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**Dear Devoted members of our Education, Energy,
and the Environment Committee:**

I am Linda L. Herdering, a former long-standing business owner and resident of Garrett County, MD. Throughout previous years my family and I were very active in promoting the ban of hydraulic fracturing in MD. It was exceedingly clear to us (and our entire community) how dangerous, health damaging, water contaminating, environment ruining, home value and local economy devastating, and simply extremely stupid it would be to allow fracking in MD. There would be no benefit whatsoever for the “average Marylander”—only for the gas companies and big landowners who would sell out to them. I ask you to please say no to SB0878.

Fracking would be especially harmful to the two far western counties of MD for that’s where most of the MD underground shale gas is located. It’s also one of the most environmentally pristine areas of our entire

state. Unfortunately, not many in eastern parts of the MD knew much and thought little about it then—maybe even the same now—for it was and will not happen in their backyard. Very fortunately, the science and validity of enacting a ban was embraced at the time by some of our devoted legislators and our then-Governor Hogan—resulting in a state ban. In fact, a few MD legislators who opposed fracking then are still active in our General Assembly now and we are ever so grateful. What our then-Governor Hogan said remains true today and will always: "It's [fracking] is not worth the risk."

Look now! Years later a sneaky, last minute, under cover bill was introduced by a few legislators, including Western MD Senator McKay—who asked for exactly zero input from his constituents. Seriously? Why? He should know, and would have learned if he asked, that there is absolutely no economic gain or any other benefit to be had in Western MD by fracking, only extreme harm to all except for the industry itself. This has been proven in many studies of horrifically fracked areas in nearby Pennsylvania. Wait... there is one gain which could be had. One of monetary payments to those holders of land tracts sold to gas companies. In my opinion, these (and gas industry folks) are the only people who would NOT oppose this ban (and might promote it for that reason now.)

And speaking of land, many landowners do not own their own mineral rights to their property. They would be forced out by contaminated wells, toxic air pollution, road and landscape damage, and perhaps acquire and suffer from cancer—all proven to be caused by fracking wells in nearby PA. Not to mention become unable to sell their hard-earned land—who would buy it with a fracking well on it?

I beg you to please put this stupid bill to rest now and forever. The ban should be permanent—not a question to again prove necessary now or in the future. We in MD are pioneers of what is best—a beacon to other states who envy our intelligence of banning fracking for our people, our heritage and our future.

Again, I implore you to please oppose SB 878.

Sincerely,

Linda L. Herdering

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