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Senate Committee Unanimously Approves Local Impact Fee

Senators Joseph Scarnati and Mary Jo White Provide Strong Leadership to Move Important Environmental Bill Forward

(Harrisburg) – Pennsylvania’s Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee approved Senate Bill 1100, the Local Impact Fee proposed by Senator Joseph Scarnati, that will deliver much-needed funding to reimburse Pennsylvania’s counties and municipalities affected by natural gas drilling, statewide conservation efforts, as well as important environmental and infrastructure projects.

“I thank and applaud Senator White and members of the committee for moving this important bill forward that will benefit and safeguard our precious environmental resources,” said MaryAnn Warren, President, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts. “The County Conservation Districts provide essential environmental protection services in every county across the commonwealth and stable funding and resources are needed to support their mission and the critical work they do every day to protect our communities.”

Senate Bill 1100 will supply a steady, long-term funding stream to Pennsylvania’s county conservation districts that continue to provide crucial permitting and environmental protection activities in the Marcellus Shale region. The bill appropriates \$7.5 million in funds annually to assist conservation districts in their efforts to provide vital services at the local level. Money for the districts would be placed into a Conservation District Fund administered by the State Conservation Commission.

“We are very pleased with the action taken today by the committee,” said Robert B. Maiden, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts. “We are looking forward to the Senate’s consideration of this bill and once again commend Senator Scarnati for having the fortitude and commitment to protect Pennsylvania’s environment and its resources at this very pivotal moment in its history.”



Over the last decade, Pennsylvania's county conservation districts have seen a decline in state funding, but an increase in work load and responsibilities. Each of the 66 conservation districts takes its work to protect our natural resources and our environment seriously, but is often left struggling to find new resources, avenues and additional funding to keep our water resources pollution free, the air we breathe clean and the land we live on sustainable.

The staff at the conservation districts works tirelessly for the federal, state and local governments in almost every facet of environmental protection. From permitting and farm land preservation to stream erosion programs and protecting the water you drink, the Conservation Districts respond quickly without reservation to all environmental issues and needs within the commonwealth.

Pennsylvania now finds itself at a crossroads as it relates to protecting its environmental resources. The massive exploration and development of natural gas from the vast Marcellus Shale formation, while positive for our economy and livelihood, can also be detrimental to our environment.

That is why, now more than ever, it is important that the conservation districts be provided with a dedicated annual stream of funding that will support the increased demand on the conservation districts as a result of the drilling for natural gas in communities throughout the state.

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PACD, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization representing Pennsylvania's sixty-six conservation districts. For more information on the PACD visit www.pacd.org.

