

Michele Fetting comments – PTTG Hearing, Shadyside, Ohio – Nov. 27, 2018

My name is Michele Fetting and I'm the program manager of the Breathe Project and a resident of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania.

I'm representing the residents of Beaver Pennsylvania where the Shell ethane refinery, very similar to the PTTG, is currently under construction.

I'm here to share a warning to our neighbors in Ohio about what can happen when you build a petrochemical refinery.

First – This is not about a single plant. This one plant will require 1000 new gas wells to be fracked each year, to provide feedstock to the plant and make plastic.

If they frack for gas in southeast Ohio, they don't have to transport it too far to reach the plant.

Before you know it, fracking will occur in your neighborhood, like it did mine. And in the most unexpected places. Very quickly and often behind closed doors with little public input.

Second – The PTTG plant requires ethane which must be extracted from the fracked gas, which will require significant gas processing facilities, to separate the ethane from methane.

Further contributing to our region's already poor air quality.

Third – The PTTG plant requires hundreds of miles of pipelines to transport methane to processing facilities, and then to bring the ethane to the plant itself. These pipelines will be laid through parks, public lands, residential areas, schools and under your drinking water resources.

And sometimes they explode.

As the Revolution Pipeline did several weeks ago in Beaver County, very near the Shell cracker plant.

Pipelines and pipeline infrastructure contribute to poor air quality.

Fourth – The PTTG petrochemical refinery is a plastic factory. It is being built to make polyethylene pellets to make plastic.

HERE is the product – tiny, lightweight plastic pellets – also called Nurdles – that will be used for making plastic that will be shipped overseas and likely end up in our oceans, drinking water supplies and in our bodies.

We learn more about plastic every day. It is toxic from start to finish.

It is already contaminating all humans as it has been detected of us as it has been found in our bodies, and even in the bodies of infants in remote corners of the world.

As the Ohio EPA considers the air permit for this plant, I urge you to consider the full impact on air quality that this petrochemical refinery and the infrastructure that goes along with it will bring to Ohio.

Finally, don't expect the petrochemical industry to be a savior.

The folks in Louisiana who live in Cancer Alley know all too well what the petrochemical industry will truly bring.

The PTTG gas refinery will release cancer-causing Volatile organic compounds VOCs, carbon pollution, diesel pollution, light and noise pollution – but worst of all the end goal of this plant is plastic.

At a minimum, this plant must use the best available technology that we were able to achieve through litigation with Shell for Fenceline monitoring, that will be provided in detail in written comments.

This permit is being considered when we have received DIRE warnings from the United Nations and the United States government on the risks and harms of climate change that we can no longer ignore. The effects are being felt right here in the Ohio River Valley.

A petrochemical “hub” or Plastic Belt may be the final nail in the coffin on climate change. But this does not have to be our destiny.

Actually, Ohio is doing fairly well without this plant. Just a few weeks ago E2 announced that Ohio ranks 7th in the nation for green jobs. These are the kind of jobs Ohio can continue to build upon – Renewable Energy including solar, wind, hydropower and geothermal, sustainable agriculture, clean technology and manufacturing.

Ohio should invest in the kind of economy that is going to attract people, not drive them away.

And not do unnecessary harm to communities.

The thing industry fears the most is an informed, engaged and active public. I urge you not to go down the road of Pennsylvania and work together to ask the Ohio EPA to deny the permits for this plastic monster – and an industry that that threatens our air, drinking water and health.

Ohio deserves better.

Thank you.