



**For Immediate Release**

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**Rochester City Councilmembers and Local Officials among 600+ Elected Officials Raising Concerns about True Costs of Fracking**

*As Fracking Deadline Closes In, Elected Officials to Protect New York Hold Press Conference Detailing True Costs of Fracking and Calling on Governor Cuomo for Transparency*

**(Rochester)** On Monday, February 4 at 12:00 PM, Rochester City Councilmembers and other members of Elected Officials to Protect New York (EOPNY) held a press conference - which included Rochester City Councilmember Matt Haag, Rochester City Councilmember Elaine Spaul, Rochester City Councilmember Loretta Scott, Pittsford Mayor Robert Corby, Brighton Supervisor William Moehle, and Town of Caroline Deputy Supervisor Dominic Frongillo - detailing concerns about the costs of fracking and the inadequacy of New York State's fracking study.

As a February deadline looms for a decision about fracking, Rochester region elected officials are among the group that consists of more than 600 local elected officials from all 62 NY counties. Speaking for EOPNY, the officials are taking objection to the fact that New York State has not considered the negative economic impacts of fracking, has not adequately looked at the health costs, and has not given attention to the heavy municipal burdens that would be associated with fracking.

"New York State must assess the true costs of fracking before making a decision," **said Rochester City Councilmember-at-Large Matt Haag.** "Commissioner Martens admitted a year ago that the study of costs was lacking in the draft SGEIS. The state's study in 2011 completely ignored the negative impacts of fracking. How can the state make a decision without knowing the costs to our local governments, health, businesses, and environment?"

"Fracking could irreversibly damage our landscape, local economies, and environment that make New York special," **said Councilmember Elaine Spaul.** "As local officials, we're concerned about the making certain that we continue to ask the hard questions about fracking. We are calling on the Governor to ensure that all New Yorkers are protected."

The elected officials raised concerns about the negative socioeconomic impacts of fracking and how fracking could jeopardize the economic well-being of municipalities and local economies

across the state. New York's upstate economy is built on agriculture, tourism, a strong real estate industry, and small businesses, all of which could be negatively impacted by fracking. Yet the Department of Environmental Conservation's study consisted of only a one-sided review of the economic impacts of fracking, looking at potential benefits but entirely neglecting the negative socioeconomic impacts.

More than a year ago, DEC Commissioner Martens acknowledged that the state's economic analysis was inadequate, yet with a decision nearing, this serious shortcoming has not been addressed. Meanwhile, the gas industry's own claims of economic benefits such as job creation are seriously in doubt. For instance, an independent study from the Keystone Research Center found that fracking only contributed 5,669 jobs in Pennsylvania between 2007 and 2010, and that the gas industry's claim of creating over 48,000 jobs during that period is far from true. Data from other parts of the country such as Wyoming show that crime rates have risen with the influx of fracking, leaving municipalities concerned about impacts on public safety. Meanwhile, the NYS Department of Transportation estimates that fracking would result in increased in heavy traffic (6,790 truck trips per well, according to the DEC), which would equal yearly road damage of \$211 million to \$378 million.

**Brighton Town Supervisor William Moehle said**, "Fracking produces enormous volumes of highly toxic, radioactive waste, yet New York State and the gas industry have no plan to deal with it. Meanwhile it is transported throughout our communities, over our streams and rivers, and amidst our parklands and farmlands. The potential for costly disasters is cause for great alarm."

**Pittsford Mayor Robert Corby said** "Fracking threatens the economic vitality of Upstate New York. Fracking could destroy our tourism industry, our wineries, and the allure of our beautiful landscapes. No one wants to sit in a vineyard next to a fracking rig."

Additionally, in the wake of Superstorm Sandy and Tropical Storms Irene and Lee, potential impacts from climate change are a concern to municipalities. Fracking releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is 105 times more potent than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period.

"Fracking makes climate change worse, when we're already paying for damage from stronger storms. Tropical Storm Lee caused over \$1 billion in damage in the Southern Tier alone," **said Dominic Frongillo, Deputy Town Supervisor in Caroline**. "Taxpayers cannot afford another disaster. How much more will fracking cost our towns and cities?"

The elected officials pointed to a numerous letters that they have sent Governor Andrew Cuomo, DEC Commissioner Martens, and Department of Health Commissioner Nirav Shah since June 4 requesting that three studies must be done before a decision can be made about fracking: a comprehensive health impacts analysis, a cumulative (not site-specific) environmental analysis, and a socioeconomic analysis that examines the costs as well as the benefits of fracking. Elected Officials to Protect New York remains convinced these are the minimum analyses that New Yorkers deserve to have their most pressing questions answered.

The elected officials also called on Governor Cuomo for transparency in the state's review of fracking. Of particular concern is the state's health review, which has been entirely secret, excluding all health professionals, elected officials, and the public. A review mired in secrecy is not a review that earns the public's trust.

"There are significant holes in the data about health impacts of fracking," **said Rochester Councilmember-at-Large Loretta Scott.** "Governor Cuomo needs to delay the implementation of the regulations until a comprehensive health impact study is conducted and shared with the public for review and comment.

**Frongillo said,** "We urge Governor Cuomo to make New York a world leader in the energy of the future by advancing clean, renewable energy like solar and wind."

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