

1 Mr. Hoffman, please. Thank you, sir.

2 MR. HOFFMAN:

3 My name is Joe Hoffman.

4 I am not representing an organization  
5 at this time because I just recovered  
6 from kidney transplant surgery.

7 However, I did work for 15 years for  
8 Wildlands Conservancy and Berks County  
9 Conservancy, so I'm a little familiar  
10 with this idea.

11 I wanted to try something  
12 different for the benefit of the group  
13 today, and it's something that I had  
14 practiced 20 years ago in Berks County  
15 when I was at Berks Conservancy.

16 A group that is not very  
17 well represented at any of these public  
18 hearings are our children, our  
19 students, high school level, college  
20 level especially, but even of a younger  
21 age. And yes, they care very much  
22 about this issue. Their comments --- I  
23 went to eight different schools.

24 The schools involved were  
25 Emmaus, Parkland, Whitehall,

1 Northampton, Nazareth, Freedom, Easton  
2 and Liberty, all of which are very  
3 familiar to folks in the Lehigh Valley.  
4 What they had to say was very  
5 enlightening to me. For example, they  
6 identified properly that there was a  
7 Delaware River Basin Commission  
8 narrative saying that they want to ban  
9 hydraulic fracking in this region.

10 And their response was  
11 very simple, how can you say that if  
12 you're going to allow water transfers  
13 in and out? They said it makes no  
14 sense. You have a beautiful resource  
15 that we all use. We use it for parks,  
16 recreation, open space, the  
17 environment.

18 We have memories in all  
19 these places, every stream, every park,  
20 every hollow has our name on it and  
21 you're going to damage it and you know  
22 you're going to damage it. You say you  
23 don't want to and then in the next  
24 breath, you do. How can we explain  
25 that? How can we justify that? And I

1 really couldn't. I just listened and I  
2 listened to a surprising consensus  
3 among younger folks that, yes, indeed,  
4 they do know what fracking is.

5 And, yes, indeed, they do  
6 know how important the Delaware River  
7 basin is. One of them said to me, I  
8 think the only one more important in  
9 the whole United States is the  
10 Mississippi River. And they said that  
11 because their family, some relatives  
12 live on the Mississippi River.

13 So I would venture to  
14 guess that the Commission needs to find  
15 a way to have a youth forum to talk  
16 about this issue with people who really  
17 are going to be affected by whatever  
18 decision DRBC makes. If it's an extra  
19 meeting, if it's some other method,  
20 that's up to them, but they must do it.  
21 Those people need to be heard.

22 HEARING OFFICER:

23 Thanks, Mr. Hoffman.

24 Thank you, sir.

25 MS. CATARINO WISSMAN: