

# Shell's Monaca Plant Exposes Pennsylvania's Failed Trickle-Down Petrochemical Renaissance

Pennsylvania invested substantial government funding and tax credits in the Shell Polymers Monaca plant in an attempt to help launch a “petrochemical renaissance” in the state.

It didn't work.

The failure of Pennsylvania's economic development initiatives to spur more private investment in major petrochemical developments—despite the ready access to natural gas—is a red flag that shows the petrochemical renaissance in Pennsylvania has not delivered on its promises.

Not only have state subsidies not spurred private investment but the refining and petrochemical-related industrial sector in Pennsylvania **has shed jobs**—not generated them.

## A RECORD OF POLLUTION AND VIOLATIONS



**62** notices of violation issued during the facility's lifetime.

**85%** tied to air emission requirements.



The only thing the facility has delivered on is **pollution**. Problems at the Shell plant highlight the need to assess risks and the compliance records of sponsors who seek public incentives for petrochemical projects.

The fate of the Shell Polymers Monaca plant and the Pennsylvania government's unrealized expectations of economic development should serve as a cautionary tale for state and local governments pressured by businesses for financial incentives. The “wow” factor of big projects can feel overwhelming, but the warning signs for the petrochemical project were there early in the process. Ultimately, state financial incentives for economic development should target business sectors with strong track records of generating local jobs, robust markets for their products, and proven commitments to community safety and quality of life. The petrochemical industry doesn't meet that criteria.