

Comments to the COGCC – Elise Jones, March 11, 2019

- Good morning. Thank you for listening to us today.
- I believe this is the 7th time in 18 months that I've stood before you to provide public comment. Admittedly, I'm typically pretty grumpy, often even angry, when you hear from me - because I feel the system for oil & gas in Colorado is broken.
- But today, for the first time, I'm feeling optimistic.
- That's because last November elections provided us with new leadership on the oil and gas issue. As they say, there's a new sheriff in town. A new Governor, a new COGCC Director, new leadership in the legislature.
- And with this change, comes an opportunity to transform this body to make it function like a real regulatory agency,
 - Where you undertake meaningful analyses of impacts, including cumulative effects
 - And require meaningful mitigation for these impacts, and an analysis of alternative locations for wells and facilities
 - Where you ensure a meaningful opportunity for the public's voice to be heard
 - And engage in rulemakings that provide meaningful protection to the people and environment of Colorado
 - Where you put public health and safety first
 - And exercise your ability to say no when it's the right thing to say, when the impacts are too great and the protections inadequate.
- The changes underfoot also provide an opportunity to redefine the state-local government relationship on oil and gas, to make it more of a partnership.
- Something that is very near and dear to my heart and that of other local elected officials: the legislation being considered at the Capitol this week would provide more local control, allowing cities and counties to do what we do best -- to exercise our traditionally-held land use powers and oversee oil and gas like we do every other land use in our communities.
- Through rulemakings, you and other state agencies can set the standard for minimum statewide protections, and we local governments can provide additional safeguards as needed for our local communities and to address the particular needs and desires of our constituents and economies.
- We look forward to this relationship with you and to working with you to achieve these long overdue and much needed reforms. While change can be difficult, it's necessary for the future of our state and I urge you to embrace this opportunity.
- Thank you.