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Legislation Before Gov. Wolf Would Make Fracking Worse

Coalition of environmental groups ask Governor Wolf to veto bill that promotes the use of treated mine water for fracking

Harrisburg, PA – Today, 13 environmental groups from across Pennsylvania sent Governor Tom Wolf a letter urging him to veto Senate Bill 875, which would promote the use of treated mine water for oil and gas development. Senate Bill 875 was introduced in the spring; amended in the House this fall; the amended bill was recently approved by the Senate and is now on the Governor's desk.

The groups have been working to defeat the legislation since its inception. In their letter to the Governor, the groups say "This legislation would give a far-reaching waiver of liability to coal and oil and gas companies in the Commonwealth--industrial sectors with a track record of pollution in Pennsylvania that we continue to try and remediate today, often at great expense."

They also point out in the letter that "peer-reviewed science does not support the General Assembly's claims that treated coal mine water is "an acceptable source of water" and can be "effectively substituted for fresh water" for use in oil and gas well development" and that "mine water treated to effluent standards still contains contaminants and will introduce pollution in watersheds where it does not now exist, spreading degraded water to wherever a driller wants to use it."

They further state that "the damage that would be done by taking mine water away from coal mining impacted watersheds is unjust and harms communities and environments that are bearing the burden of coal mining activity and struggling to bring these degraded streams back to life".

They conclude their objections by arguing that the legislation will take Pennsylvania in the wrong direction by reinforcing exemptions and state government officials are bound by the Pennsylvania Constitution's Environmental Rights Amendment (Article I, Section 27).

A full copy of the letter sent to Governor Wolf is available at <http://bit.ly/1KPVxHf>

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