



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## Editorial: Senator Avella – The One Guy Who Got It Fracking Right

TONY AVELLA December 18, 2014

### **Every fracking bit of it.**

From the git-go, one politician in Albany got fracking right on literally every issue – and had the gumption to say so and the integrity to actually do something about it. My pal **Senator Tony Avella** not only hosted **hearings and forums** on virtually every aspect of the issue – **health, regulations, geology, economics** – to get the facts out on fracking in New York, but he also **sponsored key legislation** to do something about it. Bravo Senator Avella. **The Best Senator The Frackers Couldn't Buy.**

(QUEENS, NY) Today, State Senator Tony Avella joined a number of environmental advocacy groups, activists and stakeholders to praise the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Department of Health's (DOH) historic decision to recommend a ban on hydrofracking in New York.

After working extensively with the environmental advocacy community, the world's largest grassroots movement, Senator Avella brought the anti-fracking conversation to the forefront by holding three public forums, introducing the first legislation to ban hydraulic fracturing throughout the state, in addition to sponsoring bills

requiring seismological and health impact studies.

“After nearly six years of working tirelessly in the fight against hydrofracking, having first introduced a resolution in the City Council and then leading the fight in the legislature by introducing the first bill that would ban the practice, I am ecstatic with the DEC and DOH’s conclusions. As part of what has been the largest grassroots movement in history, I have long emphasized the possible health risks, as well as the grave environmental dangers at stake here, and it is great to see that here, the science and the people have won,” **said Senator Avella.** “I applaud DEC Commissioner Martens, DOH Acting Commissioner Zucker, and Governor Cuomo in their findings. Dr. Zucker was correct when he said that we cannot afford to make a mistake. I am glad to say that today, in prohibiting hydrofracking in New York State, we have done the right thing.”

Senator Avella noted that while DEC’s recommendation is to ban high-volume hydraulic fracturing (HVHF), there is still a long way to go towards ensuring the complete protection of New York’s citizens from the health and environmental risks of fracking. He pointed out that the same scientific studies that led Commissioners Martens and Zucker to conclude that the list of ‘potential significant impacts’, including community impacts, environmental impacts and public health impacts, was too great, is the same scientific data that illustrates the need to address the current hazardous waste loophole and stop the importation of fracking waste water from other states.

The ban will not address the current hazardous waste legal loophole or provide for a halt on the importation of fracking waste water from states with fracking, such as

Pennsylvania. Currently, the hazardous waste loophole that exists in the DEC regulations that govern the waste produced by oil and natural gas industries, exempts 'drilling fluids, produced waters and other wastes associated with the exploration, development of production of crude oil, natural gas or geothermal energy.' Further, New York State currently imports fracking waste water, a practice that Senator Avella has long denounced.

"In banning hydrofracking, Cuomo and the DEC sent out a thunderous roar to the rest of the country. New York is now the second state in the nation to ban hydrofracking and now we need to ensure that we continue to protect our citizens from fracking dangers. The community that made this ban happen – our environmental leaders throughout the state – must come together to make certain that going forward New York is not impacted by other states' bad decisions," **said Senator Avella.**

**"Senator Avella has been one of the few leaders in New York State that has been consistently on the right side of this debate from the outset.** Not only was he right on all counts, but he used his office as a platform for getting the facts out on the environmental risks, the regulatory shortcomings and the realities of the economics of shale gas development in New York. All of his work – and that of his stellar staff – were evident in today's announcement: fracking simply is not worth it in New York State – as Senator Avella has worked so hard for so long to point out. So we all say bravo Senator Avella and bravo Governor Cuomo," **stated Chip Northrup, MBA Private Investor.**

"Today is a great day for New Yorkers and people across this country because New York has banned fracking," **said Mark Ruffalo,** an advisory board member of New

Yorkers Against Fracking and Americans Against Fracking. “Governor Cuomo held to his word and listened to the science on fracking. The New York State Health Commissioner Zucker and Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Martens presented their research today at the Governor’s Cabinet meeting about the environmental and health risks of fracking deeming it is not safe and is banned from happening in New York State. It’s time now for Governors across this country to learn from the heroic and bold leadership of Governor Andrew Cuomo. The science is in on fracking and it’s time for renewable energy now.”

“The science on fracking has been clear: the toxic drilling process would threaten our health, poison our water and air, and forever mar New York as hundreds of health professionals and medical organizations have told us. This decision will affect New York for generations to come and we now look forward to making New York the renewable energy capital of the United States, leading the nation to a better, brighter future,” **said Julia Walsh of Frack Action and New Yorkers Against Fracking.**

**Wes Gillingham, Program Director of Catskill Mountainkeeper said,** “Governor Cuomo has shown true leadership and Joseph Martens and Howard Zucker have shown dedication to science and facts by standing up to the oil and gas industry. This is a wake up call. The industry should clean up their act, take a close look at the Health Commissioner’s review, and take their money out of political lobbying and put it into renewable energy.”

“Across the country, fracking has been a rolling environmental disaster – contaminating drinking water, making residents sick, and transforming forests into industrial zones,” **said Heather Leibowitz, director of Environment New York.**

“After listening carefully to the latest science and the voices of millions of New Yorkers, Governor Cuomo has decided to permanently protect the water, health, and environment of the Empire State from the documented damage of dirty drilling. This is what true leadership looks like.”

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