

Public Hearing on water quality 9/7/2016

Good Afternoon

My name is Jennifer Plouffe. I moved from Richmond VA to Hoosick Falls on October 1, 2015. I'm originally from upstate NY and returned to be closer to my family in particular, my parents, so I could be a resource to them as they age. My parents live in Petersburg, NY. Another small town dealing with PFOA contamination of both public and private water sources caused by another factory not too far from Hoosick Falls.

I was excited to embark on this new chapter of my life. I spent many months preparing for my move back home. First order of business was to find a job. Second was to buy a home. My first home. Being a first time home owner I wanted to be sure I crossed my T's and dotted my I's. I was though in my process. I was careful not to buy a home outside of my price range. I put down a good size down payment to be sure my mortgage would be manageable. I researched water

quality reports and even discovered in my research that HF water had won awards for being the best tasting water. I knew I wanted to be close to my new job in Bennington so I looked for real estate in Hoosick Fall NY, Petersburg NY, Cambridge NY, Bennington VT, and Pownal VT. What I did not know then is that all the places I was looking at real estate would later be discovered to have contamination of PFOA in both private wells and public water sources.

I after months of searching I found the home I wanted to purchase in Hoosick Falls. I was thrilled but nervous. I was about to entered into the biggest financial commitment of my life, but my nerves about this were eased because I knew this would be an investment. Based on all I knew at the time it would be a sound investment. I could not have been more wrong.

On November 10, 2015 I signed all papers and I closed on my home in the Village of Hoosick Falls. Less than 48hrs later I found out that there was a serious problem with the municipal water supply.

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There was a high level of a poisonous substance called PFOA in the municipal water supply. It has been linked to all kinds of different cancers as well as other serious health problems. It was in the Aquifers. That moment changed everything. I had been drinking the water for over a month, giving it to my family members, friends, my animals. I immediately went from being the happiest I had ever been to being terrified. There was no housewarming gathering, no celebration. No nesting or enjoying my new home. My world was turned upside down. There was immediate shock and fear. Fear for both my physical and financial health. How could this happen. What did I miss? What am I going to do?

Within months of closing on my home Hoosick Falls was deemed a superfund site. Banks stopped providing mortgages to residents. People could not refinance their homes. Since then property values have dropped significantly, people can't sell their homes. The stigma of superfund status impacts real estate sales and home values. It's only

natural. Who would want to buy a home sitting in the middle of an environmental catastrophe? I know I wouldn't.

I have lived this nightmare for almost a year. I am not the same person I was when I moved here. I no longer trust the safety of my drinking water. I no longer trust local and State leaders. Why should I? Why should any of us? It all wrecks of corruption, cover up, and collusion.

When you google/research Hoosick Falls now the information on PFOA contamination and how it all came to light is one of the first things you see. Instead of the best tasting water we have a tragic situation where local and state officials could not decide who's on first, whose court the ball was in, whatever expression you choose, waited 18 months to tell the residents to stop drinking the water. Stop drinking the water because there is a high level of a known toxic contaminate that is dangerous to public health (PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY). Stop drinking the water, we will figure out how to proceed next but we need

to exercise caution, because your health and safety is a priority. We will obtain guidance from our regulatory agencies and proceed. As we all know now this is not what happened.

This is a social justice issue, this is a human rights issue. People should have been protected and been given accurate information so they could protect themselves and the ones they love. The lack of disclosure of the seriousness and scope of PFOA contamination in the municipal water supply is a dereliction of duty by all local and State government officials who knew about the problem but decided not to alert those they serve. Public Servants who had a duty to disclose this information so at the very least the residents could decide for themselves how to proceed. Lying by omission or misrepresentation is still lying. Lying breeds distrust. It is only natural.

Hoosick Falls and Petersburgh residents have been and will continue to be affected physically, mentally, emotionally and financially by PFOA contamination for years to come. The beauty of the scenery of

Hoosick Falls and Petersburg is beguiled by big business and big money. The polluters???? Where are they today? The EPA, where are they, the Governor, where is he? The disregard for the health and well-being of the residents who live in these towns is criminal. We had a right to know there was a serious problem with the water. We had a right to these hearings. We had a right to ask those in charge why the delay in disclosure. We have a right to hear real answers. Instead of treating the concern as though people were alarmists caution should have been exercised and the people and their health and safety should have been a priority.

NYS has much to learn about how to handle these types of water contamination issues. What has happened to the residents of Hoosick Falls and Petersburg can and should be prevented in the future.

PFOA/PFOS and other emerging contaminants need to be regulated and regularly tested for. Especially in areas with a history of manufacturing. Protecting public health should be at the top of every

public servants list. Having safe, clean water is a right of all citizens. We cannot afford to take it for granted and we have a duty to protect our water sources from polluters who use small towns as their personal trash cans.

Thank you for listening to my story. Unfortunately mine is just one of thousands of stories out there of people effected by PFOA/PFOS contamination; not just in New York State but all across the nation.