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Savage River Watershed Association

**Marcellus Shale Follow-up # 16
February 15, 2013**

Action Alert from CitizenShale

Become Familiar with Proposed Bills

CitizenShale has compiled a list of 20 proposed bills pertaining to shale gas development in Maryland. The bills will each be heard in one of five committees in Annapolis beginning February 26, 2013. Each bill is outlined on a [special page](#) on the CitizenShale website. Bills range in topics from pipeline safety to a severance tax rate, from a legislative moratorium on permitting to a complete ban on hydraulic fracturing. Most of the bills proposed would protect Marylanders from known and unknown impacts of industrial shale gas development. Visit citizenshale.org and learn more about each bill and ways that you can take action by presenting testimony in person, or writing a letter to the appropriate committee.

Garrett-Allegany Marcellus Coalition

Update from Smokey Stanton

HB 826 / SB 766 Business Occupations – Oil and Gas Land Professionals – Registration. (cross-filed: Beitzel and Edwards): Synopsis: Prohibiting a person from operating as an oil or gas land professional in the State unless the person registers with and obtains a registration certificate from the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; requiring a person to register as a land professional in a specified manner; requiring the Department to assign a registration number and issue a registration certificate to a specified person; requiring a land professional to provide specified proof to a property owner before obtaining specified mineral rights; etc.

The concept for these bills is supported by the Governor's Marcellus Shale Commission. SB 766 will be heard on February 26, 1:00 PM in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. HB 828 will be heard on March 8, 1:00 PM in the House Environmental Matters Committee. You can read the bill at: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2013RS/bills/hb/hb0828F.pdf>

SB 854 Environment – Gas and Oil Drilling – Financial Assurance. (Edwards): Synopsis: Requiring a specified permit application to include a specified closure cost estimate; repealing specified bonding requirements; requiring a holder of a permit to drill for gas or oil to comply with specified requirements under specified circumstances; requiring a specified permit holder to provide specified financial assurance in accordance with specified requirements; requiring a specified permit holder's financial assurance to extend to specified owners and to cover specified acts and omissions; etc.

The concept for this bill is supported by the Governor's Marcellus Shale Commission. No hearing date has been scheduled as of today. You can read the bill at: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2013RS/bills/sb/sb0854F.pdf>

SB 601 Maryland Hydraulic Fracturing Moratorium and Right to Know Act of 2013 (Zirkin and six others): Synopsis: Prohibiting the Department of the Environment from issuing a permit for the hydraulic fracturing of a well for the exploration or production of natural gas until specified conditions are met; requiring the Department of the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources to issue a specified risk assessment at the same time a specified report is issued; authorizing the Department of the Environment to establish and collect a specified fee under specified circumstances; etc.

This bill has been scheduled for hearing February 26, 1:00 PM in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. You can read the bill at: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2013RS/bills/sb/sb0601F.pdf>

HB 1274 Maryland Hydraulic Fracturing Moratorium and Right to Know Act of 2013 (Mizeur and twenty-two others): Synopsis: Prohibiting the Department of the Environment from issuing a permit for the hydraulic fracturing of a well for the exploration or production of natural gas until specified conditions are met; requiring the Department of the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources to issue a specified risk assessment at the same time a specified report is issued; authorizing the Department of the Environment to establish and collect a specified fee under specified circumstances; etc.

This bill has been scheduled for hearing March 8, 1:00 PM in the House Environmental Matters Committee. You can read the bill at: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2013RS/bills/hb/hb1274F.pdf>

Analysis of SB 601 and HB 1274. These two bills look similar, but are not the same and are not cross-filed. Both bills establish a statutory moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in Maryland until certain conditions are met, most notably until: 1. completion of the studies required under the Executive Order; 2. Eighteen months have passed after the final study (report) is issued; and 3. Regulations are adopted. Both bills require a risk assessment of fracking to be completed at the time of the final report using the categories of slight, moderate, major or catastrophic and probabilities of rare, occasional, periodic, and frequent. Both bills require written request documentation from the gas industry to allow the Department of the Environment to collect fees to pay for the studies. The major difference between the two bills is requirements for regulations: HB 1274 specifies MDE shall include restrictions or prohibitions to protect the public health and the environment, be at least as protective as the findings and recommendations of the studies, and include the risk assessment. SB 601 requires regulations to include those items. While both bills are satisfactory, HB 1274 is preferable because it is more specific in its requirements and expectations of the implementing regulations.

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*SRWA is a group of local landowners and other citizens dedicated to preserving and enhancing the rural nature and natural resources of the Savage River watershed by assisting interested landowners and public land managers with environmental stewardship efforts and educational outreach.*

*Board Members: Kenny Braitman, Annie Bristow, John Fritts,  
Ed Gates, Carol McDaniel, Liz McDowell, Rich Raesly, Tom Wolfe*

*SRWA is a 501c3 non-profit charitable organization. Please consider joining or making a donation.  
For more information visit our web site at [www.savageriverwatershed.org](http://www.savageriverwatershed.org)*