the long term. For long-term sustainability, we need to make decisions through our democratic process that bring us **REAL** jobs, **REAL** national security, and **Real Energy Independence.**

---Calling out **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST** in municipal governments.

In your elected position, it is your job to be a **steward** of the **community**, to work for the benefit of all the people. Let's consider the **legacy we will leave for future generations**, and admit that the only way to **defend our freedom** to live, work, and raise families here is to do what is necessary to prevent fracking in our community.

Now, if you have a conflict of interest, if you have signed a lease yourself, or are otherwise financially involved in gas drilling, you should abstain from this decision. Otherwise, you are putting **your profit ahead of our rights**, and the people in this room will see whether you end up voting for your own interest or choosing to act to ethically in your position of public trust.

## Jobs

From the credible news reports I have read, if this **toxic fracking** continues to multiply across Pennsylvania, we are in for serious trouble, especially in our suburban and urban communities. The major reason we are given to justify the **pollution of our water, air, and soil resources** is an increase in jobs for Pennsylvanians.

Well, a report done in 2011 by the Keystone Research Council showed that, although the increase in Marcellus fracking has been exponential in Pennsylvania, the job growth since 2007 has been less than 10% of what was promised by the Marcellus Shale Coalition, a front group for the wealthy corporations that want to frack our **communities**. In addition, it is unclear how many of those jobs went to Pennsylvanians. As local folks are saying, “What local jobs? All I see is out-of-state license plates.”

## Real Energy Independence

Why are we engaged in a huge plan to subject Pennsylvanians to the contamination, sickness, and degradation by this dirty extraction method known as **toxic fracking** when **Real Energy Independence** is easily within our grasp? Did you that in Germany [in 2011], production of solar energy increased by 60%? Renewable energy is now 20% of that nation’s total energy production, and that number increases greatly each year.

Not only that, but most of their solar panels are installed on the roofs of the houses and businesses where they are used, eliminating the need for any transmission or transportation, let alone **dangerous pipelines**. And in case you’ve never been to central Europe, this is not a very sunny part of the planet. So, instead of giving huge government subsidies and corporate welfare to oil and gas companies, we could be investing those funds in a clean and sustainable energy future, which would provide a great **legacy for future generations** instead of creating a situation where our state and nation are increasingly marked by **industrial sites** and the pollution of our **vital water, air, and land resources**.

Also, to anyone who would allege that I’m a radical or that Germany has somehow slipped into communism without anyone noticing, you should know that I’m referring to 100% *private sector* solar development. I’m fine with corporations making profit off of solar energy; I just can’t tolerate **corporate greed** resulting in pollution **that harms our health and tramples our rights**.

## Multiplying the Ill Effects

Given the shocking personal stories of debilitating illness, contaminated water, ruined landscapes, polluted creeks, dead livestock and pets, and sick children from Pennsylvanians – some people who have leased their land, and some who are merely the neighbors of those who have –, you simply cannot say that **toxic fracking** is safe. To the contrary, **fracking makes people sick**. This dirty drilling is estimated to eventually take up 50% of the land in Pennsylvania, as reported by the Sierra Club, analyzing permitting data and projections by industry. 50%! That means half of the land in our beautiful state will become industrial areas. I can tell you one thing for sure: virtually no Pennsylvanians, once given the facts, want to live in an industrial site.

What about the **long-term sustainability** of this toxic process? Besides the demonstrated health problems and sickness, living in an **industrial site** means risking long-term damage to our property values, our **vital water, air, and land resources**, and the long-term **endangerment of the food supply**. Has any of this been considered, or are we just rushing ahead?

But you might say, “The industry has told us this is safe and no toxic compounds ever escape. There’s no proof that it’s harmful.” If so, you’re still relying on promises without evidence that the practice is safe. Is that how you act with your own health? With your family’s? We shouldn’t dump the burden of proof on average people who are just trying to keep the value in their home, raise their children, and maintain a decent **quality of life**. That burden of proof should be on those who would impose their heavy industrial activity into our communities. And the **toxic frackers**, motivated by **corporate greed**, WILL NOT discuss the facts; they CANNOT produce proof that their practices are safe. We are WAY too trusting in this state right now. Perhaps that’s because our politicians’ relationships with these drilling corporations are too cozy; after all, a lot of campaign funding changes hands, and we all know that large contributions almost always entail a *quid pro quo*.

The people who own and run the corporations that want to put **toxic fracking**, gas processing, and **dangerous pipelines** in our neighborhoods don’t live in our communities, and I doubt they have drill rigs and gas plants and pipelines close to their homes. They are not invested in this community for the long term, but the people in this room are. It’s very simply a choice between **our rights versus their profit**. **Who should have the right to decide** whether this **heavy industry** has the right to set up and pollute and sicken our communities – us, or the state? And whose side are you on?

## **Pennsylvania's Outdoor Heritage**

I recently read an article entitled “Hiking the Marcellus Trail.” It explained how our treasured state forests and parks are starting to be bulldozed for **toxic fracking** operations. We're talking about the heart and soul of Pennsylvania here – we are a state that loves to hike, camp, fish, bike, hunt, and explore, but the citizens' forests and streams and hills that allow for these unique experiences are being leased for private gain.

Let me say that again – our public resources, which we enjoy as part of **Pennsylvania's Outdoor Heritage**, are being destroyed to allow for extractive drilling that pollutes streams, kills wildlife and plant life, and destroys the best that Pennsylvania has to offer. Aren't we supposed to be good **stewards** of the land? Aren't we supposed to ensure **long-term sustainability** and protect our aesthetic treasures for **future generations**? What kind of example does that set for our children?

By the way, do you know what Pennsylvania's biggest industry is? Steel? Coal? Natural Gas? No – it's TOURISM, which is set to be very badly hurt by the industrialization of our beautiful wild lands. This **toxic fracking** is destructive, it's wrong, and we must ban it.

## **Taking Precautions**

I want to pose the following questions: Should we trust the corporations that bring **toxic fracking** into our communities when they say they operate safely? Should we trust the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Federal EPA to regulate effectively? How about our state and federal governments? Should we trust them to make laws fairly, without bias, and to uphold their duty to protect us?

Well, in 2010, BP and the EPA vastly underestimated the amount of toxic contamination and destruction in the Gulf that continues to this day. In 2011, we found out that the corporation responsible for the Fukushima Nuclear disaster covered up the severity of the meltdowns and radioactive leaks for months. Coming back to the subject at hand, in 2005 the Federal government passed an energy law that specifically prevented regulators from holding hydraulic fracturing operations to the important standards of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, among others. And, going somewhat farther back, the EPA declared the air quality safe in lower Manhattan after the attacks on the World Trade Center site in New York in 2001. It was later revealed that they knew the air quality was very dangerous, and workers there were sickened and died.

The lesson? We should practice skepticism, get the facts, take a go-slow approach, work to put the burden of proof on the industry, and organize democratically whenever extractive industry spends millions to promise us jobs, cheap energy, and economic recovery, and whenever government agencies assure us that all is well.

## What Should Governments Do?

Marcellus Shale gas drilling, and the **toxic fracking**, processing, and transporting that go along with it are already **making people sick**, ruining their water supplies, destroying property values, decreasing the **quality of life** for them and their children, and harming the environment. **Our publicly-owned state forests and parks** (and by extension, our rivers, lakes and streams) have been opened to this private destruction as well.

**Dangerous pipelines** are being built across our state, and industry estimates that eventually, 50% of Pennsylvania's land will be exploited by the **toxic fracking** process, which threatens the **legacy we will leave for future generations**. **Our rights** are trampled upon and trumped by those who seek **profit** from the unrenewable resources under our land, and their big money corrupts our political process at both the state and federal levels.

So what can we do? Well, we must not fall into the trap of asking too little. There are plenty of groups and politicians and individuals calling for regulations, taxes, a moratorium (and they are good people, and I stand WITH them), but there are not enough strong voices saying that this practice must NOT be allowed, because it CANNOT be done safely, and it never has been done safely. This is why we need a **BAN on fracking**, using the method of a Community Rights Ordinance, in order **to defend our freedoms**.

A Community Rights Ordinance asserts the rights of the people, not big corporations, to **decide** what happens in their community. It references constitutional rights to freedom and safety and clean natural resources, which are more fundamental than state laws pushed by corporations through their lobbyists.

You may hear people say, "Pittsburgh banned fracking. That was a mistake. It technically goes against the 1984 PA Oil and Gas Act, so they'll be sued and will lose." Well, maybe, maybe not. Pittsburgh hasn't been sued yet, [well over a year] later, but if it is, they will not incur any legal bills, because the non-profit that helped write the law has promised to defend them free of charge. [Nine] other municipalities in our state have also banned fracking in the past [year]. In fact, the only municipalities being sued are ones that have attempted to *zone* Marcellus drilling, not the ones that have banned it. Zoning doesn't even protect a community – that's been clearly demonstrated. With a ban, you're at least protected until appeals are exhausted, and that's assuming you'll lose in the long run. In the meantime, the leases would be voided, simple as that.

Now, after we've banned this current form of hydro-fracking, if the corporations come to the citizens of Pennsylvania with an explanation and demonstration of how they can now extract gas from deep shale without massive carbon emissions, without contamination and sickness and all of the other terrible effects we've learned about, then I think we should listen, and maybe after they've proven that they are right and agree to clean up the damage they've done so far, we could conditionally take back the ban and allow some gas extraction. But the current technology is an *ecological and climate failure*, and on moral grounds, we cannot tolerate it. We are the citizens, and we must assert our Article 1, Section 27 right in the PA Constitution to a clean environment. As Pennsylvania

citizens, we have the power to decide. We can allow drilling or not, because this is our land, and as many have said before, the gas is not going anywhere.

People who **profit** from Pennsylvania's gas reserves always call people with my opinions angry, emotional, conspiracy theorists. That's an unfair smear; I couldn't be more rational, fact-based, and objective in my comments tonight. I can drive just a few minutes, and clearly see with my own eyes Marcellus drilling hurting people and the environment, and I want to stop it. That's no conspiracy theory. If something is wrong, if it's harmful, if it's hurting people and making us sick, we should eliminate it--not carefully and politely work to kind-of, sort-of, maybe, possibly, make it 10% or 20% less harmful. A ban is **RIGHT**, a ban is **NECESSARY**, and we are **COMPLICIT** in destruction if we demand less than a ban.

Do any of you really believe that if we have some better regulations, or a tax, or a moratorium, that this will end our problems? That fracking will be safe for all and that Marcellus gas will be extracted cleanly? To paraphrase Thoreau, I see many politicians and citizens hacking at the branches of this issue, but very few striking at the root.

So, extrapolate the destruction caused by thousands of wells now to the hundreds of thousands projected over the next ten years, and the **REAL** question is "Should Pennsylvania continue to be a place where humans can live, work, and raise a family?" Such a question doesn't allow for compromise and half-measures. This is the moral question of our time, and our answer should be to **BAN FRACKING**.

## **Thank you for considering a Ban on Fracking using Community Rights language**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I live in \_\_\_\_\_, and come to you tonight to thank you.

Clearly, you are aware of the contamination that has been widely reported around the state and nation. Time after time, I have personally heard the stories of residents who have found out the hard way that **fracking makes people sick**. They have experienced terrible health effects, hair falling out, nervous system problems, barium poisoning, contaminated well water, dead livestock, and sick children. People who support hydraulic fracturing and who stand to gain financially call these people liars and claim that they come to public meetings to spread hoaxes and lies. Obviously, that's ridiculous. Respectfully, no citizen, including myself, goes to many evening meetings for the fun of it; we're all here because of the importance of the issue.

When the people of Pennsylvania get the facts, they will be angry at the state and federal governments, and they will be upset with municipal governments that have allowed this **toxic fracking** and in many cases welcomed it, but you will be acclaimed for being one of the first to ban it. This problem of **corporate greed** resulting in dangerous oil and gas extraction is national, but it's also regional, and it's also *local*. I understand a little about the process you've used for writing this ordinance – a community rights argument which asserts that the local people have the **right to decide** democratically what happens in our **communities**. This community rights justification also references the state constitution's assurance that the right of the people to clean air and clean water, must be protected. The state has failed to protect residents and live up to this guarantee, so I thank YOU for stepping in and **defending our freedoms** by **banning toxic fracking**. The people will stand with you.

## Questioning the Impartiality of a Regulating Agency

Your [commission/agency/etc.] claims to be investigating the safety of hydro-fracking, yet **toxic fracking** is *already happening NOW*. Why must we assume that extraction must be allowed before investigating it? This entire idea demonstrates a gift to extractive industry, in an attempt to prove to them that the government is “business-friendly.” We constantly hear from our government officials in many varied contexts that they can’t “prejudge” a situation; they must wait until all the information is in before they draw conclusions. That principle has been blatantly violated in this case. Now, I know various studies are ongoing, but it sounds like the conclusions have already been reached. To me, establishing pollution standards is just another way of saying that we are “standardizing pollution.” After all, to issue a “permit to pollute” literally means that pollution is allowed.

I see a pattern recently of government agencies relying on the promises made by multinational corporations when they should be relying on science. If these dangerous energy companies actually had to prove that their practices were safe, would they be able to convince the American people, given such events as:

- The BP oil spill?
- Coal mining disasters through history?
- Mountaintop Removal Mining in nearby states?
- The Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear disaster?
- The terrible record of pipeline leaks around the nation?

I know that industry donates huge sums of campaign money to politicians in both parties so they will do what these corporations want. Buying politicians is a great deal for those who practice **corporate greed**; after all, you’ll get back 10 times, 100 times, or 1,000 in revenue what you paid out in campaign contributions. Put simply, **our rights are traded for their profit**. In addition, I know that there is frequently a revolving door between industry and the regulating agencies that oversee them, creating a reluctance to hold industry accountable to the letter of the law. I’m sure you’re very familiar with the idea of corporations influencing policy – you live in that world. So, if you’re feeling pressure from industry lobbyists, or at least from politicians who are beholden to these interests, pressure that is preventing you from regulating based on the clear evidence of all of these dangers, I would encourage some of you to resign in protest, call a press conference, and attract more public attention to the problem instead of passing it on to **future generations of American children**. This would be the principled thing to do.

# Appendix E:

## About Marcellus Protest

Marcellus Protest is an alliance of western Pennsylvania groups & individuals building a broad movement to stop the destruction of our environment and communities caused by Marcellus Shale gas drilling as well as to support other directly affected communities. Currently we are also engaged in the following activities:

- Advocating for legislation to ban shale gas drilling throughout the region
- Creating & distributing publicity and educational materials (including art & photos)
- Organizing video screenings
- Helping to project and amplify the voices of directly affected communities
- Pitching stories to the media
- Supporting and promoting other protests and actions as the need and opportunity arise
- Fundraising and dispersing funds for our activities

Learn more at [www.marcellusprotest.org](http://www.marcellusprotest.org).

Email: [info@marcellusprotest.org](mailto:info@marcellusprotest.org)