



WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
6820 MARKET STREET
RUSSELL PA 16345-3406

GARY L. WEBER
SUPERINTENDENT

March 24, 2025

State Representative Mandy Steele
1296 Pittsburgh Street
Cheswick, PA 15024-1445

Dear Representative Steele,

I write to express the absolute opposition of the Warren County School District to your proposal to increase the allowable per acre price paid by the Pennsylvania Game Commission to purchase private land within the Commonwealth.

According to PGC reports, they currently own 1.5 Million acres of land across the Commonwealth, including in excess of 109,000 acres here in Warren County, which is roughly 17% of our total acreage. In addition to this acreage, Warren County also provides over 135,000 acres to the Allegheny National Forest. This combination of restricted use property removes over 38% of our land mass from private ownership as well as dependable economic contribution to our communities, residents and school systems.

Natural resource development on these publicly held lands, be it timbering or oil, gas and mineral right extraction has suffered dramatically due to shifting public policy and land management decisions for decades. As such, these local economic drivers have been reduced to a fraction today of what they were when they served as the catalyst for the region's growth and prosperity.

Enhancing the Game Commission's ability to secure more privately held land within the Commonwealth is absolutely detrimental to the economic future of the Commonwealth. This is particularly true for rural counties such as Warren, which are fortunate enough to hold private, natural, well managed woodlands which are typically sought after by the PGC.

Warren County simply cannot afford to lose any additional land to non-tax-paying government agencies which stifle, rather than promote, development of economically productive uses. The loss of transfer tax, real estate and school tax is devastating to our local municipal governments and school system that rely almost exclusively on property taxes revenues to support their mandated service provision.

We ask you to cease your efforts to improve the Pennsylvania Game Commissions ability to acquire any additional property within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Weber
Superintendent

The Warren County School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, and prohibits sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§1681 et seq., and its regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 106. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the District's Title IX Coordinator, Eric Mineweaser at (814) 723-6900. The District's full Title IX Notice of Nondiscrimination is located at www.wcsdpa.org.