



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

February 5, 2018  
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**When:** Thursday, February 8, 2018 7:30 pm

**Where:** Penn Township Municipal Building  
2001 Municipal Court  
Harrison City, PA 15636

**What: Public Health Expert to Testify at Penn Township Zoning Hearing (Name who is coming and what will he say that would power up this headline?)**

A continued special exception hearing for the proposed Gaia well site in Penn Township will be held this Thursday at 7:30 pm. At this time Huntley & Huntley is seeking approval for this unconventional gas well pad within the Mineral Extraction Overlay. Protect PT, a citizen's group working to ensure our community's safety, security, and quality of life from the effects of unconventional gas development, is participating in these hearings to cross-examine industry experts. Protect PT will also present expert witness, Walter Tsou, MD, MPH. Dr. Tsou is Adjunct Professor in the Department of Family Medicine & Community Health, University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. Dr. Tsou is also the interim Executive Director of Philadelphia Physicians for Social Responsibility and has served as past Health Commissioner of Philadelphia and past President of the American Public Health Association.

Dr. Tsou recently authored a resolution passed by the **Pennsylvania Medical Society** calling for a moratorium on new gas drilling in Pennsylvania based on the precautionary principle. The resolution also calls for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to fund research on the health effects of fracking in order to advance our scientific knowledge.

At the Zoning Hearing Board's December 14th hearing, Huntley & Huntley objected to Dr. Tsou's testimony on the public health impacts of the proposed shale gas development. After consideration of legal memos submitted by the parties, however, the Zoning Hearing Board decided January 11 to admit his testimony. Dr. Tsou's testimony, along with testimony from Huntley's public health expert, will be heard at this hearing.

Protect PT holds the position that unconventional natural gas development is a heavy industrial process and should not be permitted in rural resource zoned areas.

Executive Director, Gillian Graber said, *"If the Pennsylvania Medical Society can call for a moratorium on fracking due to public health concerns, then our Zoning Hearing Board should carefully consider the public health factors when making their decision on these well pads."*

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