

**Comments by
Elise Jones, Boulder County Commissioner, on COGCC Rulemaking
December 11, 2017**

Good morning. My name is Elise Jones and I'm a Boulder County Commissioner. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

I am here to represent my constituents and share their deep and urgent concerns about pending proposals from Crestone and Extraction to drill over 250 wells in eastern Boulder County.

I was here before you last month, I'm here today, and I will continue to come again and again in the future until it's understood, until it's abundantly clear to everyone, that the status quo isn't working.

The process we're going through vividly highlights that the rules and standards the COGCC has in place aren't designed for the technologies and concentrations of today's drilling proposals; instead of a single well drilled in an undeveloped rural area, we are now seeing 20-acre industrial fortresses with dozens of wells being sited near backyards and playgrounds in urban and suburban communities up and down the Front Range.

Current rules didn't envision where we are today and are woefully inadequate to ensure the safety and protections that Coloradans deserve and demand. There have been several Governor Task Forces and rulemaking proposals in recent years but none of these has yielded meaningful change. Hence, this roomful of concerned and angry people.

In my years as commissioner, we have received more citizen input on this issue than any other. And there is broad consensus; 99% of the comments we've received say: Keep these impacts out of Boulder County. They say: we're scared for our children, we're worried about how carcinogenic emissions of benzene will affect their health, we're concerned that the life savings we put into purchasing our home is at risk, we are fearful there will be more tragedies like Firestone.

I've had many constituents tell me they specifically moved to Boulder County for our clean air and water and pristine environment, and that they would never have purchased homes here if they knew there would be drilling nearby. Some are already making plans to leave.

In Boulder County, as in other communities, some of the places proposed for drilling are right near elementary schools and homes. We don't allow any other dangerous industrial uses to occur in residential neighborhoods – drilling shouldn't be allowed there either.

Likewise, some sites proposed for drilling in Boulder County are open space. We have spent hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars – hundreds of millions – permanently protecting more than 100,000 acres, for farming, wildlife, scenic views, and outdoor recreation. Seven times our voters have gone to the ballot and approved taxing themselves to preserve these lands -- not to drill them.

The Martinez case ruling holds that you, the COGCC, must make oil and gas decisions subject to the “protection of public health, safety, and welfare, including protection of the environment and wildlife resources.”

I urge you to follow the Martinez ruling and put public safety and environmental protection first.

Thank you.