



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

Senator Avella Stands WITH Environment NY on Release of Shalefield Stories

TONY AVELLA March 5, 2014

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The newly released booklet details personal and collected testimonies on the negative effects of fracking

(Bayside, Queens) Senator Tony Avella hosted a press conference today with Environment New York, a statewide, citizen-based environmental advocacy organization, on the release of latest evidence against the implementation of hydrofracking, an extremely dangerous practice of extracting natural gas from shale rock formations.

As Governor Andrew Cuomo continues to weigh a decision on whether to allow hydraulic fracturing in New York State, Environment New York presented **Shalefield Stories**, a booklet written by people on the frontlines of fracking who tell their own experiences of illness, water contamination, and damage to their livelihoods due to the drilling operations. The collection includes testimonies ranging from negative health impacts to financial despair, loss of property and livestock, and agricultural ruin.

“Shalefield stories highlights the stories of victims of fracking, who live right next to us, in Pennsylvania,” said Heather Leibowitz, Director of Environment New York. “From stories of Judy Armstrong Stiles who found arsenic and barium in her water after signing the lease to allow fracking, and who later found it in her blood stream, to stories from June Chappel from Washington County who can tell you exactly what it’s like to live just 200 feet from a 15 million gallon waste fracking pit, these stories come at a critical time and we have the responsibility to listen to their words of wisdom.”

Senator Tony Avella added, “When you hear from people about their own personal horror stories of the damages they have incurred to their homes and water supply as the result of hydrofracking, it stops you dead in your tracks and makes you wonder why this dangerous practice is even under consideration.”

This booklet is being released just over a month after President Obama called for more high-volume hydraulic fracturing of natural gas during his State of the Union Address.

Ms. Pramilla Malick, a resident of Minisink, New York, a town known for its organic farming, shared her own experience of being targeted for a huge gas compressor station by Millennium Pipeline to be built in the center of this pristine rural-residential community.

“My neighbors are now besieged by noxious odors, severe air pollution, and deafening noise from frequent blowdown events,” said Malick. “We are all experiencing many symptoms that we have never had, prior to the facility being built. Rather than putting the brakes on the permits until we understand the public health implications, which have shown to be extremely negative, our state agencies are handing out permits like candy on Halloween.”

"Anyone who doubts the damage of dirty drilling simply has to look next door to the nightmare unfolding in Pennsylvania. We have known this truth for some time. But now we are hearing it from the source, from the very people living on the frontlines of fracking," said Leibowitz. "We urge Governor Cuomo and our decision-makers in Albany to ban fracking so we can swiftly close the door on dirty drilling."

“I think we all agree that hydrofracking has been a disaster in Pennsylvania and it is very important to share Shalefield stories in New York," concluded Avella. "This evidence should be enough for the Governor to say “no” and finally ban hydrofracking in the State once and for all.”