

Testimony of Nathan Eachus

Luzerne County, Pennsylvania

My name is Nathan Eachus, a concerned Pennsylvania citizen, and I come before you today deeply alarmed by our state's ongoing failure to protect public health from oil and gas pollution, radioactive wastewater, and the unchecked growth of fossil-fueled data centers.

Let's start with the facts.

- In May 2025, a tanker truck spilled 2,000 gallons of fracking wastewater into a creek just a few miles from Mansfield University.
- In March, Coterra spilled 12,600 gallons of wastewater in Bridgewater Township, Susquehanna County.
- In August, during the Little League World Series, Eureka Resources leaked 16,000 gallons of radioactive wastewater into the Susquehanna River at Williamsport, while radiation detectors inside the facility showed dangerously high levels of contamination that workers were never warned about.

Coterra Energy was fined \$299,000 this summer for contaminating 13 private water supplies in Lenox Township near famous Acre Lake. But that contamination began in 2021, families lived for years with poisoned water before DEP finally acted. And still owe Dimock PA a water line since 2009. This is just one example of a much larger truth: Pennsylvania's oil and gas industry has spilled, leaked, and contaminated drinking water supplies *thousands of times*, while continuing to operate with little more than token fines and no long-term accountability.

Now, unbelievably, DEP is considering making this crisis worse.

A petition to amend (25 Pa. Code Chapter 78a) would allow drillers to set up wastewater processing and storage facilities at *any* well site, not just the one where it was generated or used. That means radioactive, highly toxic wastewater could be hauled across the state, stored and processed in new places, and then trucked to yet another site for reuse. The result will be more spills, more hazardous radioactive worker exposure, more community contamination, and zero accountability.

For a state that already suffers the second-highest cancer rate in the nation, this is reckless and dangerous. It confirms just how deeply industry influence has corrupted both DEP and the Pennsylvania Department of Health's regulatory mission. DEP is scheduled to discuss this petition on September 11 at a meeting of the agency's Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board. **I urge a No Vote.**

At the same time, Pennsylvania faces new water and air threats.

Fossil-fueled data centers are expanding rapidly. In Shelby County, Tennessee, Elon Musk's xAI data center runs on 15 methane turbines, polluting a community already burdened with poor air quality and now has the most air quality complaints in the state. That is not innovation, it is environmental injustice.

Here in Pennsylvania, we are now facing similar proposals:

- A 4.5-gigawatt methane-powered facility at Homer City, the largest such project ever proposed in the U.S.
- Amazon's expansions in Berwick and Hazle Township.

According to Susquehanna River Basin Commission Executive Andrew Dehoff, each of these data centers will consume up to **5 million gallons of water per day** for cooling. Paired with fossil-fueled turbines, these facilities will emit massive amounts of methane and VOCs while straining and polluting water resources already at risk. Where is the public education from our state agencies about this methane pollution from data centers?

Meanwhile, our communities are already in crisis.

On June 23, 2025, Freeport Township Supervisors in Greene County declared a Disaster Emergency after residents impacted by a gas-related water contamination event had gone without permanent water supplies for three years. Just weeks later, on August 7, 2025, Springhill Township Supervisors did the same, filing their own Disaster Emergency Declaration after residents faced the identical crisis, homes left without permanent water for three years.

I respectfully request that these documents be attached to the permanent record. They bring to light the very issues this leadership group is intentionally choosing to neglect.

I have joined nearly every Citizens Advisory Committee call over the past year. Public comments are never truly discussed in a roundtable. The Public Participation Committee is tasked with that responsibility, yet the rhythm of these meetings consistently sidelines citizens' comments while elevating industry interests. Legacy pollution and public health risks are intentionally ignored.

So I ask plainly:

- Why wasn't Freeport Township's Disaster Emergency placed on the July agenda, when its pollution was publicly announced on June 23 2025?
- Why is neither Freeport nor Springhill on today's agenda, when both communities have taken the extraordinary step of declaring official Disaster Emergencies (From

the Township Supervisors of both townships) after losing their drinking water to EQT drilling?

If this body cannot even acknowledge these emergencies, then it is failing the very citizens it is meant to represent.

Pennsylvania cannot afford to normalize the destruction of its most vital resources.

Clean water is not negotiable.

Public health is not expendable.

And the future of this state must not be sacrificed to the profits of oil, gas, and fossil-fueled data centers.

That concludes my testimony.