To the Editor:

In the November, 26th edition of *The Eastern Medina Post*, Speaker Bill Batchelder wrote a column entitled “Oil, gas production is an exciting opportunity”; this is a line by line rebuttal to inaccurate claims about hydraulic fracturing. For more information, visit the Concerned Citizens of Medina County’s website at fracking.weebly.com; all of my citations are listed there.

Representative Batchelder focuses on the economic benefits of hydraulic fracturing, which are largely short-lived. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, over 70% of the jobs related to hydraulic fracturing are out of state hires. The highest paying jobs are transient; they move from state to state, depending on where drilling is occurring. As a result, the Department concluded, the jobs that are created when drilling occurs are low-paying and last only as long as drilling progresses. The Department reported that Pennsylvania gas development created 10,600 total jobs, roughly 70% being from out of state. There is no factual information to even suggest that 200,000 jobs could be created.

Speaker Batchelder then claims that hydraulic fracturing has been used safely in Ohio for decades. In fact, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 created the loophole in the Safe Drinking Water Act that made hydraulic fracturing, in its current form, possible. The process used now is more heavily industrialized, uses far more fluid, and is far less safe than the process previously used. Water contamination has been connected to hydraulic fracturing in eight states, including Ohio. On our website, see the “Scientific Conclusions” page, where I go into detail about the scientifically proven environmental impacts of modern hydraulic fracturing.

Representative Batchelder also claims that ODNR provides adequate regulation of the process. The 2011 Ohio energy law actually reduces regulations at the state level. In their report on Ohio, Common Cause writes, “Companies engaged in fracking contributed $2.8 million to state candidates, political committees, and parties in Ohio from 2001 through June 2011, helping the natural gas industry preserve what are some of the nation’s most lenient fracking regulations.” Bill Batchelder specifically received $71,195 from hydraulic fracturing interests over that period. Also note that Ohio does not require full disclosure, so the number may be much higher. With lenient regulations, Ohio is not in a position to safely exploit oil and gas. Batchelder then claims that states are better suited to regulate drilling. However, the reason that the Safe Drinking Water Act was called for in the 1970s, was precisely because hydrologic features do not stop at state boundaries. This means that federal regulations are important; but currently, they are inadequate.

As a member of The Concerned Citizens of Medina County, I believe that the regulatory climate at the state and federal levels is too lenient to adequately protect our health and safety. I encourage anyone reading this to consider carefully a decision to lease land for hydraulic fracturing. All of my claims are expressed in more detail and with more citations on our website, fracking.weebly.com.