

American Littoral Society, Tim Dillingham, Executive Director
Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, Sandy Batty,
Executive Director
Clean Ocean Action, Cindy Zipf, Executive Director
Cohansey Area River Preservation, Cynthia Zirkle, President
Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey, Margaret O’Gorman
Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, and
Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director
Edison Wetlands Association, Dana Patterson, Toxics Coordinator
Environment New Jersey, Dena Mottola Jaborska, Executive Director
Food and Water Watch, Jim Walsh, New Jersey Director
Grandmothers, Mothers and More for Energy Safety, Paula Gotsch, Co-Founder
GreenFaith, Rev. Fletcher Harper, Executive Director
New Jersey Audubon Society, Eric Stiles, Chief Operating Officer
New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Alison Mitchell, Policy Director
New Jersey Environmental Lobby, Michael L. Pisauo, Jr., Legislative Affairs
New Jersey Highlands Coalition, Julia Somers, Executive Director
New Jersey Sierra Club, Jeff Tittel, Director
North Jersey Public Policy Network, Rhoda Schermer, Chairperson
NY/NJ Baykeeper, Debbie Mans, the Baykeeper and Executive Director
Pascack Sustainability Group, Rosemary Dreger Carey, Founder and Chair
Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Jaclyn Rhoads, Director of Conservation Policy
Raritan Riverkeeper, Bill Shultz, the Raritan Riverkeeper
South Branch Watershed Association, William S. Kibler, Executive Director
South Jersey Land and Water Trust, Suzanne McCarthy, President
Tidewaters Gateway Partnership, inc., Richard H. McNutt, President

August 1, 2011

Governor Chris Christie
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Re: The Ban Bill: S2576

Dear Governor Christie,

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to sign the New Jersey Ban Bill into law.

The New Jersey Legislature has overwhelmingly approved the New Jersey Ban Bill (S2576, A3313) prohibiting the use of hydraulic fracturing for the purpose of natural gas exploration or production in the State. This is a historic action on the part of the Legislature aimed at protecting New Jersey’s water resources and communities.

It is also remarkable because of the bipartisan support the measure received and the huge margin of favor. In the New Jersey Senate the vote was: Yes, 33; No, 1; Not Voting, 6. In the New Jersey Assembly the vote was: Yes, 58; No, 11; Not Voting, 2, Abstains, 8. This vote undoubtedly reflects the enormous public and constituent support for a ban on hydraulic fracturing in New Jersey.

Everywhere gas drilling is occurring, problems follow. In Pennsylvania, PADEP records show about 11 violations of environmental permits by gas and oil company operators every day.¹ In 2010, there were about 6 per day. As gas drilling quickly expands, violations proliferate. And some of the biggest, most profitable companies have the most violations. Chesapeake Energy (132), Chief Oil and Gas (174), Cabot (114), Anadarko (75), Talisman Energy (153), East Resources (74), and Exxon Mobile/XTO (66) top the list as the worst.

Why are there problems? Because hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking”, isn’t safe. Gas drilling regulations aren’t adequate and the technology itself isn’t advanced enough to prevent substantial damage to the environment. Even with the best available technology, methane and chemicals are escaping into ground and surface water.² Harmful human health and environmental impacts are the result.

Due to years of lobbying by the industry, the oil and gas industry is exempt from protections in the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Superfund law, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act. In addition, they are not covered by public right-to-know provisions under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act. These exemptions make it impossible to sufficiently address gas drilling at the State level; without federal regulatory reform fracking will never be safe.

Governor Christie, we have a rare moment in time when New Jersey can take real action to protect its water resources – action that will prevent pollution for present and future generations. Preventing pollution is the best investment that can be made in the State’s future.³

¹ <http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/minres/oilgas/OGInspectionsViolations/OGInspviol.htm>

² http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/us/DRILLING_DOWN_SERIES.html;
<http://www.nicholas.duke.edu/cgc/HydraulicFracturingWhitepaper2011.pdf>;
<http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/resources/Reports/Rubin%20report%20finalfinalTOC4.9%202011%200.pdf>.

³ <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/p2/whatisp2.html>

Please consider the positive impact you will be making as you stand up for clean water in New Jersey in response to the deep concern expressed to the State's lawmakers by the residents of New Jersey. Please sign the Ban Bill today.

Sincerely,

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