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## Testimony to Joint Public Hearing of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and Senate Local Government Committee

Presented by Charles J. Morris, Chairman  
Greene County Board of Commissioners

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to share with you our experience in Greene County regarding the opportunities created through the Impact Fee. My name is Charles Morris, and I am Chairman of the Greene County Board of Commissioners.

Greene County is the southwest corner of the Commonwealth. We are a 6<sup>th</sup> class county with a population of 38,000. The activity of the gas industry in our county over the last several years has been extensive. At last count we had approximately 560 active Marcellus Shale gas wells. While the activity has been of great benefit for local businesses, restaurants and landlords, it has also given rise to issues that might be confronted by local government. These issues are, but not limited to, housing, deteriorating roads, damage to bridges, traffic safety and the demand for human services.

The passage of Act 13 of 2012 (Impact Fee) has greatly eased the financial burden of the County in addressing the issues that have arisen.

Greene County has received the following amounts in the following years:

\$3.1 million (2012); \$2.9 million (2013); and \$3.6 million (2014). In view of our total budget of approximately \$29 million (\$10 million of which is Human Services and is funded by the Commonwealth), the effect of the Impact Fee is plainly evident. We have used these funds in any number of ways, a few of which are as follows:

- Courthouse – Much needed repairs to the ceilings, roof and dome were made.
- Bridges – Just as the state's bridges are old and in need of repair, so are the County's. Coupling their age and condition with the size and weight of the trucks now using them has resulted in the expenditure of roughly \$1 million in demolition, repair and maintenance.
- Infrastructure – The County has provided emergency funds to three water authorities for repairs to their lines and to assure compliance with DEP.
- Parks – We have repaired and upgraded playgrounds and a pool for the eastern side of the county.

- Fairgrounds – Improvements have been made regarding stormwater and repair of existing buildings as well as construction of a new building.
- Law and order – We have increased funding to the Drug Task Force as well as to Legal Aid.
- Emergency Management – the 911 system has been upgraded, and at long last security has been installed at the Courthouse as well as the building that houses Domestic Relations and Children and Youth Services.
- Redevelopment Authority – The authority has been revitalized with significant funding and an emphasis on housing.
- Human Services (CYS) – Due to recently implemented “Sandusky Laws” regarding time frames, expanding mandated reporters and redefining abuse, it has been necessary to increase our staff by three. I am told that we should not expect the state to bear the cost.

Time does not permit me to detail all of the ways the Impact Fee has been spent. Indeed, not all of it has been used but rather has been set aside for future use as we (Commissioners) are fearful of becoming dependent upon it. Needless to say, the Impact Fee has been a blessing to Greene County.

Thank you,

Charles Morris