



CITY OF PITTSBURGH

"America's Most Livable City"

Office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl

August 8, 2011

President and Members of City Council
510 City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear President and Members of City Council:

I write today to inform you of my decision to withhold my signature from Council Bill No. 2011-1939, an ordinance directing that an amendment to the City of Pittsburgh Home Rule Charter be placed on the ballot. By withholding my signature I have effectively eliminated the possibility that this item appear on the ballot during this election cycle.

I have several reasons for this action. Chief among them is the message that we are sending when we are essentially blocking an industry from investing in our City and region. Additionally, legal concerns have been raised about the language proposed by this ordinance and I have reservations about incorporating a drilling ban into our City's Home Rule Charter. On top of these standing issues I must note my grave concern for the expedited process that was utilized as the state-created statutory timeframe for referenda neared.

The fact that in order for this to be on the ballot would have required me to fast forward a legislative process that is part of our City Code speaks volumes. This bill was rushed through with little time for public discussion, legal analysis and consideration of its impacts. Ordinarily, a matter of this importance, potentially changing the very language of our Home Rule Charter - this City's constitution, would be part of a community wide dialogue replete with post-agendas, public hearings and the like. In fact, I have received different messages from well-known environmental groups about whether or not the bill is a good idea. If this bill's author really believes this is an important issue, then why not introduce it weeks if not months ago?

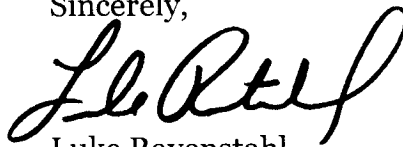
Last year I declined to place my signature on Council Bill No. 2010-0909. That ordinance, among other things, added language to our City Code purporting to ban the extraction of natural gas within the City. The ordinance before me today seeks to now bring that exact same language into our City's Home Rule Charter. By adding this language to our very governing documents we send the wrong message, not just to an

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industry that is burgeoning in our state and region, but also to the world. Whatever your own position on the issue of natural gas drilling, this industry is in this region to stay. In time, this industry may well be one this region's leading job creators and economic engines. Our role in government must be to protect our people by ensuring that commercial activity is conducted safely and our environment is preserved. Simultaneously, our role is to encourage job creation and to connect Pittsburghers to employment opportunities. To ban any particular industry in our constitution, our Home Rule Charter, is not just out of place, which is why it has never been done before, but also says that Pittsburgh is closed for business. For a City with half the population we used to have, starting to grow only now for the first time in generations, Pittsburgh cannot afford such a message.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Ravenstahl", written in a cursive style.

Luke Ravenstahl
Mayor, City of Pittsburgh