



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

Senator Grisanti announces legislative package aimed at protecting our environment with regards to hydrofracking

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As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Environmental Conservation for these last sixteen months, I have advanced a number of reforms aimed at protecting the environment, from sponsoring New York's Water Withdrawal legislation that ensures compliance with the Great Lakes Compact, to advocating for enhancing our Environmental Protection Fund.

Nonetheless, I have encountered no single issue as critical, controversial and important as high-volume hydraulic fracturing (HVHF).

I held a Public Hearing, attended and participated in a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) hearing, as well as observed an Assembly hearing on this topic. Further, held extensive meetings and discussions regarding hydraulic fracturing with stakeholders.

Since becoming Chairman, I have not advocated for or against hydraulic fracturing. I have taken the time to better understand the nature of this complex drilling operation, the extent of the environmental impacts as well as the potential benefits for the State's economy. I know that making an impulsive decision at the behest of one side or another would not be fair and would not produce the appropriate results. Further, I eagerly await the DEC's final decision on whether or not to allow HVHF.

I am confident from my conversations with Commissioner Martens and from my reading of the draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) that if the finalized document and regulations allow for HVHF that the necessary protective measures will be included. I commend Commissioner Martens for his leadership, and I thank him and his staff at the Department of Environmental Conservation for the work they have done over the last three years studying hydraulic fracturing and developing an effective regulatory system to guide its practice in New York State. However, should the DEC ultimately decide to allow for HVHF I strongly believe environmental safeguards are needed.

We do not want to have our children be forced to drink bottled water because our water has been tainted nor do we want another Love Canal. However, we want to continue to search for economical environmentally safe national options for fuel and energy, to relieve our dependence on foreign entities.

My review of the draft SGEIS and discussions with stakeholders have led me to identify five additional measures I believe are necessary should HVHF be allowed to go forward:

- * Prohibit public owned treatment works from accepting wastewater associated with the exploration, delineation, development, or production of natural gas;(S. 6893)
- * Prohibit the use of wastewater for road- and land-spreading; (S. 6895)
- * Create an Oil and Gas Waste Tracking Program that is stronger than the tracking program proposed under the draft SGEIS; (S. 6892)
- * Strengthen the notification requirements for unauthorized wastewater discharges; (S. 6891)
- * Create a geographic information system to provide information to the public concerning gas and oil production. (S. 6894)

Today I am announcing that I will be introducing a package of five bills that will address each of these measures as necessary steps to safeguard New York's environment.