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Dear Legislator,

I am writing on behalf of PennEnvironment in support of [House Bill 170](#), State Representative Danielle Friel Otten's bill to protect the health of Pennsylvanians by increasing setback distance from fracked gas well sites and related infrastructure. This proposed legislation would increase the mandatory buffer distance from 500 feet to 2,500 feet for homes and 5,000 feet for schools and hospitals to protect Pennsylvania's most vulnerable populations. PennEnvironment is a statewide, people-powered environmental non-profit.

[Health research over the last decade has shown that a 500-foot setback exposes residents to unsafe levels of air and water pollution](#) linked to [cancer, impacts on birth outcomes, and other serious health problems](#). This pollution is especially harmful to children, the elderly, and those with respiratory problems. [A 2020 Pennsylvania Grand Jury report on fracking](#) called the current setback distance "woefully inadequate" and recommended a 2,500 foot buffer between fracking and homes, as well as greater distances for schools.

What's more, the public supports increasing the distance between fracking and our communities. A 2021 poll found that [more than 60% of Pennsylvania voters supported increasing setback distances from fracking infrastructure](#).

[House Bill 170](#) will put these recommendations into practice, by requiring a buffer of at least 2,500 feet around well sites and related infrastructure, and 5,000 feet around schools and hospitals to better protect Pennsylvanians.

Every day, the Commonwealth's residents are at risk due to our outdated laws. We urge you to support [House Bill 170](#) to better protect Pennsylvanians' health and safety.

Sincerely,

Zachary A. Barber

Zachary Barber
Clean Air Advocate
PennEnvironment