

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
James M. Hanley Federal Building
100 South Clinton Street, Room 1470
PO Box 7378
Syracuse, NY 13261

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

I am writing to ask that you do all that you can to ensure the rapid consideration and approval of S.1215, the Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals (FRAC) Act by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, the committee to which the bill has been referred. As a member of that committee, you will play a key role in moving this crucial legislation forward.

I also urge you to contact the Senate appropriations committee to support passage of language in the FY 2010 bill that directs the EPA to conduct a new study of the risks that hydraulic fracturing poses to drinking water. It is crucial that the EPA undertake a new, independent and thorough examination of hydraulic fracturing, especially in light of recent studies of water contamination in the state of Wyoming and recent events related to Marcellus Shale gas development in Pennsylvania. This language has already been approved by the House of Representatives.

Rapid committee approval and passage of the FRAC Act is crucial to protect water supplies throughout the Marcellus Shale region and throughout the United States. The FRAC Act repeals the exemption for hydraulic fracturing in the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and requires public disclosure of the chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing fluids.

Passage of this legislation is extremely important to me: I live in and rely on ground water in an area that overlies the Marcellus Shale. Hydraulic fracturing, which is used to extract natural gas from shale formations, must be regulated by the EPA under the SDWA to ensure that our drinking water supplies are not put at risk.

It is unfortunate that the Energy Policy Act of 2005 exempted hydraulic fracturing from EPA's oversight under the SDWA. Other forms of underground injection are regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act to protect drinking water. We should hold the oil and gas industry to the same standards as other industries and close this and all other loopholes, to achieve consistent federal oversight. It is crucial that the FRAC Act be passed and signed into law in order to reverse this policy.

Natural gas may be an important part of our energy portfolio, but the right balance needs to be established between oil and gas development and protection of our precious natural resources, including clean air and clean water. The FRAC Act is simple, straightforward and reasonable, and I encourage you to do all that you can to ensure its passage. Every American deserves clean drinking water.

Sincerely,