

Testimony Submitted by Eric Holtzman Greencastle, PA

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recently imposed storm water fees in Franklin County. I am unable to attend the September 11th meeting, but I want to provide you with the financial effects of this new tax.

I know that officially it is not a tax, since it appears on my water/sewer bill, but the new storm water tax is not based upon my use of water/sewer services. Nor is the Borough of Greencastle permitted to put my house up for a Sheriff's sale or other auction, if I fail to pay the storm water fee. Of course, a lien could be placed against my property. But I digress.

For 2019, the Borough of Greencastle charges me a property tax of \$439.80. However, I now have an additional tax of \$188.00/year for the storm water fees.

If this were imposed as an official property tax, my tax rate would have increased by 43%!

Additionally, the Greencastle-Antrim School District will now have to pay over \$40,000 per year. As a Board member at GASD, I also know that this fee will be passed along to me as a property owner. There simply isn't another funding source to cover this added expense, and no additional funds will be sent to the District by the Commonwealth (I believe the term is unfunded mandate).

As a school board director, we often hear about the burden of property tax on homeowners. We also have controls in place that limit our ability to raise property taxes. Yet, this new tax effectively increases the cost to homeowners, in addition to their school, county and borough taxes. I cannot imagine what this tax will look like 3-5 years from now, when a new rate is determined -- most likely much higher.

To place the burden of the Chesapeake Bay on my house, which was built in 1993 following all required laws and regulations, is an undue hardship. If the Commonwealth agrees with the storm water process as imposed by the Federal government, then it should be paying for and obtaining revenue, at a state level.

These costs should not be punitively placed on homeowners, with little warning, and with no recourse. Our locally elected officials are not to blame for this situation, and only our state legislators can resolve this situation in a manner that is fair to the residents of Franklin County.

Thank you for your time and for your willingness to hold a committee meeting in Antrim Township.

Regards,

Eric Holtzman