



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

RICHMOND

Joseph R. Yost
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TWELFTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
EDUCATION
GENERAL LAWS
HEALTH, WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS

August 21, 2017

Director David Paylor
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
629 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Director Paylor,

First, allow me to thank you again for your participation, along with your staff, at the two public meetings hosted by Delegate Greg Habeeb and I. I think these meetings were both successful and beneficial to those who may be impacted by the Mountain Valley Pipeline.

As you are aware, the comment period for the 401 certification is scheduled to close Tuesday, August 22nd. During the meetings, a repeated request from most speakers was to please extend and/or suspend the public comment period to allow adequate time to review the potential impact of the Mountain Valley Pipeline on our water.

Water is life. We can survive without numerous other things in our lives but with the absence of clean and pure drinking water, we cannot. The potential catastrophic impact to our water by the Mountain Valley Pipeline is unquestionable. You saw that first hand when you visited Sinking Creek following the Newport meeting.

So please, I ask you to extend or suspend the public comment period for the 401 certification. I have spent my entire life in the District I represent and I grew up on well water on the other side of Giles from Newport. If wells are damaged or contaminated along the pipeline, there is no alternative water source for many in its path. Particularly in our rural areas, municipal water supply is confined mainly to populated areas and not in outlying land. While damaged wells may be fixed, contaminated water cannot. You cannot just dig a new well relying on the same source as the previous well.

Additionally, the impact of contaminated water could be greater than those just along the pipeline. Our waters are derived from numerous springs, streams and aquifers. These sources also help feed the New River and Roanoke River water basin that supply thousands of individuals in our region. To say that a contamination could be catastrophic is an understatement.

I understand that this process is nuanced and there are many factors that go into making these decisions. However, I implore you to think of the numerous individuals you heard from on August 10th. I saw the passion in their remarks and heard the concern in their voices as did you. This is their life we are talking about. Let's not rush this process. Please extend or suspend the comment period.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions, comments, or concerns. I can be reached at (540) 922-8032 or DelJYost@house.virginia.gov.

Proudly representing the 12th District,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph R. Yost". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "J" and "Y".

Delegate Joseph R. Yost
12th District
Commonwealth of Virginia