

November 8, 2007

Governor Bill Richardson
State Capitol Suite 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Governor Richardson:

I am writing to ask you to carefully consider the consequences of allowing the proposed pit rules to be approved. As an engineer in the oil and gas industry I have one perspective; however, as a life-long resident of New Mexico who cares deeply about my community and my state, I have another point of view.

As an engineer in the industry, I strongly believe that the OCD is at fault in their logic for proposing the rules. I know that the industry in which I have chosen to make a living has its faults. I am well aware of the fact that there are those in the industry who absolutely refuse to be good stewards to the environment. These people, however, are few and far between. The industry as a whole is mindful of the fact that we are under constant scrutiny, and we generally go above and beyond expectations to protect our precious natural resources. And believe me; we appreciate natural resources more than any other industry in the world. Knowing what I do about the industry, and having been raised by one of the best environmentalists I know, I strongly believe that the OCD has made a dire mistake in accusing our industry of such disregard for Mother Earth.

More importantly, as a resident of the great state of New Mexico, I must express my concern for the fate of our state if we alienate the oil and gas industry. I grew up attending public schools, attended a state university, and chose to remain in the state to pursue my life-long goals. Even as a child, I was informed enough to realize that New Mexico heavily relies on the oil and gas industry for funding of essential programs. It is easy to recognize the impact that the loss of funding will have on future government programs; however, it is much deeper and more devastating to consider the effect such alienation of the industry will have on the citizens of the entire state. Not only people like me (who work directly in the industry) should be considered when making such decisions. There are thousands of us working in the oil field, but there are even more people who rely on the industry for their livelihood. I can think of grocery stores, gas stations, car dealerships, and home builders who would greatly suffer if the oil and gas industry were to leave the state (or even if their activity were to decline within the state). This is not to mention the teachers, the restaurant owners, and the CHILDREN who will inevitably suffer as well. It is disconcerting to imagine where our state will be without our industry.

As an afterthought, I believe that you may be strongly misled in your motivations. I know that you are environmentally conscious and that you are making an effort (misguided I believe) to preserve the environment, but I also know that you are one of the strongest advocates for decreasing our nation's dependence on foreign oil. If you believe that estranging the oil and gas industry of our state is any way to decrease this dependence, I am afraid that you have been given the wrong impression.

In closing, I hope that you consider the long-term impact such rules will have on the state of New Mexico (not just the oil & gas industry), and that you will take into account the way that our government is intended to function. In doing so, I am sure that you will see that this proposed rule is whimsical and unfair and will be ineffective in solving any environmental problems whatsoever.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathlain H. Richardson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Cathlain H. Richardson
cc: Joanna Prukop