

# THE COUNTY OF CHESTER

CHESTER COUNTY  
WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY  
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June 8, 2018

Representative Daryl D. Metcalfe  
Chair, State Government Committee  
144 Main Capitol  
PO Box 202012  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2012

Dear Representative Metcalfe,

Chester County Water Resources Authority (CCWRA) would like to express it's strong support for the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) and the essential roles DRBC plays in ensuring water availability for all water users here in Chester County, and throughout the Delaware Basin.

CCWRA is a county-wide municipal authority established by the Chester County Board of Commissioners in 1961 to provide science-based, county-wide water resources management, investigations, and monitoring and to work with water-use industries and commercial entities, water supply utilities, other government agencies, municipalities, and stakeholders to balance the use of the waters of Chester County to support economic growth while protecting and enhancing the quality, quantity and ecology of Chester County's water resources. As owner/operator of a regional water supply reservoir and 4 regional flood control facilities, CCWRA is also regulated by DRBC. For many reasons and on numerous occasions, the Delaware River Basin Commission has provided essential, balanced, science-based oversight of water use decisions supporting the economic development and environmental sustainability of Chester County, PA.

All watersheds of Chester County originate within the County and then drain downstream to 6 adjacent counties, in 3 adjacent states – PA, DE and MD. In total, 80% of Chester County's 2,400 miles of streams are source waters for public water supplies in PA, DE and MD. Alone, the Brandywine Christina Basin comprises over 55% of Chester County and drains to New Castle County DE supporting 9 surface water intakes for public water supplies for over 250,000 residents and numerous major industrial water users in PA and DE. Hence, inter-state oversight by DRBC of these inter-state water resources and their use and management is crucial to the balanced use - and to the sustainability of those economic uses - of the groundwater and surface waters of Chester County to ensure sufficient supplies to sustain current uses and allow for additional future uses.

In addition to the surface water withdrawals, there are multiple groundwater withdrawals within Chester County supporting public, industrial and commercial water supplies, at least 1 that involves potential inter-state transfer of water out of Chester County to Delaware. DRBC provided balanced, science based oversight to resolve a highly controversial proposal for use of this groundwater source.

Also, the DRBC Groundwater Protection Area includes a portion of Chester County that previously was in danger of over-withdrawal of groundwater. The DRBC oversight and groundwater management framework they apply for that GWPA has shown significant benefit in minimizing additional stress on the aquifers and allowing sufficient groundwater resources to remain in the system to support current uses and planned growth in that area.

Because PADEP has no authority to regulate groundwater withdrawals under most circumstances, the absence of DRBC oversight of groundwater use could lead to poorly planned and unsustainable withdrawals by water users. This could then lead to over-withdrawal of the County's aquifers that could result in dewatered streams, insufficient stream flows to assimilate treated wastewater discharges, and could prohibit future growth that would need to rely on those resources for water supplies. Curtailed roles of, or the absence of, the DRBC could also force water users to "fend for themselves" against opposition to their proposed water use activities.

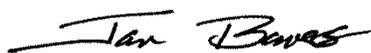
DRBC oversight of groundwater and surface water use has been critical to sustaining the groundwater and stream flows of the watersheds of Chester County. The science-based technical expertise and regulatory balance employed by DRBC to oversee and regulate the use of groundwater and streams in the Delaware Basin has facilitated beneficial and efficient water use by industries. Their regulatory and science-based approaches have allowed industries and commercial water users to obtain fair and adequate rights to water resources for current and future uses to support economic development.

In summary, as a County comprised of – and reliant upon – multiple inter-state and inter-jurisdictional watersheds, the scientific and regulatory oversight provided by DRBC has proven effective and essential in supporting current water users, providing available water resources to support planned growth in the County, and for sustaining those water resources to continue to support economic growth and the ecological resources within the watersheds of Chester County.

As a DRBC regulated entity and a count-wide water resources management agency, CCWRA respectfully requests your support for the continued role of DRBC as essential to the viability of water resources in Chester County and throughout the PA portion of the Delaware Basin. In addition, CCWRA encourages the Commonwealth to work towards restoring funding to the full "fair share" level of \$893,000 as soon as possible. Given the services and benefits provided by DRBC, this relatively small annual contribution by Pennsylvania as a signatory member of DRBC is an important public policy investment.

CCWRA thanks you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Janet L. Bowers, P.G.  
Executive Director