

# Press



# Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Legislature Committee Urges Governor to Impose Statewide Moratorium on Natural Gas Drilling Projects Pending Study Results

**“Hydrofracking” Potentially Injurious to Health and Environment, Says Committee Chair**

**New City, NY (June 23, 2010)** – The Rockland County Legislature’s Environmental Committee passed a resolution at the June 23, 2010 meeting to urge Governor Paterson to impose a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing, an underground procedure used by the gas industry to release and capture natural gas deposits, pending further scientific assessments and reviews by state, federal and independent environmental agencies. The resolution also calls upon the Governor to withdraw a draft environmental impact statement issued by the NYS DEC as many scientists and environmentalists argue that it does not adequately analyze the potential impacts associated with drilling.

The process, also known as “hydrofracking” involves drilling deep horizontal wells into areas of shale, and infusing massive quantities of fluids into the wells to fracture the shale to release the natural gas. Various types of fluids are used, ranging from water, to gels, foams, nitrogen, carbon dioxide and air. To keep the fracture open after the infusion of fluid, solid material is then injected. Various types of material is used, including sand, resin-coated sand, man-made ceramic products and radioactive sand is sometimes used to trace and measure the fractures.

“This procedure presents many environmental, human and wildlife health concerns,” said Legislator Coker, who is the chairwoman of the Environmental Committee and the prime sponsor of the resolution. “There is the potential to contaminate groundwater, the surrounding landscape and the quality of air. What happens to all that solid material that is no longer just innocent sand, but toxic waste? This resolution asks the Governor to impose a moratorium and to withdraw the flawed impact statement until the results of on-going studies are made available, studied and concluded. I believe it would be viewed as a responsible and prudent action on his part.”

Numerous municipalities across the state have called upon the Governor to impose a moratorium. Presently, no hydraulic fracturing projects are proposed in Rockland County. Coker states “Our County is not part of the Marcellus Shale, an underground formation of sedimentary rock that begins in the Catskills and continues northwest through Pennsylvania, W. Virginia and Ohio and is very rich in natural gas reserves. So it may seem that we are not at direct risk from the effects of the hydrofracking process - but as the horrible oil spill in the Gulf is emphasizing we have to be aware of all the unintended consequences of the methods used to obtain any substances from the earth. Furthermore, we want to stand with the residents of other parts of the state that are at risk for

environmental catastrophes from horizontal drilling for natural gas which involves blasting water and chemicals deep into the earth to release the gas. Therefore, extremely careful study of hydro fracturing is required. ”

The resolution has been referred to the Full Legislature and will appear on the agenda of the July 6, 2010 meeting. The meeting is open to the public.

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