

Tax could hurt gas industry, help economy

By Nathan Pipenberg
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A recent report issued by Penn State found that a severance tax on natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale will have a negative effect on the gas industry, but will aid Pennsylvania's economy.

Researchers Rose Baker and David Passmore, who work for Penn State's Institute for Research in Training and Development, released the report on Monday.

Passmore said the overall effect on the state would not be extreme,

but it would be positive.

"There would be neither a huge positive impact or a huge negative impact," he said.

But this doesn't mean that individual towns and firms won't be affected. Passmore said the tax might be enough to push some firms over the edge, causing them to go out of business and resulting in job loss.

According to the report, for every \$100 million the natural gas industry pays in extraction taxes, 292 jobs will be lost along with \$22 million in revenue in the year 2015. But the money will be redistrib-

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David Passmore
Institute for Research and Training and Development researcher

uted throughout the state and will benefit residents in the form of 1,400 new jobs and \$80 million in business sales.

Though the gas industry has warned that an extraction tax will increase the cost of gas in the state, Passmore said the findings of the report didn't support that.

"They can't really change the

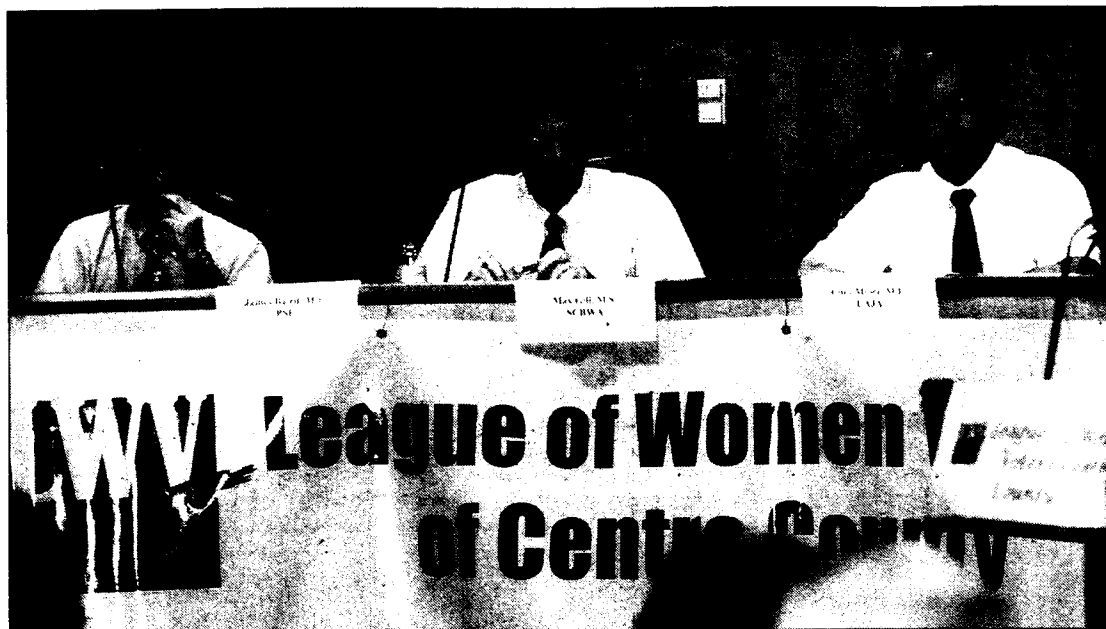
price of the commodity they're selling in a national market," he said, because the price of natural gas is too well established across the country.

A potential gas tax has been a hot bed issue between gubernatorial candidates, with Democrat Dan Onorato in support of the tax, and Republican Tom Corbett in

opposition. State senators and representatives, meanwhile, are attempting to pass a severance tax by Oct. 1, pending an agreement between Gov. Ed Rendell and state republicans.

On campus, Eco-Action has vowed to support the tax through a campaign called "What the Frack?" club president Kelley Cressman said. Cressman (senior-international politics) said the club is writing letters to representatives and gathering signatures for a petition supporting the tax.

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Panelists answer questions at the Eco-Action Forum organized by the League of Women Voters on Wednesday.

Panel talks chemical research

By Katrina Wehr
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

To Rachel Brennan there may be a reason Happy Valley is so happy: Pharmaceuticals like Prozac and contraceptives have been detected in low concentrations in local water supplies.

The Centre County League of Women Voters hosted an educational forum Wednesday night to explain the risks associated with harmful chemicals that can be found in water supplies.

John Vandenberg, a Professor Emeritus from North Carolina State University, presented the keynote speech about endocrine disruptors such as bisphenol A (BPA) and the effects they have on the human body.

BPA resin can be found in aluminum can liners and different types of plastics and is most harmful to developing fetuses and infants, Vandenberg said. The chemical can stay in a person's system anywhere between two to four hours after exposure before

it is metabolized, he said.

The effects of BPA were first discovered when the chemical was used in a certain brand of petri dishes, Vandenberg said. He said a Tufts University researcher noticed the difference in tests she was running and realized the new petri dishes were the source of the incongruity, and after some more tests on the dishes, BPA was discovered as the culprit.

Vandenberg said BPA is linked to disorders and health problems like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), learning disabilities, reduced Intelligence Quotient (IQ), breast and prostate cancer, reduced fertility and increased obesity and childhood diabetes in people whose mothers were constantly exposed to BPA.

To avoid too much BPA exposure, Vandenberg said consumers should buy fresh foods, or foods in glass containers. He also said that many companies like Nalgene, a maker of reusable

water bottles, have products that are BPA-free.

After Vandenberg's talk, Rachel Brennan spoke to the audience about research she was conducting at Penn State about water quality.

Brennan, an assistant professor at Penn State, told the audience about "living machines" — machines made up entirely of living organisms — that can clean wastewater. Penn State has a smaller version of the machine at its Center for Sustainability near Medlar Field, she said.

Brennan's research involves modifying the machine to incorporate fungi that she hopes will remove endocrine disrupters from the water.

The final part of the forum was a panel discussion with three representatives from area water authorities. They talked to the audience about specific processes they use to treat the region's wastewater.

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Repeal could reduce illegal immigration

By Sarah Peters
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A study by a Penn State professor and the National Migration Policy Institute reports repealing birthright citizenship could cause the illegal immigrant population to rapidly expand in future decades.

By the most conservative estimate, the population of illegal immigrants would rise from 11 million to 16 million by 2050, said Jennifer Van Hook, Penn State professor of sociology and demographics, principal author of the study and non-resident fellow at the Migration Policy Institute.

"This would dampen enthusiasm on their part for doing better," Van Hook said. "If their opportunities are blocked, because they don't have legal right, their integration would be slowed down."

Van Hook co-authored the study with Michael Fix, Migration Policy Institute senior vice president and director of studies.

The study was publicized in the Wall Street Journal and New York Times.

Van Hook said the debates this summer focused on the goal of reducing the number of illegal immigrants coming into the country in the first place.

"The idea of repealing birthright citizenship was based on the idea that most of the people coming here wanted their children to have U.S. citizenship," Van Hook said.

"These debates were missing a whole other dimension, because they weren't looking at the long-term effects of repealing birthright citizenship."

As a demographer, Van Hook was able to provide insight about those long-term effects, she said.

The Birthright Citizenship Act

currently being debated by Congress would only repeal citizenship for children born to two illegal immigrants.

The potential effects of the act, Van Hook said.

Fix said people want to get a smaller unauthorized population, but the act will only cause the population and associated problems to increase.

"What they're also going to get from the policy is a long-term, hardcore population that's permanently disenfranchised in the U.S.," Fix said.

"This kind of hereditary disadvantage is really un-American. It's unprecedented in the U.S. post-Civil War history."

Fix said the visa system, which hasn't taken into account the economy's need for lower-scale workers since the 1960s, is "the instrument for reducing the size of the unauthorized population."

But Penn State College Republicans Chairman Josh Crawford said the clause in the Constitution that guarantees birthright citizenship was designed hundreds of years ago to give slaves and Native Americans citizenship after the Civil War, since they were previously undocumented.

Crawford (junior-crime, law and justice) said it's unfair that illegal immigrant couples expecting a child come into the U.S. solely to get their child citizenship.

"People circumvent the traditional immigration law by doing that because most courts won't send the family away from their child," Crawford said. "Essentially, it bumps people who play by the rules down the list, because someone jumped ahead in line."

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Weekly 'Doctor Who' club attracts British show's fans

By Julia Anselmo
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

More than twenty enthused sci-fi fans gathered Wednesday night for their weekly "Doctor Who" club meeting.

The "Doctor Who" club is a group of Penn State students and a few community members who are fans of the longest-ever running British sci-fi television series.

The group meets weekly to view episodes of "Doctor Who." The show gained popularity in the 1970s and there was even a "Doctor Who" club at Penn State during this time. The club was reinstated in 2008.

Since the '70s, 11 actors have played the part of "Doctor Who."

President of the club, Elizabeth Bartels said that one of the goals she has for the club this year is to expose members to older episodes of "Doctor Who."

"We're showing members old stuff that hasn't been as common, which is exciting," she said.

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Elizabeth Bartels
President of the "Doctor Who" club

Bartels (junior-security and risk management and information sciences and technology) said she is excited that club membership has increased since it restarted in 2008.

"We're bringing in a lot more blood into the club by advertising this year" she said. "A lot of people don't know there is a 'Doctor Who' club."

Caitlin Brubaker, the former club president and founder of the club, said she appreciates the work Bartels has put into keeping the club going.

"Doctor Who" is an awesome show and Liz has done a wonderful job keeping the club alive," Brubaker, Class of 2009 said.

Bartels said that in addition to watching episodes of their favorite

British sci-fi show, club members like to get together with other "random British clubs" at Penn State, including the Monty Python Society and the Harry Potter club, Three Broomsticks.

Bartels said she feels fortunate to go to Penn State, where she has found other people who share her love for the British sci-fi show. She said she gets excited every time she meets another "Doctor Who" fan.

"All my friends at smaller schools are excited because we have a 'Doctor Who' club here," she said. "It's kind of a geek code word exchange. If you're a 'Doctor Who' fan, you know you're a nerd."

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Courtesy of www.bbc.co.uk

Since its reinstatement in 2008, the "Doctor Who" club has gained interest for the longest-ever running British science-fiction TV series.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT



Tyler Sizemore/Collegian

Students practice Wednesday for the Prisoners of War Missing in Action vigil, a 24-hour ceremony which will take place on the Old Main lawn starting at 5 p.m. Friday.

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