

November 15, 2010

Letters to the Editor  
The Butler Eagle  
P.O. Box 271  
Butler, PA 16003-0271

Dear Editor:

Perhaps John Wise was so busy writing his most recent editorial (*Corbett should revisit, consider reversing his gas tax position*) that he failed to notice last week's election results. Citizens across the nation made it clear that government simply taxes and spends too much of their money.

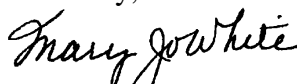
Tom Corbett was up front with voters that he did not support a severance tax, or any other tax increase. The voters seemed to agree with his platform. To suggest some nefarious connection between his position and campaign contributions, without any evidence whatsoever, is outrageous. Let me suggest another motivation: perhaps Mr. Corbett and like-minded legislators actually believe that government taxes and spends too much money.

Mr. Wise also apparently confuses paying a severance tax with environmental compliance. Pennsylvania has stringent environmental regulations. Over the last year, new standards for wastewater treatment, erosion and sediment control and well construction have been finalized. We have doubled the number of DEP inspectors – all paid for by permitting fees on the industry. To suggest that our environment is put at risk merely because we do not have a severance tax is disingenuous and a disservice to your readers.

To be clear, the Marcellus Shale activity in Pennsylvania is already generating hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue: bonus and royalty payments, sales and income taxes, fuel taxes, hotel surcharges, and limited leases of state forest land. Every dollar raised by enacting a new tax – especially a punitive tax as sought by Governor Rendell – is a dollar that cannot be paid to a landowner, business owner or employee in Pennsylvania.

We can and must develop this resource responsibly, and hold operators accountable. In the midst of one of the worst economic downturns since the Great Depression, Pennsylvania is blessed with a unique opportunity to create jobs, help families keep their property, and develop a cleaner, indigenous energy source right here in our backyard. Future generations are depending on us to get this right.

Sincerely,



MARY JO WHITE  
SENATOR, 21<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT