

BRAINSTORMING CALLS RECAP

We wrapped up our first round of follow-up calls on the PA Dems action and we're ready to start planning and implementing the ideas we discussed.

I've included a link to a Doodle poll to help us schedule a group call. Because we have a number of different ideas, I imagine that we might want to come up with teams working on the different actions, but we can decide that when we meet.

Before we meet, I wanted to recap what we've discussed already:

Every call/meeting has begun with a review of what happened in Lancaster and what the response has been from others in the movement, politicians, candidates, press, etc.

- Organizations around the country and even around the world have reached out to congratulate us. We're told that the story has made the news in Connecticut, so it's possible it's been covered elsewhere. EcoWatch asked me to write a piece on what we did and I've heard from people in other states who would like to try what we did at their state committees.
- Rendell, Schwartz, McGinty, and Wolf have been in the press criticizing the party's vote. Myers has been in the press supporting the vote. Hanger has publicly taken a middle-road position of supporting a moratorium on state forest drilling.
- The press seemed pretty indifferent, as usual, to the story when it happened, but are now covering the reaction. The entire meeting was televised on PCN and has been rebroadcast at least once. Many of the articles that were written about Rendell and the candidates came from PennLive. I responded with a letter to the editor that has not been picked up, as far as I can tell.

After the recap, we've discussed next steps along two tracks. Our action at the PA Dems was directed, of course, at getting support for the moratorium. However, it was appealing for another reason. We believed it was a more unusual or interesting target than we typically go after. We discussed possible next steps along both tracks.

Moratorium Track –

Need to keep bringing up the resolution, make it the constant drumbeat when we talk to candidates, elected officials, and public officials at every level of government.

Organize/attend candidate debates

Birddog candidates

Reach out to McCord, the only prospective Dem candidate who has not weighed in. Word is there's no love lost between McCord and Rendell, so that might be helpful.

Target Rendell to point out how he failed the state on fracking and is now an industry shill. Don't overdo targeting him, however, because we don't need to remind non-Dems of the party's bad history on fracking.

Approach county committees to pass the resolution to show the depth of support within the party.

Enlist state and county Dem committee members to pressure legislators to co-sponsor Ferlo's bill.

Some Republicans expressed interest in doing the same thing at their committee. It was also suggested by one of the participants on our calls before we heard from the Republicans and we'd discussed the role we can play providing support on how to go about it.

Focus on 2014 and beyond. We should organize throughout the state and drive voter turnout in areas where fracking is happening.

Play up our successes. We have them all the time. Take advantage of great pubs like EcoWatch to submit stories to encourage people. Similarly, develop stories, e.g. McIlhinney and the moratorium in the South Newark Basin, to point out that votes matter.

Develop talking points to distribute throughout movement on key issues.

Interesting Targets/Creative Actions –

Water replacement – a number of orgs and individuals are collecting money for water replacements, equipment, and other things needed by people dealing with methane contamination.

On July 28th, BGT is hosting Frackapalooza where we plan to raise funds to support that effort. We thought we could use it as a kick-off event to a month of fundraising events throughout the state.

The idea is to hold "pathetic" bake sales. Really humble little bake sales or lemonade stands, could be at farmer's markets or busy main streets. There would be only one very simple handout explaining why the sale was taking place.

We want to raise awareness, but we also want to embarrass the government and the industry who have turned their backs on people in need by having these tiny events where private citizens are raising money so Pennsylvanians can have clean water to drink.

These can be listed as announcements in every paper for free on their community calendars and we can send releases to the editors of the “Neighbors” section of the paper, just as an org would if they were having a charity car wash. It’s a different way to get press attention.

Extensions of this idea are 1) to ask a legislator to sponsor a bill calling for a 5 cent tax to be added to water bottles or beer bottles to pay for water for Pennsylvanians, mostly to bring attention to the issue, and 2) to start a drive for Halloween where trick or treaters carry little boxes with them to take donations, sort of like the old UNICEF drive in the old days.

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts or your ideas for different actions on our call!