

## Opinion

### My View: Real victory for state is veto of fracking moratorium

By **Brad Gill**

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Misinformed opponents of natural gas exploration continue to misrepresent a viable and responsible industry and the process of hydraulic fracture stimulation.

Susan Zimet's Dec. 29 "My View" piece is representative of those who are desperately, intentionally — and unfortunately, successfully — scaring the public into an uneducated opinion and false impression of our industry.

Hydraulic fracturing is not a drilling technique, and it's not new. It's a process that has been used successfully and safely for 60 years to free oil and gas from geologic formations. It is used in 30 percent of the oil and gas wells in America and on more than 90 percent of all gas and oil wells in New York.

Contrary to Zimet's claim, vertical drilling combined with hydraulic fracturing was never intended to be part of the state's moratorium legislation. The bill would have put 5,000 jobs and 300 companies in jeopardy. To suggest it was intentionally drafted that way is simply false. No lawmaker would — or should — have purposely signed on to something that would have, for no good scientific or environmental reason, cost the state millions of dollars. They simply didn't know the full impact of the bill.

She also misrepresents mishaps in Pennsylvania as she claims "widespread groundwater contamination." I ask anyone to examine the record in Pennsylvania and find even a single official record of methane migration in the Dimock Township because of hydraulic fracturing.

Poor well construction was the cause of problems in Dimock, which of course doesn't excuse the industry from criticism, but let's not mislead readers. Pennsylvania's DEP secretary, John Hangar, told CNN Oct. 25: "It's important to be clear about what the problems have been. We have not had a single case of these (fracking) fluids coming back to the groundwater."

Further, a Dec. 27 headline in the Philadelphia Inquirer read, "Marcellus Shale gas development fueling Bradford County boom." The author wrote, "Unemployment is dropping faster here than in any other county in Pennsylvania — the jobless rate was 6.8 percent in October, fourth best in the state, down from 8.1 percent a year ago."

This is one of many examples of a thriving economy just south of our border. Furthermore, tax revenue will more than offset any strain on governments, and regarding the environment and public health: Please show us how they have been negatively impacted.

In a Dec. 16 editorial, The Wall Street Journal did what very few mainstream publications or broadcasters have done. The paper took New York state to task for unnecessarily holding up the expansion of natural gas development. The editors wrote: "New York state urgently needs more jobs and new tax revenue, so naturally its political class has decided to reject one of the best economic opportunities in decades. And people wonder why Albany is bankrupt."

Regarding alleged environmental impacts, the Journal wrote, "New York has imposed a de facto drilling moratorium because of dubious environmental fears. Shale drilling relies on hydraulic fracturing, the process of blasting a solution that is 99 percent water and sand (less than 1 percent chemicals) into rock to release gas deposits."

The moratorium bills passed in the state Legislature because environmental groups convinced lawmakers to throw facts and logic aside and deny the prospect of prosperity much longer than necessary. Zimet's assertion that the executive order is a "victory for the citizens of New York" is twisted. The real victory is the governor's veto of the moratorium bill — a victory for New Yorkers who want to see safe, environmentally sound drilling continue in our state.

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