



*Preserving and protecting our precious freshwater*

July 17, 2019

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Ohio Attorney General  
30 East Broad St., 14th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Attorney General Yost:

Per the complaint we have filed today online as well, we are sending this letter via certified mail to copy in Governor DeWine and the Auditor General. We would like an immediate investigation into JobsOhio's decisionmaking for granting funds. We are unable to obtain records through Ohio's Sunshine Laws due to the way JobsOhio was formed, however, we are seeing a trend that our state's economic development arm is primarily supporting a single industry, fracked gas development, to the extent that it is precluding other opportunities for a brighter economic future for Ohioans outside of a shaky industry like capital-intensive fracked gas development. We think JobsOhio was created primarily to serve the fracking industry and its upstream and downstream industries, such as the foreign-owned PTT Global petrochemical plant proposed for Belmont County. We think the massive amount of money given to entice the "cracker" plant (some say \$60 million so far) is unwarranted in many ways; one of which is the fact that this facility may not even be built.

We are copying in our recent press release regarding this matter, because the public is becoming increasingly informed and questioning why Ohio would be sacrificed for a single industry like fracking. Not only does the industry destroy vast amounts of freshwater and create billions of gallons of toxic, radioactive waste, much of the product leaves the state while leaving the pollution with us. We question how an investment in a single petrochemical facility to support fracking could be justified, especially seeing how much has been given of potential public revenue in tax abatements, etc. to support the Royal Dutch Shell cracker plant, a similar facility, in Monaca, PA. Now that the Shell plant is being built, there are questions about the justification for it, including the use of foreign steel, and the fact that profits will go overseas, along with much of the product from fracking and its related petrochemicals, such as plastic. We believe there will be similar questions about the PTT Global cracker plant if it gets built, especially considering how much money is being given behind the scenes.



We believe JobsOhio was created by Governor Kasich primarily to support the fracking industry. We want to know how much of the money that has been granted for economic development in Ohio has been earmarked just for this single industry, which is increasingly being exposed as being financially questionable and may not even be in existence by the time the cracker plant would be built, five years from now if started now.

JobsOhio was created to be our State's economic development arm, and Ohioans have a right to know how JobsOhio is spending the money it receives and what criteria it is using to make funding decisions. Revenue from liquor sales (which would have been public funds had a secretive private entity not been created specifically for the purpose of brokering business deals) could be better spent on the development of renewable energy projects, hemp production, agriculture, recreation and tourism in the area. Instead, the Ohio River Valley is being sacrificed for a single boom/bust industry like fracking with a petrochemical complex that will be a major polluter without a long-term payback to insure a healthy economy and environment in the region.

We request an immediate investigation on:

1. Funding given to a single industry (fracking) which is financially unstable and could cause economic distress itself in Ohio when the boom becomes a bust: <http://ieefa.org/sightline-ieefa-update-u-s-fracking-sector-bleeds-red-ink-in-q1/>
2. Funding given to a single source – the Thailand-based PTT Global facility that does not even have a final investment decision made to build in Belmont County.
3. Investigations into potential conflicts of interest within the JobsOhio Board and Staff (former and current) related to fracking and the petrochemical buildout.
4. The additional \$65 million funding for the PTT Global project cited here: <https://wvpress.org/wvpa-sharing/ohio-investing-100-million-on-site-preparation-for-possible-10-billion-cracker-plant-across-ohio-river-from-moundsville-w-va/>. This article says Ohio has invested \$100 million – where is all this funding coming from, and how much has been spent by JobsOhio compared to PTT Global (“The companies have committed \$65 million for the site work through JobsOhio for a total investment of \$95 million.”)?
5. How and why was JobsOhio created to have greater funding with lesser transparency and why it promoted and focused upon fracking and its infrastructure from the outset: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jui3jM98ZT8>. We believe JobsOhio was created by Governor Kasich primarily for the fracking industry in Ohio, and we would like this investigated to prove us wrong. How much money has been given other industries in Ohio unrelated to fracking (such as the growing, profitable renewable energy industries) vs. given to fracking and its associated industries and infrastructure by JobsOhio?



Thank you in advance for looking into this important matter.

Best regards,

Lea Harper  
Managing Director  
FreshWater Accountability Project

Cc: Governor Mike DeWine  
Ohio Auditor Keith Faber

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 8, 2019

**OUTRAGE GROWING OVER INCENTIVES GIVEN PETROCHEMICAL PLANT**

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(Columbus, OH) In yet another dubious deal done by JobsOhio, the State of Ohio has doubled down on its support for an overseas investment in a petrochemical plant to process fracked "wet" gas (ethane) into feedstock for the plastic industry. This overseas investment scheme is led by PTT Global Petrochemical from Thailand in partnership with Daelim of South Korea. China Energy also signed an \$84 million Memorandum of Understanding to advance petrochemical development in the Ohio Valley. The details of the financial incentives given the proposed cracker plant in Belmont County



are vastly unknown, because elected officials from Ohio and West Virginia have not released public records requested which would include the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with China Energy. The public knows little of meetings held with Governor DeWine and officials from PTT Global on February 21 and May 21, 2019 (Executives from PTTGC America and Daelim met with the DeWine Administration and JobsOhio May 21, 2019) and overseas visits to China with officials from West Virginia (<http://wvmetronews.com/2019/06/12/wv-commerce-secretary-optimistic-after-meeting-with-china-energy/>).

“This needs to be investigated. Why Ohio would spend funds for a single foreign venture, just to prop up the fracking industry and support overseas profiteering schemes is baffling. This is a massive misappropriation of incentives, especially considering the financial riskiness of the fracking industry itself. We are calling on the Attorney General's office investigate the subsidies given fracking through JobsOhio, the most recent being the support of the PTTG petrochemical plant which may not even be built,” stated Lea Harper, Managing Director of FreshWater Accountability Project.

JobsOhio, the state's economic development arm, has committed \$30 million—its largest grant ever—for this proposed cracker plant. JobsOhio is a little-known private, non-profit entity not subject to open disclosure like purely public entities under Ohio's Sunshine laws for information disclosure. JobsOhio was created by Governor Kasich and has been promoting the fracking industry since its inception in Ohio in 2011.

“What if the people have a say in how this money is granted? Imagine if state entrepreneurs who care about our region could get chunks of this seed money to develop businesses based here where the owners are accountable to their neighbors, where the owners have to breathe the air and drink the water, too. Yes, we need jobs, but we need jobs that don't poison us and the planet.,” said Vivian Stockman, Executive Director of OVEC - the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition.

Most people have no idea of the plans being made by overseas corporations and state and federal elected officials to entice the cracker plant that would be a major polluter on the Ohio River, a drinking water source for approximately five million people. The extent of the tax abatement incentives is also unknown. The most recent announcement of a \$30 million grant given to improve the site without even a Final Investment Decision (FID) being made is the most questionable move yet by Jobs Ohio to attract the facility.

"This subsidy of this much money to attract overseas investors will give them the profits and leave us with the pollution and clean up - risking an already compromised river and creating environmental and human health harms here," stated Mary Wildfire of Roane County, WV.



"The industry playbook is to take advantage of fracking, which is financially risky to begin with, to take profits overseas while leaving us with the pollution, not only of the cracker plant, but the 1,000 additional frack wells needed each year with all the infrastructure to support such a huge plastic producer. We don't need more plastic - we certainly don't need more fracking in the region," stated Dr. Randi Pokladnik of Harrison County, OH.

"We are already seeing the destruction of our environment with the fracking industry and its toxic, radioactive waste. What JobsOhio is doing is supporting corporate overseas profits at our long-term loss," stated Barb Mew of Belmont County, OH.

"There is a reason the biggest US petrochemical center is called Cancer Alley. But its location near the Gulf of Mexico is on flat land, and subject to sea breezes to disperse the pollution. The Ohio River Valley is a valley – subject to air inversions. Also, the Gulf of Mexico is not a drinking water source, so we would expect even worse health harms in a valley with a cracker plant than what is now being experienced in the Gulf due to air and water pollution," stated Dr. Deb Cowden, a physician. A recent investigative report on a similar facility being built in Monaca, PA supports concerns about such air quality impacts.

"The people in the region are largely unaware of the plans being made for them, and for those who are, many are skeptical and worried that the pollution would not be worth the jobs promise, which is often over-estimated. There is a growing resistance to plastic pollution and all the injection wells and waste processing facilities required by fracking as well as to all the pipelines, frack pads and infrastructure already industrializing the area, taking billions of gallons of freshwater permanently from the region," commented Cheryl Johncox, regional organizer for Sierra Club National. "Without even a Final Investment Decision, why would Ohio spend this huge amount of money just to promote one project that may not even come to fruition?"

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