Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

I have lived in Penn Lake Borough for many years. Penn Lake Borough is a small community in northeastern Pennsylvania with approximately 250 households. Penn Lake itself is literally the heart of the community. So, everyone who lives at Penn Lake was understandably concerned when the Borough was notified by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in March 2020 that the dam that creates our lake is considered high hazard, is unsafe because of seepage and other issues, and that the Borough, as owner of the dam is responsible for correcting the deficiencies or risk the Department draining the lake.

Over the past four years, the community pulled together, participated in public meetings and forums and voted overwhelmingly to increase our own property taxes to help provide the necessary funding to fix the dam. In November 2023, the Borough submitted a permit application to the DEP outlining how the Borough plans to correct the deficiencies identified by the DEP. We understand that the DEP’s review can sometimes take up to one year, but at this point, we don’t even know if our application is complete. Despite multiple requests for a meeting to discuss the status of the application, the DEP has failed to respond.

I am writing to solicit your assistance in expediting the DEP’s review. The urgency about the necessity for dam repairs that the DEP expressed in March 2020 seems to have totally dissipated. Meanwhile, the seepage continues at the dam unabated and the funds the Borough has acquired through grants, loans and increased tax revenue that are earmarked for dam and spillway repairs are being eroded by inflation. Now, it is the Penn Lake community that feels that urgent action is required, and we need your help.

Regards,