

TO THE ATHENS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
November 19, 2013

Thank you for your gracious willingness to receive public comments about the pending K & H2 injection well permit application and the permitting process as it affects this county and community. You may know me as someone who has made her home in Athens County for over the past 40+ years and as an advocate for our poorest friends and neighbors.

You may recall that in 1994 President Clinton issued Executive Order #12898 "to ensure that all communities and persons across the United States live in a safe and healthful environment." Specifically, the Order addresses the civil rights of minority and low-income communities, seeking to prevent low income communities from being subjected to disproportionately high and adverse environmental effects.

Attached to my comments is a 2013 map published by Ohio's Department of Natural Resources showing the location of all Class II Brine Injection Wells in the State¹. Also attached is data from the U.S. Census Bureau with the most recent poverty estimates by county in Ohio².

The attached information demonstrates that injection wells in Ohio are disproportionately located in Ohio's Appalachian, and poorest, counties. This is one result of Ohio's permitting process.

Ohio's poorest residents should not have their health put at risk in this manner.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is urged to do a complete audit of Ohio's injection well permitting process and to examine environmental justice concerns consistent with Executive Order 12898.

ODNR's program is out of date and does not adequately protect the public health and safety. The K & H 2 application proposes to accept 60,000,000 gallons of waste per year, over 10% of all the injectate received in Ohio in 2012. To date, ODNR has not determined that environmental justice concerns are "relevant" so as to necessitate a public hearing on the K & H2 application. Rather, ODNR permits pressurized injection of toxic waste into the ground where it accumulates near our communities' water supplies, after that waste is hauled in on back county roads shared by our children's school buses, as long as this occurs mainly in the poorest part of the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information and concern.

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¹ Although classified as "Brine Wells," these wells are no longer simply receiving saltwater brine, but accept waste

² Small Area Income and Poverty Estimate (All Ages), December 2012.