



DARLA M. BORTZ  
CHAIRPERSON  
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VICE-CHAIRMAN  
BETTY REIBSON  
COMMISSIONER

**SULLIVAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
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SOLICITOR

April 9, 2009

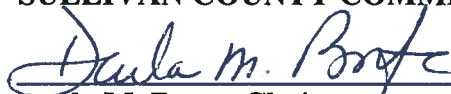
Senator John R. Pippy  
Room 168  
Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3037

Dear Senator Pippy:

On behalf of the residents and taxpayers of Sullivan County, the Sullivan County Commissioners request that serious consideration be given to our request for additional financial assistance from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as it pertains to the drilling for Marcellus Shale in our county.

Sincerely,

SULLIVAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Darla M. Bortz, Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert R. Getz, Vice Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Betty Reibson, Commissioner

Attachment

**On behalf of the residents and taxpayers of Sullivan County, the Sullivan County Commissioners request that serious consideration be given to our request for additional financial assistance from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as it pertains to the drilling for Marcellus Shale on all state-owned land and the restoring of oil and gas to the assessment roles.**

**Sullivan County is seeking your support in the coming months and we ask that this issue be addressed legislatively in the first half of 2009. Restoring oil and gas to the assessment roles will be equitable for other local taxpayers who otherwise will have to bear an unfair proportion of the tax burden for side-effects related to development of this natural resource. The restoring of oil and gas to the assessment roles would be consistent with taxation of comparable resources, including coal, minerals, and wind energy.**

**Sullivan County supports legislation to restore local tax equity by reversing the 2002 Supreme Court decision in Independent Oil and Gas Et. Al., versus Fayette County Board of Assessment Appeals. Sullivan County believes the Assessment Law language stating that all property is taxable unless statutorily exempted. As you are aware, the court found that for oil and gas to be assessable they must be enumerated in the law as subjects of taxation. We are requesting your support in legislation to reverse the decision and allow oil and gas to be assessed, based on an income valuation of the producer's interest in the lease, as is already done for wind towers and commercial and industrial properties.**

**Our review of the Commonwealth's contributions to Sullivan County indicates that the amount of the In Lieu of Taxes payments needs to be addressed.**

**The efforts of the Marcellus Shale drilling in Sullivan County on state-owned lands have the potential of a huge financial gain for the Commonwealth. The accompanying map of Sullivan County shows that approximately 36.9% or 107,044 acres are owned by the Commonwealth, out of the total 290,055 acres. Currently, the In Lieu of Taxes for state-owned lands provides \$.40 per acre each for county, school and municipal purposes. This is projected to amount to \$125,134.02 for the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 based on the 104,471.70 acres. Please note that for 2,572.4 acres in the State Parks (World's End and Ricketts Glen), no funds are received.**

**Additionally, the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Gaming Fund monies provided \$.80 per acre each for county, school and municipal purposes. This is projected to amount to \$250,268 for the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 based on the 104,471.7 acres contingent on the Gaming Fund having the available revenues. Review of tax assessment and tax levies for the county, school district and municipalities shows that average taxes on an acre of land in Sullivan County ranges from a low of**

**approximately \$35 to a high of approximately \$43. Based on this information, if the Commonwealth's lands were on the tax rolls an additional \$3,746,540 to \$4,602,892 would be available to reduce local taxation and provide for additional governmental services.**

**The Sullivan County Commissioners are requesting that the laws that govern the State's oil and gas leases be amended to provide needed assistance to the county, school district and municipalities to help us pay for the expanding services that will be needed if and when state-owned lands are drilled upon for Marcellus Shale natural gas. We feel that the current \$.40 per acre payment will be far insufficient to meet the costs that will be placed on our county residents and taxpayers.**

**Sullivan County, as an 8<sup>th</sup> Class County, with a population of 6500 and having 36.9% of our land owned by the Commonwealth and taxed at a very low rate is not equitable. We feel it's not fair to our 6500 residents to provide revenue thru taxes for additional, road work etc. for private companies to gain.**

**Thank You, for your attention to our request. We cordially invite you to Sullivan County to meet with us to discuss the Marcellus Shale issue and other subjects we feel are important to Sullivan County.**

**SULLIVAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**Darla M. Bortz, Chairperson  
Robert R. Getz, Vice Chairman  
Betty Reibson, Commissioner**

COMBINED STATE OWNED LAND

COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES
ADAMS	25,200.09	ELK	147,519.99	MONTGOMERY	4,711.40
ALLEGHENY	1,325.40	ERIE	19,359.03	MONTOUR	233.10
ARMSTRONG	9,368.34	FAYETTE	63,351.10	NORTHAMPTON	6,764.50
BEAVER	12,128.27	FOREST	11,966.53	NORTHUMBERLAND	11,369.86
BEDFORD	93,637.75	FRANKLIN	56,356.56	PERRY	59,715.38
BERKS	26,733.65	FULTON	48,716.33	PHILADELPHIA	300.17
BLAIR	53,129.05	GREENE	14,576.91	PIKE	98,119.26
BRADFORD	59,925.41	HUNTINGDON	100,148.95	POTTER	287,574.91
BUCKS	12,407.55	INDIANA	16,874.55	SCHUYLKILL	42,964.40
BUTLER	26,756.60	JEFFERSON	46,227.38	SNYDER	33,012.34
CAMBRIA	53,891.85	JUNIATA	26,985.83	SOMERSET	72,878.72
CAMERON	154,890.97	LACKAWANNA	19,687.52	SULLIVAN	107,044.20
CARBON	50,090.17	LANCASTER	9,262.97	SUSQUEHANNA	14,787.99
CENTRE	225,297.10	LAWRENCE	5,407.28	TIOGA	176,622.17
CHESTER	6,957.77	LEBANON	29,504.64	UNION	67,876.93
CLARION	22,886.38	LEHIGH	6,745.94	VENANGO	33,221.35
CLEARFIELD	125,580.41	LUZERNE	66,592.96	WARREN	38,033.50
CLINTON	300,577.05	LYCOMING	239,076.13	WASHINGTON	14,495.86
COLUMBIA	20,810.34	McKEAN	28,444.78	WAYNE	23,842.52
CRAWFORD	47,608.84	MERCER	10,870.54	WESTMORELAND	39,412.60
CUMBERLAND	43,600.74	MIFFLIN	61,891.27	WYOMING	36,476.86
DAUPHIN	54,655.79	MONROE	56,625.37	YORK	10,209.03
DELAWARE	2872.66				
TOTALS.....	1,430,332.18		1,086,192.56		1,179,667.05
MEAN =	55,167.04	TOTAL ACRES		3,696,191.79	

COMPILED FROM FISH, FOREST, GAME & PARK OWNED LANDS

PENNSYLVANIA'S STATE GAME LANDS

COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES
ADAMS	1,942.30	ELK	71,021.57	MONTGOMERY	158.00
ALLEGHENY	1,245.80	ERIE	15,124.83	MONTOUR	227.50
ARMSTRONG	5,507.94	FAYETTE	21,573.22	NORTHAMPTON	4,977.57
BEAVER	4,103.29	FOREST	7,146.70	NORTHUMBERLAND	11,189.54
BEDFORD	53,945.31	FRANKLIN	15,178.02	PERRY	17,129.29
BERKS	18,453.85	FULTON	18,607.76	PHILADELPHIA	0.00
BLAIR	51,967.88	GREENE	13,067.36	PIKE	24,467.37
BRADFORD	54,350.34	HUNTINGDON	32,594.59	POTTER	18,698.03
BUCKS	4,377.60	INDIANA	13,213.49	SCHUYLKILL	29,978.95
BUTLER	10,182.00	JEFFERSON	34,538.99	SNYDER	2,873.99
CAMBRIA	40,439.75	JUNIATA	9,343.28	SOMERSET	31,022.10
CAMERON	12,963.00	LACKAWANNA	11,680.03	<b>SULLIVAN</b>	<b>60,338.41</b>
CARBON	26,603.29	LANCASTER	8,611.12	SUSQUEHANNA	14,358.07
CENTRE	65,213.56	LAWRENCE	2,709.88	TIOGA	24,678.55
CHESTER	2,089.51	LEBANON	26,728.84	UNION	2,545.75
CLARION	17,949.68	LEHIGH	6,414.04	VENANGO	22,818.64
CLEARFIELD	27,227.45	LUZERNE	47,895.97	WARREN	37,082.91
CLINTON	22,727.80	LYCOMING	43,918.40	WASHINGTON	10,110.46
COLUMBIA	20,453.84	McKEAN	24,234.29	WAYNE	20,637.36
CRAWFORD	25,367.62	MERCER	6,955.12	WESTMORELAND	14,571.38
CUMBERLAND	4,439.72	MIFFLIN	3,265.34	WYOMING	36,340.66
DAUPHIN	46,515.38	MONROE	38,895.10	YORK	4,013.19
DELAWARE	0.00				
TOTALS.....	518,066.91		472,717.94		
				TOTAL ACRES	
				388,217.72	1,379,002.57
MEAN =	20,582.13				

PENNSYLVANIA'S STATE FOREST LAND

COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES
ADAMS	21,806.19	ELK	73,408.06	MONTGOMERY	0.00
ALLEGHENY	0.00	ERIE	0.00	MONTOUR	0.00
ARMSTRONG	0.00	FAYETTE	17,944.80	NORTHAMPTON	85.44
BEAVER	0.00	FOREST	2,247.53	NORTHUMBERLAND	4.00
BEDFORD	29,603.46	FRANKLIN	39,779.57	PERRY	41,588.23
BERKS	885.38	FULTON	29,001.57	PHILADELPHIA	0.00
BLAIR	2.00	GREENE	0.00	PIKE	67,832.83
BRADFORD	4,247.68	HUNTINGDON	66,344.92	POTTER	265,344.03
BUCKS	55.61	INDIANA	471.26	SCHUYLKILL	9,199.54
BUTLER	0.00	JEFFERSON	9,612.59	SNYDER	28,794.35
CAMBRIA	3,272.69	JUNIATA	17,590.05	SOMERSET	30,807.99
CAMERON	131,214.57	LACKAWANNA	6,324.01	SULLIVAN	41,660.87
CARBON	999.06	LANCASTER	10.00	SUSQUEHANNA	0.00
CENTRE	149,100.81	LAWRENCE	0.00	TIOGA	150,174.04
CHESTER	591.80	LEBANON	0.00	UNION	64,551.52
CLARION	6.00	LEHIGH	0.00	VENANGO	3,165.00
CLEARFIELD	97,029.06	LUZERNE	2,117.94	WARREN	100.41
CLINTON	268,236.82	LYCOMING	192,331.94	WASHINGTON	0.00
COLUMBIA	58.34	McKEAN	3,534.51	WAYNE	0.00
CRAWFORD	146.26	MERCER	0.00	WESTMORELAND	18,442.41
CUMBERLAND	35,969.32	MIFFLIN	57,902.73	WYOMING	0.00
DAUPHIN	8,029.61	MONROE	8,637.69	YORK	0.00
DELAWARE	266.00				
TOTALS.....	751,520.66		527,259.17		
				TOTAL ACRES	
				721,750.66	2,000,530.49
MEAN =	29,858.66				

ACREAGE OWNED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA FISH COMMISSION

COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES
ADAMS	1,306.4	ELK	100.0	MONTGOMERY	20.5
ALLEGHENY	43.6	ERIE	1,032.2	MONTOUR	5.6
ARMSTRONG	3,860.4	FAYETTE	2,837.6	NORTHAMPTON	465.0
BEAVER	452.6	FOREST	986.7	NORTHUMBERLAND	40.7
BEDFORD	132.5	FRANKLIN	144.1	PERRY	18.0
BERKS	258.6	FULTON	250.0	PHILADELPHIA	25.3
BLAIR	199.7	GREENE	345.4	PIKE	10.8
BRADFORD	25.1	HUNTINGDON	6.6	POTTER	1,396.1
BUCKS	116.3	INDIANA	263.0	SCHUYLKILL	5.4
BUTLER	146.2	JEFFERSON	713.8	SNYDER	858.0
CAMBRIA	698.6	JUNIATA	52.5	SOMERSET	1,275.3
CAMERON	0.0	LACKAWANNA	119.0	SULLIVAN	2,472.5
CARBON	642.6	LANCASTER	417.6	SUSQUEHANNA	29.9
CENTRE	996.9	LAWRENCE	163.7	TIOGA	410.0
CHESTER	442.8	LEBANON	21.8	UNION	4.6
CLARION	247.3	LEHIGH	331.9	VENANGO	220.4
CLEARFIELD	37.9	LUZERNE	997.1	WARREN	45.5
CLINTON	123.2	LYCOMING	642.2	WASHINGTON	731.4
COLUMBIA	224.7	McKEAN	58.0	WAYNE	2,261.6
CRAWFORD	967.1	MERCER	1,058.7	WESTMORELAND	233.8
CUMBERLAND	768.7	MIFFLIN	503.2	WYOMING	136.2
DAUPHIN	110.8	MONROE	490.0	YORK	497.4
DELAWARE	0.0				
TOTALS.....	11,802.0		11,535.1		
					TOTAL ACRES
				11,164.0	34,501.1
MEAN =	514.94				

INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA FISH COMMISSION

PENNSYLVANIA'S STATE PARKS

COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES	COUNTY	ACRES
ADAMS	145.20	ELK	2,990.36	MONTGOMERY	4,532.90
ALLEGHENY	36.00	ERIE	3,202.00	MONTOUR	0.00
ARMSTRONG	0.00	FAYETTE	20,995.48	NORTHAMPTON	1,236.49
BEAVER	7,572.38	FOREST	1,585.60	NORTHUMBERLAND	135.62
BEDFORD	9,956.48	FRANKLIN	1,254.87	PERRY	979.86
BERKS	7,135.82	FULTON	857.00	PHILADELPHIA	274.87
BLAIR	959.47	GREENE	1,164.15	PIKE	5,808.26
BRADFORD	1,302.29	HUNTINGDON	1,202.84	POTTER	2,136.75
BUCKS	7,858.04	INDIANA	2,926.80	SCHUYLKILL	3,780.51
BUTLER	16,428.40	JEFFERSON	1,362.00	SNYDER	486.00
CAMBRIA	9,480.81	JUNIATA	0.00	SOMERSET	9,773.33
CAMERON	10,713.40	LACKAWANNA	1,564.48	SULLIVAN	2,572.42
CARBON	21,845.22	LANCASTER	224.25	SUSQUEHANNA	400.02
CENTRE	9,985.83	LAWRENCE	2,533.70	TIOGA	1,359.58
CHESTER	3,833.66	LEBANON	2,754.00	UNION	775.06
CLARION	4,683.40	LEHIGH	0.00	VENANGO	7,017.31
CLEARFIELD	1,286.00	LUZERNE	15,581.95	WARREN	804.68
CLINTON	9,489.23	LYCOMING	2,183.59	WASHINGTON	3,654.00
COLUMBIA	73.46	McKEAN	617.98	WAYNE	943.56
CRAWFORD	21,127.86	MERCER	2,856.72	WESTMORELAND	6,165.01
CUMBERLAND	2,423.00	MIFFLIN	220.00	WYOMING	0.00
DAUPHIN	0.00	MONROE	8,602.58	YORK	5,698.44
DELAWARE	2,606.66				
TOTALS.....	148,942.61		74,680.35		58,534.67
					TOTAL ACRES
					282,157.63
MEAN =	4,211.31				