



STATEMENT OF JOANNE KILGOUR, DIRECTOR, SIERRA CLUB PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

FEBRUARY 17, 2015 MEETING OF THE DEP CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Good morning and thank you for your attention to the Act 54 Report and your willingness to hear testimony from the public on this matter during your March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting in Harrisburg. This is a critically important issue to Pennsylvania residents, especially those in the Southwestern corner of the state in Washington and Greene Counties.

Today, I am here to respectfully request that the CAC consider holding an additional or alternative meeting in Washington, PA so that the residents of Washington, Greene, and parts of Allegheny County who are most impacted by longwall mining are able to provide in-person testimony and share their perspectives with the Council for its consideration. I am joined in my request by dozens of community members who would greatly appreciate the opportunity to be heard by CAC members.

The Act 54 Report prepared by the University of Pittsburgh is able to provide a solid factual basis on which to evaluate underground mining impacts, regulations, monitoring, and data-collection. In addition to the valuable experience of individual council members, the experience of the community members living in proximity to some of the state's largest underground mining operations can help to contextualize the data presented in the report and inform the interpretation of this data as the CAC crafts its own comments.

While we appreciate the opportunity to provide written feedback and comments to the Council – and plan to do so – the opportunity to speak directly to Council members is invaluable to local residents. The CAC's willingness to host a meeting in Washington, PA would be a demonstration of its commitment to serving the public interest of the Commonwealth and fulfilling the mission of the Council. Additionally, such a meeting would provide helpful on-the-ground context and examples from which the CAC could draw as it crafts recommendations to the Department.

Thank you for your consideration.