

STATEMENT OF STEVEN C. BECKMAN
Nominee for Appointment to the Environmental Hearing Board

Before the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee

Madame Chairman, Honorable Members of the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to present brief testimony in support of my nomination to the Pennsylvania Environmental Hearing Board. I am deeply honored to have been nominated for the position by Governor Corbett. Having represented both individuals and corporations in environmental legal matters, I know the fine reputation of the Board and its current and former members and would consider it a privilege to join them in serving the citizens of the Commonwealth.

I believe my educational background and the varied career path I have taken to this point will allow me to function well as a member of the Environmental Hearing Board. I received a B.S. in Geology from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio in 1983. From there, I attended the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and received a Master's Degree in Geology from UNC in 1985. After graduating from UNC, I worked from 1985 to 1990 for Shell Offshore Inc. in New Orleans as an exploration and production geologist. It was during this time that I became interested in using my science background in the burgeoning field of environmental law. It was also during this time that my wife and I began our family and wanted to move closer to her family in the Pittsburgh area. These two threads came together when I decided to attend the University of Pittsburgh law school. I graduated from Pitt law school, summa cum laude, in 1993 and was hired by the Erie law firm, MacDonald Illig Jones and Britton, LLP.

At MacDonald Illig, I worked in the environmental law group on all types of environmental matters. In 1996, it was my privilege to be appointed by Governor Ridge to serve as the Regional Director of the Northwest Region Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection in Meadville, Pennsylvania. In that position, I oversaw the implementation of the Commonwealth's environmental statutes and regulations in the twelve county Northwest Region. I gained significant insight in to the work performed by the DEP and the challenges faced by that agency. My work with DEP also gave me an opportunity to work closely with many members of the General Assembly to address environmental issues raised by their constituents. In 2001, I left DEP and returned to MacDonald Illig in its environmental law group. I have been a partner at MacDonald Illig since that time representing individuals, municipalities and corporations on all types of environmental legal issues.

My varied background has given me broad knowledge of the environmental issues facing the Commonwealth and its citizens. I also have had the opportunity to see these issues from various perspectives which I believe will be an asset as a judge. I know from firsthand experience that the Board plays an important role in addressing environmental issues by providing a legal forum where parties who have a dispute can bring those issues for resolution and can be confident that they will receive a fair and impartial hearing by judges who are knowledgeable in the specialized field of environmental law. I believe I have the knowledge, judgment and temperament to serve the citizens of Pennsylvania in that role. I hope that you will see fit to recommend confirmation of my appointment to the Senate. I thank you again for your consideration and would be glad to answer any question that you may have.