

More fracking water from Susquehanna R.

HARRISBURG, PA (Sept 20): The Susquehanna River Basin Commission

(SRBC) approved 22 new water withdrawal requests at its quarterly business meeting; 16 of those 22, the fracking-related requests alone, add up to nearly 30 million gallons per day.

In his recent [blog](#) (written before the SRBC meeting), Alex Lotorto notes that the SRBC has unanimously approved every fracking withdrawal request for at least the past four quarters.

The SRBC has four voting members, representing the states of Pennsylvania (Michael Krancer, DEP), New York (James Tierney, DEC) and Maryland (Robert Summers, MDE) and the Federal Government (Col. K. Savre, USArmy Corps of Engrs.) All are appointed by the respective Governors and the President.

For its September meeting, the SRBC published 'Supplemental Rules' for attendees, including: no standing room; applying for advance permission from Capitol Police to 'display any... media to express opinions'; and the immediate arrest of anyone failing to obey an order from the Chair to leave the room.

Although it's too late to influence the September vote, the fight to defend the Susquehanna will continue. Read Alex's blog to learn how to pitch-in. [[Click here.](#)]

Solidarity and the Fight over 'Jobs'

Representative Jesse White, D-Cecil, is one of few outspoken critics of the gas industry in Harrisburg. In August he published an article in the Canon-McMillan Patch titled "Why aren't more Marcellus Shale jobs going to PA workers", in which he debunks industry claims about local hiring. Unfortunately, to highlight the prevalence of out-of-state workers in the area, he chose an incident in which five Latino workers were pulled over by the police in Cecil Township.

In fact, the men are all U.S. citizens and were not doing anything wrong. And the fact that the workers were Latino has nothing to do with the rest of White's argument about the lack of local hiring, except that it plays upon the racist and xenophobic notion that Latinos are taking jobs which white people

deserve, echoed constantly by anti-immigration forces. He could have cited the dozens of out-of-state plates one sees every day on the highway or produced actual data about company hiring practices. Instead he chose an anecdote which reinforces the scape-goating of Latino workers, and distracts from the real target: the decision-makers in the gas industry.

Racism and xenophobia have come up in other places in the antifracking movement as well. Chip Northrup, a prominent blogger and activist in upstate New York, has made much more overtly racist comments, publicly referring to Latino workers as "shalebacks" (a reference to the racial slur "wetback").

These ugly and misdirected remarks are an important opportunity for reflection for the predominantly white anti-fracking movement. Can we reject the temptation to blame workers, especially Latino workers, for the lack of jobs and other abuses of the gas industry? And can we embrace anti-racism as a principle of our organizing? Let's remember that people of color and indigenous communities in the U.S. and around the world are most targeted by the fossil fuel industry and most impacted by climate change. We need to ally our work with theirs and we cannot afford to be divided by racism.

BY BEN FIORILLO

RESPONSE FROM REP. WHITE: Serving as state representative for the epicenter of the Marcellus Shale boom, I have repeatedly questioned why there are not more jobs for Pennsylvania workers, subjecting myself to numerous attacks from the industry in the process.

The police report I referenced directly addressed claims made by industry that local jobs need to be done by skilled, highly-trained workers; my question was what kind of special training could the seventeen year old who spoke broken English have that a local worker couldn't handle. Race and ethnicity had nothing to do with it; I was using one of the few documented incidents to contradict a specific claim.

[[Go online](#) for Rep. White's full response, which is edited here to fit available space.]

A Range of Resources

Looking for someone you can support in next month's election? Marcellus Protest doesn't endorse candidates, but here are some sources of information:

Marcellus at the Polls: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/VoteProEarth/>

Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania: <http://www.conservationpa.org/marcellusscorecard/>

Sierra Club (Allegheny Group): <http://alleghenysc.org/?cat=41> and www.sierraclub.org/voterguide

Upcoming Events in October (and beyond):

(Full details, with latest updates, and a more extensive list of events, are on-line at www.marcellusprotest.org/event_calendar.)

October 17 (Pittsburgh): Supreme Court—Oral Argument. (See story on Page 1.) 9:30am, Pittsburgh City-County Building, Grant Street.

November 9 (Pittsburgh): 2012 Health Effects of Shale Gas Extraction Conference. The third annual conference, hosted by the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. Register at shalegas.pitt.edu.

Updated information on these topics (with links to original sources), along with our calendar of upcoming events and other resources, can be found at www.marcellusprotest.org.