

Hello – my name is Janice Blanock. I am a 28- year resident of Cecil township in Washington County Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, I am unable to be with you in person, but my husband and I are helping our daughter move out of state. As sad as I am to see her leaving, I am relieved that she will no longer be living in Washington County, the most highly fracked county in southwestern PA. We do however have 2 other grown children, their spouses and 3 wonderful grandchildren to be concerned about, not to mention our many family members, friends, and community. Our concerns for their health and well-being go deep to our core, because in 2016 we lost our 19-year-old son Luke to a rare and aggressive pediatric bone cancer called Ewings Sarcoma.

On August 15,2023 we finally learned the results of the study funded by the PA Department of Health, that was completed by the University of Pittsburgh. The results were not shocking to those of us who are paying attention. There have been many other studies, government reports and media investigations. What was shocking was that finding that children living close to active wells have a higher risk of developing, lymphoma, increased cases of asthma, and low birth weights for infants, didn't really draw any attention from our elected officials on either side of the isle. The silence is deafening!

What the study did not do was find a connection to other pediatric cancers such as Ewing's Sarcoma, that is not so rare in our community. However, in my opinion, the study was incomplete. They did not test for impacts of radioactive materials such as Radium 226 and 228, which are produced by fracking and are known to act like calcium, attach to bone and are linked to bone cancers. We participated in the onetime telephone interview of residential history, my son's personal health history, schools attended, occupational and family history, as well as location to major roadways and industrial complexes. No personal interaction and no air, water or soil testing involved at all. The asthma results did not even include data from other health facilities in Washington PA such as WHS, and AHN that treat many community members in our county.

At the meeting on August 15th, the deputy health commissioner Kristen Rodak apologized on behalf of the department of Health for not listening in the past and promised to do better. They suggested there would be more studies, they would update their website for nearby-fracking residents to submit complaints, offer more "air quality" awareness education for PA schoolkids and better training for

medical professionals in recognizing and dealing with environmental exposures. That statement was literally like a slap in the face. I want to know by raise of hand whether anybody hearing my testimony today would be satisfied with the results of that study if you lived in a community where children are getting sick and dying from rare cancers and other illnesses in alarming numbers and your child was one of them.

In 2020 then Attorney General Shapiro led a grand jury probe being critical of the O&G industry and negligent state regulations. The Grand Jury's 2-year investigation uncovered systematic failures by government agencies in overseeing the fracking industry and protecting Pennsylvanians from the risks of industry operations. The Grand Jury made eight recommendations to create a comprehensive legal framework to change that and to protect Pennsylvanians. Attorney General Shapiro said, and I quote "This report is about preventing the failures of our past from continuing into our future. It's about the big fights we must take on to protect Pennsylvanians- to ensure that their voices are not drowned out by those with bigger wallets and better connections. There remains a profound gap between our Constitutional mandate for clean air and pure water, and the realities facing Pennsylvanians who live in the shadow of fracking giants and their investors."

Well, here we are in October 2023 with elected Governor Shapiro and no responsible action has been taken. Speaking for the Governor his spokesman, Will Simons stated that the Governor now believes we must reject the false choice between protecting jobs and protecting our planet. He is working to embrace the Commonwealth's role as an energy leader, create good paying jobs, address climate change, and protect our air & water. Really? There are massive amounts of evidence that the economic benefits just don't add up, that fossil fuels play a huge role in the worsening climate crisis and the Pitt Study along with many other studies have determined that fracking is not healthy for children and other living things. What will it take to, at the very least, get all 8 of the recommendations of the 2020 Grand Jury implemented. Don't wait, don't let it be your child before you act. Let me explain why with the following post I came across on group called Many Phases and Faces of a Mother's Grief:

There is an order that life is supposed follow. An order of breaths that life is supposed to follow. An order of breaths we are supposed to take, as if we are passing a torch from one generation to the next. Our torch is supposed to go out before our child's flame is extinguished. We are supposed to watch them take their first breath, but not their last. We are supposed to hear the thud-thud of their heart when it starts beating, but never the silence when it stops. That heart that we once carried inside of us. That breath that we gave them. That life that we kept safe, protected. So, when the order of life is disrupted, when their torch goes out before yours, it is as if you too have been robbed of your breath and as if your heart has stopped beating as well. There is nothing that can make it less painful. You would happily blow out your flame if it meant theirs could burn. But you can't. Even though that's how it should be. So, all you can do I carry them inside you- like you did once before. Except now they stay in your heart forever. And though it hurts, just know that they are safe there. They are protected. Because a mother's love is unending. Because it burns forever with every breath you take and with every beat your heart makes. Because a mother's love is a flame that can never be extinguished.

That being said, I have co-founded a group called MAD-FACTS. It stands for Moms and Dads – Family Awareness of Cancer Threat Spike. I am working together with Jodi Borello and Heaven Sensky from Center for Coalfield Justice in Washington county with a common goal of teaching our community more about environmental health in Southwest Pennsylvania and how we can support one another in protecting our families. Our children are our greatest resources. So, ladies and gentlemen of the legislature and Governor Shapiro, please work together, do what's right ... protect our children and our planet. Start by implementing the 8 recommendations of the 2020 Grand Jury investigation, but certainly do not stop there.

Thank you.

