

PennEnvironment • Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter • Clean Air Council • Earthjustice
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture) • Natural Resources Defense Council
Clean Water Action • Public Citizen • Sierra Club • Center for Coalfield Justice
National Parks Conservation Association • Union of Concerned Scientists

June 15, 2007

Dear Governor Rendell and Members of the Pennsylvania Legislature,

As leaders of many of the top environmental organizations in Pennsylvania and nationally, we are writing to express our deep concern about coal-based fuel for transportation (liquid coal), and its inclusion in the Pennsylvania Energy Independence Strategy (EIS) alternative fuels legislation (HB 1202 and SB 789). Because of the environmental, public health and financial consequences of liquid coal, we urge you to remove this language from HB 1202 and SB 789.

The considerable economic and environmental drawbacks of liquid coal preclude it from being a sound option for achieving greater energy independence. Relying on liquid coal to fuel transportation could nearly *double* global warming pollution per gallon of fuel as compared with the petroleum-based fuels we use today. For example, using liquid coal in a hybrid car would mean doubling the carbon dioxide emissions from that vehicle, which would be equivalent to operating a Hummer H3 run on conventional gasoline. And while HB 1202 and SB 789 would require carbon pollution from liquid coal to be sequestered or offset, neither of these are viable solutions for addressing the increase in global warming pollution that would result from the advancement of liquid coal.

Scientists have warned that without action to reduce global warming pollution below today's levels within the next ten years, we will be unable to avoid the most dangerous impacts of global warming. For Pennsylvania, these impacts could include everything from more heat-related deaths to more severe flooding. Efforts to displace oil with liquid coal are not compatible with our urgent need to cut global warming pollution. We need to reduce emissions sharply over the next decades, not implement policies that promote new ways to increase global warming pollution.

Finally, subsidizing a new, costly liquid coal industry would not only severely undermine our ability to address global warming, but is unnecessary to achieving greater energy independence. We can have a robust, effective program to reduce oil dependence by using fuel-efficient vehicles, sustainably-made renewable fuels, and smart growth policies for urban areas. These measures alone would cut our oil demand by at least 40 percent by 2025, while substantially reducing global warming pollution.

We urge you to remove the liquid coal language from HB 1202 and SB 789, and promote an energy future for Pennsylvania that enhances our security, our economy and our environment.

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Sincerely,

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