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## Letter-writers sound off on hydrofracking

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### Assembly bill on hydrofracking would harm New York businesses

To the Editor:

Your readers, including those who oppose natural gas exploration, must be made aware that an Assembly bill to place a moratorium on oil and gas extraction using hydraulic fracturing will do significant harm to all of New York.

The bill has several technical flaws. As written, it would halt a vast majority of the oil and gas drilling currently allowed in New York, which means the jobs of 5,000 New Yorkers would be in jeopardy and the 300-plus companies who employ those people would likely be forced out of business.

Most New Yorkers don't realize our state has a relatively small but thriving oil and gas industry, yet the state collects about \$1 million a year in permit fees. In addition, in 2008 the total market value of New York-produced oil and gas was \$488 million, \$450 million of which was from natural gas, according to the DEC's 2008 Oil, Gas and Mineral Resources Report.

Local communities also benefit directly from the industry's activity. It is estimated that real property taxes on 2008 production totaled roughly \$14.6 million, while landowner royalties were \$61 million, according to the 2008 DEC report.

I don't believe members of the Assembly, or any New Yorker for that matter, want to jeopardize the future of this industry. The moratorium bill is broken, and the Assembly must not pass it.

#### Brad Gill

Executive director,



AP, 2008

A DRILLING RIG used to bore thousands of feet into the earth to extract natural gas from the Marcellus shale deep underground is seen on the hill above a pond in Houston, Pa.

Independent Oil & Gas Association of New York  
Hamburg

**Doctor's comments on fracking  
includes flawed scientific details**

To the Editor:

I read Dr. David Duggan's comments (Nov. 25) on hydrofracking. Duggan draws false analogies between the injection of fluids into dry rock, literally cracked to accept them, and the direct disposal of contaminants into lakes (Onondaga Lake) and very shallow aquifers (Woburn, Ma.). Naturally saline waters found in rocks a mile or more deep in all sedimentary basins, including above and below the Marcellus formation, are not "several years" old but thousands of years old if not much older. We do not need test holes to show this scientific fact, known to geologists and hydrologists for well over a quarter century.

The energy from hydrofracking cannot, from first principles, push these dense saline waters or frac fluids vertically upwards through rock thousands of feet, even through pre-existing fractures. And, wherever the Marcellus has been fracked, sensitive geophysical data confirm that the micro-fractures do not form thousands of feet above the formation.

Finally, EPA has requested operators to provide more chemical information on fracking fluids than already occurs on the regulatory material safety data sheets posted at drilling sites for the chemicals used. Industry is providing the agency with this information.

**Donald Siegel**

Syracuse

**Way too many 'could's,' 'maybes'  
to allow fracking in community**

To the Editor:

What an idyllic Central New York William Cristofaro paints (commentary, Nov. 23). "Picture" this and "envision" that, he says.

But reread the commentary and note the coulds, the could bes, the mays and the maybes (10, if you're counting). There is nothing absolute about anything he hypes: jobs, tax dollars, landowner leases and royalties, or school taxes. I will give him this: He's a good salesman. He knows that all he needs to do is dangle the almighty dollar in front of peoples' noses and all common sense flies out the door.

He further insults our intelligence by claiming environmental benefits. Really? Do the most basic of research and see the horrendous damage this does to our environment. You only need to go south, just across the border into Pennsylvania to see exactly what hydrofracking has done to the once beautiful area around Dimock, Pa.

Although Cristofaro claims no noise or pollution, he fails to mention the visual pollution that goes along with these massive wells that rise 120-plus feet on acres of crushed stone platforms per well, 24/7 production (think

stadium lighting), tractor trailers that run constantly on, and ruin, small country roads, and transmission pipes that cut through fields, forests and wetlands.

Our state politicians may be the most useless in the nation, but even the Senate had enough sense to prohibit such drilling until May 2011. And enough sense to realize the net financial impact is “none.”

### **Martha Alderman Boyer**

Marietta

### **We mustn't turn beautiful Upstate**

#### **N.Y. into industrial wasteland**

To the Editor:

William Cristofaro sings the praises of gas drilling for economic and environmental benefits. Perhaps his engineering company would benefit, but most of us would not and, instead, might pay higher taxes to repair the damage to water, roads and human health. Rural communities that embrace large-scale drilling could be worse off economically after the initial boom.

That's the conclusion of Susan Christopherson, professor of economic geography, at Cornell University. in “A Comprehensive Economic Impact Analysis of Natural Gas Extraction in the Marcellus Shale.” She adds that it also weakens economic diversity by negatively impacting such businesses as agriculture, tourism and retirement housing.

Cristofaro claims that natural gas is less damaging to the environment than coal. This is questioned by Robert Howarth, professor of ecology and environmental biology at Cornell. He calculates that natural gas produces as much, if not more, greenhouse gas emissions (leading to more global warming) as coal over a 20-year period.

Instead of turning our beautiful Upstate New York into an industrial wasteland of air, water and soil pollution from thousands of huge wells, let's invest more in green jobs, such as training people to weatherize buildings to save energy. And let's save energy through conservation in our own lives and in the workings of businesses and government.

### **Linda A. DeStefano**

Syracuse

### **Sustainable energy creating**

#### **sustainable jobs is better idea**

To the Editor:

I was very intrigued by William Cristofaro's commentary on the financial benefits of natural gas drilling in New York, but it left me with more questions than answers. Where will the energy, money and jobs come from when the gas is gone? Will the state become a ghost town? Will we leave a toxic waste dump for our grandchildren to clean up so we can satisfy our short-term greed?

Maybe we should be developing truly sustainable energy sources that create truly sustainable jobs.

**Derrick Tingley**

Minoa

**11-year-old calls for long-term moratorium, stronger regulations**

To the Editor:

Dear Andrew Cuomo, Joanie Mahoney and New York state legislators:

My name is Noah Dessauer. I am 11 years old.

Hydrofracking is bad because it destroys the environment. Hydrofracking is known to release benzene and other carcinogens into the water and air. In Pennsylvania, tap water can catch on fire. People who drink that water have a higher chance of getting cancer. Even if the accidents are only human error, the risk is too great.

I am calling for a temporary two-year moratorium till the EPA study is done and after that a 200-year moratorium and greater gas and oil regulations. We live in a special place.

Mahoney is giving Cuomo ideas for his governorship. We need to tell Mahoney that we need a two-year, then a long-term moratorium. Hydrofracking is very upsetting!

**Noah Dessauer**

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