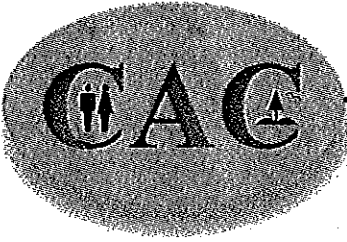


File copy



Citizens Advisory Council

to the Department of Environmental Protection

P.O. Box 8459 • Rachel Carson State Office Building

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8459 • 717-787-4527 • Fax 717-772-2291

Please Note: Our New Fax Number is 717-772-5748

June 5, 2000

Dear Representative:

The Citizens Advisory Council to the Department of Environmental Protection has discussed the suite of bills being considered to amend the Municipal Planning Code: House Bills 13 and 14 and Senate Bill 300. Overall, these bills represent some very positive and much needed changes in Pennsylvania's Municipal Planning Code to allow our local governments to properly plan and manage local land uses. However, certain provisions added to Senate Bill 300 would actually diminish the authority of local governments to deal with certain land uses, including intensive animal operations, mining and timber harvesting.

The intent of these bills is to empower local governments to do a better job of land use planning. However, the exceptions carved out for these special interests in the current version of Senate Bill 300 limit this ability and in fact prevent local communities from addressing development that could have a significant impact on the lives of local residents and the fortunes of nearby businesses. Each of these land uses has their place, but each carries with it the potential for significant environmental and quality of life impacts. The Council questions why these land uses should be placed above other land uses in being held accountable to local rules at the expense of other residents and businesses that also have a right to enjoy their homes and make a living.

The House needs to remove provisions from the Senate Bill that would unfairly protect these special interests from being held accountable for their activities. Retaining these provisions runs counter to the stated intent of these bills and will leave local governments and their residents more vulnerable and less able to plan for the needs of their communities.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (717) 787-4527.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Wilson
Executive Director

