

ORIGINAL

From: "Matt Varble" <mattvarble@hotmail.com>
To: THERRIAJ@ipcb.state.il.us
Date: 9/2/2008 9:42:20 AM
Subject: RE: 8/31/08 Peoria Journal Star story about IEPA Attorney Michelle Ryan knitting

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STATE OF ILLINOIS
Pollution Control Board

Please docket:

8/31/08 Peoria Journal Star newspaper story about IEPA Attorney Michelle Ryan knitting at the 8/18/08 IPCB hearing in peoria.

<http://www.pjstar.com/news/x1886920382/Word-on-the-Street-Is-Schock-slacking-on-debates>

-Matt Varble

Excerpt from the 8/31/08 article:

Caught knitting

An Illinois Environmental Protection Agency attorney was caught on camera knitting during an Aug. 18 public hearing in Peoria on Peoria Disposal Co.'s proposed "de-listing" of hazardous waste it handles so it can be treated and shipped to landfills around the state.

As a result, a Clinton environmental group wants the Illinois Pollution Control Board (IPCB) to consider IEPA attorney Michelle Ryan's knitting as one of 21 reasons why the hearing should be redone. The IPCB will decide whether to redo the hearing during a Thursday meeting in Springfield.

Matt Varble, president of We're Against Toxic Chemicals (WATCH), a community group opposed to having the toxic material in Clinton, said Ryan's behavior was "outrageous" and she should be "terminated" from the state for knitting while the public presented comments during a hearing.

In an e-mail to IPCB members, Varble wrote about the knitting: "This is a concern I have as a citizen due to the apparent lack of seriousness that the state IEPA has toward public comments at an IPCB hearing."

Also submitted into the case files was a letter written by Mossville resident Lisa Offutt, who highlighted in bold print, "Are we to put our trust in the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, whose attorney sat and knitted during public comments at the August 18 public hearing, oblivious to the concerns of the public?" A picture of Ryan knitting was also submitted into the files.

Maggie Carson, spokeswoman with the IEPA, said she was aware of the incident. She said Ryan is not the lead attorney in this particular case and that she was at the Aug. 18 meeting to "consult with the lead attorney" if her background expertise was needed.

Said Carson about whether Ryan faces any discipline related to the knitting, "I was told by our lead attorney that the hearing officer brought it to her attention and she stopped (knitting). From our perspective, the situation ended there." (J.S.)

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