



Fossil fuel in the foreground and alternative energy in the background, seen in this photo and in government-subsidized energy policies. Photo credit: Brooke Woodside

Greetings!

Subsidies: your tax dollars at work improving the bottom line of private corporations.

What would Pennsylvania's future look like if the playing field was leveled and energy subsidies removed from the equation? One thing is certain; the risk of placing so many eggs in the fossil fuel basket would be blatantly evident. In PA, the fossil fuel industry gobbles up \$3.2 billion, nearly the entire energy subsidy pie. Read more in this week's feature story.

Such is not the case with government subsidies in many other countries and states. While PA's DEP has issued 16,319 drilling permits, New York and Hawaii have a different outlook on the future. [Hawaii recently passed legislation that would require 100% of the state's electricity to come from renewable energy by 2045.](#) What would subsidizing a sustainable energy future look like? One thing is certain, it would not look like forests and landscapes fragmented by access roads and well pads or hundreds of miles of new pipelines. It would not include the 1,790,382,904 (yes, that's nearly 2 BILLION) gallons of liquid waste generated to date by PA gas wells.

In This Issue

[Fossil Fuel Subsidies](#)
[A Letter from the Governor](#)
[Events/Action Points](#)
[In Other News](#)
[Join RDA!](#)
[Newsletter Archive](#)

Events/ Action Points

[Merchants of Doubt](#)
[Support Clean Energy in PA](#)
[Respect Our Voices](#)
[Don't Sell Our Public Lands](#)
[No Fracking Public Lands](#)

In Other News

Texas Governor prohibits cities and towns from banning fracking

Last year, a city in Texas banned fracking. State lawmakers want to make sure that never happens again.

"It's a bad situation when city leaders' hands are tied," said Councilman Kevin Roden. "There seems to be an attitude that big state government knows better than the citizens of a city. I just think-conservative or liberal-that is something you



Along with hundreds of other petroleum-loving business folks, Williamsport Chamber of Commerce president Vince Matteo received a letter from Governor Tom Wolf this week. One thing is certain; Vince did not agree with the letter. You can decide who you agree with, as we share Governor Wolf's letter with you in article #2 this week.

A ban on bans? "In Other News" links to a story by Russell Gold of the Wall Street Journal about Texas Governor Abbott (R) signing a law prohibiting municipal and county governments from banning fracking. One thing is certain; this is all part of a broader legislative and judicial effort backed by the oil industry to limit local governments' ability to regulate drilling.

The window for comments on DEP's proposed rulemaking for oil and gas operations has now closed. RDA joined with many other NGO's and submitted our final comments, [which can be accessed by clicking here](#). RDA offers a sincere thanks to all of our members who submitted comments on these crucial regulations.

One final thing is certain, there's a lot to learn in this week's newsletter.

Thanks for staying informed.

Sincerely,

Barb Jarmoska
RDA Board of Directors

Visit our website at: www.rdapa.org

Report: PA dishes out \$3.2 billion in fossil fuels subsidies while state faces \$1.5 billion deficit

by Natasha Khan - Public Source - 4/15/15

A new [report](#) says Pennsylvania provided more than \$3.2 billion in subsidies to the fossil fuel industry, much of which went to the state's booming natural gas industry, at a time when the state carries a \$1.5 billion budget deficit and very

don't do in Texas."

Other critics of the bill said the balance of power between cities and the energy industry had been tilted toward drillers.

[Click here for the full article as printed in the Wall Street Journal](#)

PA Natural Gas Drilling Permits and Violations

The following were discovered through the Sky Truth website:

5-13-15 - Drill & operate well permit issued - Shrewsbury Twp, Sullivan County (Exco Resources PA IIc)
[Click here for more info.](#)

5-11-15 - Defective casing and cementing - Moreland Twp, Lycoming County (Range Resources Appalachia IIc)
[Click here for more info.](#)

5-11-15 - 35-40 gallons of frack fluid was spilled and cleaned up - Anthony Twp, Lycoming County (Range Resources Appalachia IIc)
[Click here for more info.](#)

5-05-15 - Drill & operate well permit issued - Loyalsock Twp, Lycoming County (Inflection Energy (PA) IIc)
[Click here for more info.](#)

Merchants of Doubt

Friday, May 29, 7 pm

Campus Theatre
413 Market St, Lewisburg

This documentary focuses on the public relations business and how the same tactics used by the tobacco industry for "doubt" about cancer, are used by the gas and oil industries.

Immediately following the film, a panel will answer questions and offer insight on climate change.

Merchants of Doubt is sponsored by the Rivertown Coalition, Keystone Progress, Otzinachson Group of the Sierra Club, and the Susquehanna Valley Progressives.

[Click here for the facebook event.](#)

little investment in the renewable energy industry.

"This report is about transparency," Rob Altenburg, director of PennFuture's Energy Center, the group that put out the report, said in a [statement](#). "Creating billions of dollars worth of fossil fuel subsidies while neglecting sensible long-term investments is a choice that has consequences not only for the citizens of Pennsylvania today but for our children and future generations."

A fossil fuel subsidy is "any government action that lowers the cost of fossil fuel energy production, raises the price received by fossil fuel energy producers, or lowers the price paid by fossil fuel energy consumers," according to the International Energy Administration.

PennFuture, a state environmental advocacy group, said the cost of these subsidies equals about \$724 per Pennsylvania taxpayer.

Subsidies have increased recently, too. A previous PennFuture report for fiscal year 2011-2012 showed annual fossil fuel subsidies were \$2.9 billion. The new report looked at fiscal year 2012-2013.

"We need to evaluate the total costs of ongoing subsidies, especially with respect to unconventional shale gas development," said PennFuture President and CEO John Norbeck in the statement, "in the hopes of avoiding the historical remediation and reclamation costs the state, and taxpayers, have endured on abandoned oil, gas and coal extraction sites. We can't go down that road again."

From the report:

Most federal fossil fuel subsidies are directed toward the "extraction and production" phase of the fuel cycle, essentially improving the economics of fossil fuel extraction. In Pennsylvania, the majority of state-based subsidies are directed toward the "end use" phase of the fuel cycle, making use of fossil fuels more attractive to users in the state.

The report laid out several recommendations moving forward, including further research needed on potential subsidies and the long-term liabilities of unconventional shale gas development, and having a non-partisan governmental group develop a comprehensive report on fossil fuel subsidies.

[Check out the full report here.](#)

Reach Natasha Khan at nkhan@publicsource.org or 412.315.0261. Follow her on Twitter @khantasha.

Governor Wolf Tells PA Chamber to Stop Putting Oil and Gas Interests Ahead of Children and Schools

Harrisburg, PA - 5/18/15 - Governor Tom Wolf today sent a letter to the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry regarding their misguided opposition to a commonsense severance tax in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania remains the only major gas-producing state in the country without a tax on natural gas.

Since the introduction of Governor Wolf's budget, the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry has repeatedly put oil and gas interests over the interests of children and fixing our schools. Instead of working with the governor on shared priorities including greater investments in education, manufacturing, workforce development, as well as major business tax cuts that will enable companies to invest in Pennsylvania and grow here these groups are simply supporting the status quo.

Support Clean Energy in Pennsylvania

Today, under the EPA's Clean Power Plan to limit carbon pollution from power plants, Pennsylvania has an unprecedented opportunity to transition away from dirty fossil fuels and towards a cleaner, healthier future based on renewable energy and energy efficiency. By developing a strong plan to comply with the Clean Power Plan, Pennsylvania can save thousands of lives while creating jobs, lowering electric bills, and preventing the worst effects of climate change.

Tell Governor Wolf to protect the health and future of all Pennsylvanians by developing a plan that promotes zero-emitting renewable energy and energy efficiency.

[Click here to sign the petition created by the Clean Air Council.](#)

Respect Our Voices on Oil and Gas Oversight

If the Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association (PIOGA) had their way, PA shalefield residents and public interest groups would "~~have no place~~" on oil and gas oversight bodies.

Tell PA Governor Tom Wolf and DEP Secretary John Quigley that shalefield residents and public interest groups should be front and center in overseeing the oil and gas industries.

[Click here to sign this petition prepared for you by the Clean Air Council.](#)

Tell Congress: America's Public Lands are Not for Sale

This latest assault on America's public lands is at the hands of Sen. Lisa Murkowski, the new Republican chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Her amendment, which passed by two votes and is now a part of

Governor Wolf sent letters to business leaders at the following organizations:

- The Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry
- America's Natural Gas Alliance
- Associated Pennsylvania Constructors
- Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania
- Consumer Energy Alliance
- Manufacturer & Business Association
- Marcellus Shale Coalition
- National Federation of Independent Businesses
- Pennsylvania Aggregates and Concrete Association
- Pennsylvania Business Council
- Pennsylvania Builders Association
- Pennsylvania Chemical Industry Council
- Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association
- Pennsylvania Forest Products Association
- Independent Oil and Gas Association
- Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association
- Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association

Below is the full text of Governor Wolf's letter:

Dear _____:

As a businessman and a former member of the board of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce and the former president of my local board, I am disappointed that you have come out in opposition to a commonsense severance tax that will help to fund Pennsylvania's schools and achieve many of our shared priorities. Furthermore, it seems that your decision is based less on the facts and our shared policy goals, and more on your need to appease oil and gas special interests.

When I crafted my budget, I took many ideas from the business community including increased funding for schools to produce a strong workforce, a lower corporate net income tax, an end of the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax, and an investment in manufacturing and workforce development. Politics aside, I know from my experience in business that these ideas work and as business people yourselves, you know the same.

Your organizations support lowering the Corporate Net Income Tax, phasing out the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax, investing in manufacturing and our workforce, and most importantly, funding our schools and making sure that you have a strong workforce to draw from. But instead of working together to achieve our shared goals, you have chosen to side with corporate special interests who simply seek to oppose progress and real economic development.

The facts you outlined in your letter are simply talking points from the oil and gas drillers. It is bogus rhetoric, and it does nothing to change Pennsylvania, fix our schools, or create jobs. You know that the severance tax I've proposed is critical to getting Pennsylvania back on track, and it will do so at minimal cost to Pennsylvania citizens. You know that since Pennsylvania exports a significant amount of the natural gas it produces, an estimated 80% of the tax will be paid by non-Pennsylvanians. Furthermore, despite false claims to the contrary, natural gas companies remain strongly profitable. Last year the value of natural gas severed in Pennsylvania was nearly \$11 billion, up from \$4 billion in 2011. Moreover, natural gas prices, which have been depressed both nationally and locally, are expected to improve significantly by the time the severance tax takes effect next year.

You have repeatedly called for major reductions in our Corporate Net Income Tax rate. My budget cuts the CNI in half. Why aren't you supporting me on this?

You have long said we have to end the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax. My

the Senate's official budget, would fund state efforts to seize America's public lands and then sell them off to the highest bidder.

Under state control, these public lands would likely be sold off for real estate or fossil fuel extraction. Hundreds of millions of acres of pristine public lands in the American West that are the cradle of future national parks, monuments, and preserves would instead be sacrificed to dirty oil drilling and fracking companies.

According to New Mexico Sen. Martin Heinrich, who stands in opposition to these attacks, "selling off America's treasured lands to the highest bidder would result in a proliferation of locked gates and no-trespassing signs in places that have been open to the public and used for generations."

[Click here to sign this petition.](#)

Ban Fracking on Public Lands

U.S. Representative Mark Pocan re-introduced the bill to ban fracking on public lands (Earth Day - 4/22/15).

Fracking has already caused serious damage to our public lands, particularly in the areas that serve to buffer America's most precious national parks and monuments. By the end of 2014, oil and gas companies had leases on over 34 million acres of public land, and over 200 million more acres are currently being targeted for drilling.

[Click here to sign Food & Water Watch's petition.](#)

Join RDA!

Sign Up/Make a Donation

We welcome your active participation and are in need of help for special events, publicity, research and other projects.

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, RDA relies on donations for the important work we do. In order for RDA to continue its valuable education and advocacy

budget does so on Jan 1. Why aren't you working with me to end the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax?

You have called for a stronger education system. Education is the cornerstone of my budget. And the investments we will make in our schools will come from a commonsense severance tax. Why aren't you working with me to fix our schools?

You have called for workforce development and a focus on manufacturing. My budget will support the growth of manufacturing in Pennsylvania and it will do so in part by strengthening our workforce. Why aren't you working with me to create new manufacturing jobs in Pennsylvania?

We cannot keep doing the same thing and expecting different results in Pennsylvania. Instead of working with me to address our shared priorities, you are standing with oil and gas special interests and opposing progress for Pennsylvania. You are ignoring your own priorities and you are hurting businesses, schools, and the people of Pennsylvania who desperately need change. It is simply unacceptable.

Now is the time to do big things in Pennsylvania. That's what I'm trying to do. What you're doing is ignoring your own goals and your own priorities and in the process, you're letting down our commonwealth.

Tom Wolf

MEDIA CONTACT: Jeff Sheridan - 717.783.1116

[Back to Top](#)

outreach in 2015, please consider a tax-free contribution to our efforts.

You can send a donation to the address listed at the bottom of this email, [click here to donate via PayPal](#), or [click here to download our current membership form](#) to fill out and send in along with your donation.

Membership levels:
Adventurer.....\$10
Explorer.....\$20
Woodlander.....\$50
Guardian.....\$100
Naturalist.....\$500
Preservationist.....\$1,000

www.RDAPA.org

Past Newsletters

[Click here to access our newsletter archive.](#)

[Join Our Mailing List](#)

RDA Newsletter

Brooke Woodside, RDA Working Group, Managing Editor
Barb Jarmoska, Treasurer - RDA Board of Directors, Editor
Ralph Kisberg, RDA Working Group, Contributing Editor
Ted Stroter, RDA Working Group, Chemical Advisor & Contributing Editor
Jim Slotterback, President - RDA Board of Directors
Robbie Cross, Vice President - RDA Board of Directors
Jenni Slotterback, Secretary - RDA Board of Directors
Mark Szybist - RDA Board of Directors
Roscoe McCloskey - RDA Board of Directors
Dianne Peeling - RDA Board of Directors



This biweekly e-newsletter is written and designed by the RDA consultants and Board of Directors and sent to RDA members/subscribers. Every effort is made to assure complete accuracy in each issue. This publication and the information contained herein is copyrighted by RDA and may not be reproduced without permission. All rights reserved. Readers are invited to forward this newsletter in its entirety to broaden the scope of its outreach. There is a forward link below. Readers are also invited to submit articles to be considered for publication in a future issue.

Please note: The RDA newsletter includes reporting on a variety of events and activities, which do not necessarily reflect the philosophy of the organization. RDA practices only non-violent action in voicing the organization's beliefs and concerns.

Responsible Drilling Alliance | responsibledrillingalliance@gmail.com
<http://www.rdapa.org>
Phone: 888.332.1244 (toll free)

Please mail donations to:
RDA, PO Box 502, Williamsport, PA 17703



Copyright © 2014. All Rights Reserved.