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Rep. Jamie Callender, Chair of the Public Utilities Committee

I feel many of Ohio's legislators still do not understand the crisis we are facing.

This bill, SB 33, is supposedly about protecting "critical infrastructure", which is a vague term. The public is keenly aware that SB33 and other similar bills in nine other states are a result of the Dakota Access pipeline protests. So, this bill is about stopping citizens from expressing their concerns over harms caused by the oil and gas industry. That's easy to see as you look at the proponents of the bill.

If you read the dictionary definition of critical infrastructure it says, "assets that are essential for the functioning of a society and economy." How would you feel if a stranger came into your community and polluted the streams and wetlands with drilling mud? Or cut down trees on your property, or took your land by eminent domain? Or spewed volatile organic compounds into the air around schools and homes? Or used millions of gallons of precious groundwater and contaminated that ground water with toxic chemicals? Or spread radioactive wastes on local roads? Or completely ruined the roads and caused numerous vehicular accidents?

These actions all affect critical infrastructure that citizens need; clean air and water, roads, and ecosystem services provided by intact forests and wetlands. Yet, everyday these are destroyed through processes used in high pressure hydraulic fracking. We are told, it's for jobs, it's progress. So, when a corporation destroys something it's progress? It's OK for a corporation to do whatever it wants to private citizens' land, water, and air as long as they are making money.

Ohio citizens have a million other things they'd like to be doing besides protesting. We have watched and hoped that someone, some elected officials would step up and say enough is enough. Certainly, other states and countries have listened to the scientists and have banned fracking.

It is astonishing to me that Ohio's politicians will capitulate to an industry that has proven time and time again that the harm it visits on human health and the environment are not important. It appears they only care about their campaign contributions. The citizens of the state realize that they must speak up about these harms and that the passage of SB33 will be a detriment to that action. The citizens of the state have been victims of the actions of this industry.

New York State's Physicians for Social responsibility report, "Compendium of Scientific, Medical and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking 5th Edition" clearly spells out the health risks associated with this process. There are countless studies that show there are negative health effects from living near fracking well pads and associated infrastructure.

The recently released report, "Plastics and Health; The Hidden Costs of a Plastics" points to our exposures to plastics, microplastics and plasticizers and the effects on our immune systems, liver and kidneys, and impacts of cancer and neuro and reproductive toxicity.

Countless peer reviewed studies show that exposures to petrochemical compounds such as bisphenol A and phthalates can cause de-masculinization in males. Polychlorinated biphenyl 153 and the plasticizer (diethylhexyl phthalate) found in toys, carpeting, flooring and clothes, can leach into foods and water. A recent study links these two compounds to a 50 percent decrease in sperm counts, testicular cancers, and DNA fragmentation. I am borrowing a quote from the famous endocrinologist Dr. Theo Colbourn, "every man sitting in this room is half the man his grandfather was".

The report, "The New Plastic Economy" stated that "externalities related to the use of plastics and plastic packaging are concentrated in three areas: degradation of natural systems as a result of leakage, especially in the ocean; greenhouse gas emissions resulting from production and after-use incineration; and health and environmental impacts from substances of concern. Valuing Plastic, a report by UN Environment Program and the Plastics Disclosure Project (PDP) based on research by Trucost estimated the total natural capital cost of plastics in the consumer goods industry at \$75 billion, of which \$40 billion was related to plastic packaging, exceeding the profit pool of the plastic packaging industry."

This rich and powerful industry has taken over our communities and rural regions in this state. What recourse do citizens have to say enough is enough? Are we supposed to watch while our children are exposed to carcinogens and endocrine disruptors? These exposures cause serious harm to the next generation which is not classified as “critical infrastructure”. Our distrust of this industry is not unfounded as they knew decades ago that burning fossil fuels was causing climate change, yet hid that fact.

Now this industry wants to use fracked gas to make the Ohio Valley the next plastics hub of the nation.

Only a fool would destroy the very planet on which he needs to live. Only a fool would allow corporations to make money at the expense of citizen’s lives. Only a fool would jeopardize his children’s future.

Ohio’s politicians are worried about vaping and its health effects on children but ignore the effects of living near compressor stations and well pads, even though peer reviewed studies show these facilities emit hazardous pollution.

Ohio politicians cannot find a way to curb violent acts committed with guns because they want to preserve our second amendment right to bear arms, but they are fine with taking away our first amendment rights “freedom of speech”.

Ohio’s politicians need to unite behind the science, protect human health and the environment, and preserve free speech. Money is not speech; corporations are not people! NO SB 33.

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