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Dear Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee Members,

My name is Carl M. Herdering. I am a retired USMC Colonel, a geologist and a resident of Garrett County, MD. I am writing to the Committee today to voice my strong opposition to SB0878 Oil and Natural Gas - Hydraulic Fracturing - Authorization.

Please vote NO on this bill.

Our western MD elected representatives sponsor and vote on bills without allowing their constituents to weigh in. Of course, regarding hydraulic fracturing being allowed in Garrett County, our representatives know full well that we have already been through this fight, during which the majority of Garrett Countians made it crystal clear that fracking is not welcomed here or anywhere in Maryland. The majority's strong opposition to fracking was voiced in the years that led up to the decision to ban fracking in 2017. The ban legislative decision was supported and signed by then-Governor Larry Hogan.

It is unbelievable and disheartening and anger inducing that SB0878 was filed without public knowledge and an opportunity for us to express our concerns and ask questions about its filing. I do not want to see Garrett County,

where the Marcellus Shale intersects with Maryland, fracked to the detriment of our economic, environmental, and public health.

Because I am geologist, I specifically oppose fracking because gas drilling in karst topography, distinct for Garrett County, presents significant challenges due to the presence of large, interconnected underground cavities which can lead to issues such as a sudden loss of drilling fluid, potential for gas blowouts, and contamination of groundwater, making it a high-risk operation requiring specialized techniques and careful geological mapping to mitigate hazards; essentially, drilling in karst can be extremely dangerous because of the unpredictable nature of the rock formations with large open spaces and channels that can easily swallow drilling fluids and potentially cause well blowouts.

In addition there are numerous harmful and dangerous environmental reasons to keep fracking banned in MD. Above ground, emissions from gas wells pose numerous environmental problems through the release of carbon dioxide. Gas emissions also include pollutants like nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and volatile organic compounds which can contribute to smog and Respiratory health issues. Wildlife can co-mingle with well sites placing them near contaminants that can make them unsafe to hunt for food. Polluted aquifers can infiltrate drinking water sources and streams, contaminating aquatic life and ecosystems.

And let's not forget the extreme water consumption and dangerous disposal of same needed when fracking for gas. The original estimate was that Garrett County would drill 438 wells by 2025, requiring 3.5 billion gallons of water will be

removed from Garrett County's resources. The water is not reusable and will need to be disposed of. It is uncertain where disposals would occur. Common practice is drilling injection wells then forcing the waste water back underground. A chemical cocktail is added to fracking water making it toxic and a potential contaminate for aquifers. The Wolman Report was never completed which studied the availability of water in Maryland. Garrett County was not included in the report, leaving a gap in knowledge about available water.

Fracking will drain our resources and ultimately contradict the state's future goals and path to economic, environmental, and public health, most severely here in Garrett County.

I urge you to please vote no on SB0878.

Thank you,

Col. C.M. Herdering, USMC ret.

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