

October 2, 2012

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224



Dear Governor Cuomo,

We are writing on behalf of Elected Officials to Protect New York, a bipartisan coalition of more than 440 local elected officials from 52 counties across our great state. On June 4, 2012, we wrote you to ask that as Governor you postpone a decision on the highly-controversial industrial practice of horizontal, high volume hydraulic fracturing. We support your promise to make the decision “based on the facts and on the science” and maintain that major questions are still unanswered.

We respectfully request an in-person meeting with you, Governor Cuomo. We represent thousands of New Yorkers from most of the counties across the state, and our constituents depend on us to help their voices be heard. Since - according to the public record - you have met directly with Brad Gill and other representatives of the gas industry, it is time that you meet with us.

As we asked back in June, we reiterate our request that a decision about fracking must not be made and permitting must not begin until the following independent assessments have been completed:

- **A comprehensive health impact assessment of the entire shale gas extraction process**, including but not limited to direct and indirect health effects and cumulative health impacts;
- **A revised and properly thorough analysis that considers all potentially negative socioeconomic impacts**, including but not limited to increased demands on local governments, first responders and law enforcement, and the effects of drilling on property values and home mortgages, existing businesses and economies, and local community character; and
- **A revised and properly thorough study of cumulative impacts**, including but not limited to the impacts on the rural landscape, water resources, air quality, and greenhouse gas emissions, and the lack of safe alternatives for wastewater disposal.

We represent the growing majority of elected officials from all political parties, from cities, towns, villages, and county governments, who have reviewed the science and facts on fracking. As local officials, we are the closest to the people and we’ve heard deep concerns from an unprecedented number of our constituents. Not only have we spent countless hours listening to public comments at hearings and public meetings, we hear from our neighbors at post offices, in grocery stores, and in our personal email inboxes. We have the ear to the ground on how our constituents view this industry. The sum total of what we have learned is deeply troubling.

Many of us have enacted local bans and moratoria, first conducting our own rigorous and exhaustive research to ensure that such ordinances were a necessary risk in the face of the gas industry's threat of lawsuits. Across the state, in response to our constituents' concerns and a remarkable citizens movement, more than 135 municipalities have bans and moratoria enacted and many more are under consideration.

Yet we realize it is not enough to protect "our own backyards." All of our communities are interdependent. The water and air do not know our municipal boundary lines. The truck traffic and pressure on housing and property values will not skirt towns that have banned fracking. It is up to the state government to adequately study the science and economics of fracking, and to make sure the health, safety, and prosperity of *all* New Yorkers are protected.

We know that you have been pressured by a small group of town supervisors in the Southern Tier to direct the DEC to move forward with fracking as soon as possible, but we urge that a decision cannot be made without all of the aforementioned studies.

Additionally, the validity of the request from this small group of town supervisors is questionable. They claim a majority of their constituents support their position, but we can attest that many of their resolutions were very purposefully passed with no public notice and no public input. They themselves point to an inundation of opposition following passage of their resolutions. What other admission is needed that their own constituents do not agree with them? While the public protests having "pro-fracking" resolutions passed in the dark of night behind their backs, the contrast with passage of bans and moratoria - with public meetings and formal hearings, usually following public petition drives - could not be more clear.

As mayors, town supervisors, councilmembers, trustees, and county officials of Southern Tier communities and on behalf of elected officials from most counties in the state, we can attest that the majority of residents in upstate New York, the communities that will be most affected, are not in support of going forward with fracking at this time.

We are the boots on the ground where the impacts and ramifications would be greatest. We do not believe that the facts and science are complete yet, so it doesn't matter whether 50 to 100 wells are permitted or 5,000 to 10,000. We do not have the knowledge that fracking is "safe" so we oppose subjecting any of our communities to this industry until all of our concerns have been thoroughly addressed.

We request a meeting with you, Governor Cuomo, at your earliest convenience, to more thoroughly communicate our concerns and the situation on the ground in our communities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph St. Angelo Jr., Van Etten Town Council  
Kathie Arnold, Cortland County Legislator  
Ronald H. Bailey, Meredith Town Councilperson  
Bert Candee, Fremont Town Councilmember  
Nancy Cole, Pulteney Town Councilmember  
Leslie Connors, Danby Town Councilperson  
Richard Driscoll, Newfield Town Supervisor

Dominic Frongillo, Caroline Deputy Town Supervisor  
Stephanie Kiyak, Dunkirk City Councilperson-at-large  
Jeffrey Mangus, Hector Town Councilmember  
Kevin Millar, Owego Village Mayor  
Mark Morris, Yates County Legislator  
Sally Muller, Afton Village Mayor  
Dylan Race, Danby Town Councilperson  
Virginia Rasmussen, Alfred Village Trustee  
Martha Robertson, Tompkins County Legislature Chair  
Jane Russell, Pulteney Town Supervisor  
Matt Ryan, Binghamton City Mayor  
Marcia Shaw, Meredith Town Tax Collector  
Lea Webb, Binghamton City Councilmember