

When I learned this legislation is a coordinated product of the aggregate and industrial mineral associations and ODNR, I became concerned that scientists and citizens concerned about the environment might have been absent the planning process.

The proposed changes roll out the red carpet for an industry that is slow to adapt to modern times. Yes, we need material for highways and construction of all kinds. But digging and blasting out hundreds of acres of rural or agricultural land , making a hole 14 stories deep, putting our water resources at risk, polluting the air, truck traffic degrading our county roads and risking damage to hundreds of our homes is unacceptable.

The aggregate mining industry must do better, making use of available alternative materials that utilize industrial byproducts, recycling construction materials that otherwise are dumped on landfills, and lowering carbon emissions.

Ohio citizens cannot afford to depend on ODNR to protect us from potential impacts of deep mining. The permitting process is flawed if a permit is rarely, if ever, denied. We have quarries permitted to operate within a few feet of railroad tracks, our beautiful streams and homes. The specter of East Palestine is not soon forgotten.

The mining industry in Ohio must be regulated and our local BZA boards and planning entities exist to afford justice and that reasonable standards are met. Less regulation is not in the best interest of Ohio citizens, especially when there is inadequate oversight once a mining project has begun.