

Fracking Resolution

Resolution to Continue the Moratorium on High-Volume Hydraulic Fracturing and to Advance a Renewable Energy Economy in New York State

Whereas, New York State has historically led the nation in matters of advancing social progress, including the abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, civil rights and environmental stewardship; and

Whereas, scientific evidence shows that the heavy industrial process of unconventional gas extraction by hydraulic fracturing poses serious risk of water contamination, air pollution, and health impacts; and

Whereas, the New York State Medical Society, representing 30,000 medical experts, the American Academy of Pediatrics of New York, the American Lung Association of New York and many independent medical experts and scientists have called on Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State legislature to continue New York's moratorium on hydraulic fracturing and to conduct further health studies including a comprehensive health impact assessment; and

Whereas, data from Pennsylvania and the gas industry on well casing integrity show an immediate 5% or higher failure rate and as much as 50% or more over 30 years raises serious concerns of water contamination; and

Whereas, high-volume hydraulic fracturing threatens to negatively impact property values, disrupt municipal tax-bases and could effectively create an additional unfunded state mandate – as has been raised by the New York State Association of Counties - by imposing costs and strains on municipalities such as road damage and increased demands on municipal services, etc; and

Whereas, research on the economic and social impacts of hydraulic fracturing raises concerns regarding increased crime rates and hazards for first responders, as well as an influx of workers who send their paychecks out-of-state while raising local rental housing prices and disrupting existing businesses and economies; and

Whereas, in addition to emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases associated with gas development activities, hydraulic fracturing gas development releases methane in the atmosphere, which is at least 72 times more potent in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide on a 20-year timescale and 25 times on a 100-year timescale, thereby making the process potentially disastrous for climate change; and

Whereas, New York communities have been significantly affected by the impacts of Hurricanes Irene and Sandy as well as lesser storms including Tropical Storm Lee, extreme weather events that are connected to/exacerbated by climate change due to increases in heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere, costing New Yorkers tens of billions of dollars in damages and lost business opportunities; and

Whereas, significant action is necessary to address climate change, action which the federal government has to date failed to take, including energy conservation and advancing a clean energy infrastructure and making a significant economic transition to renewable sources; and

Whereas, we need to expand local employment opportunities in our communities and for our young people in sustainable, safe long-term jobs and careers, and invest in industries that will create jobs for decades to come - in contrast to reliance on the “boom to bust” economic cycle associated with extraction of non-renewable resources; and

Whereas, expansion of renewable energy and energy efficiency presents the opportunity to create a significant number of jobs for New Yorkers and for New York State to lead the nation on a visionary energy policy that will protect our water, air, land and public health while developing climate solutions; and

Whereas, Governor Cuomo’s Administration has already demonstrated significant leadership on innovative clean energy programs including the investment of \$1.5 billion in New York Sun, opening 360 electric vehicle charging stations that will be available for both public and county fleet vehicles, establishing the successful Regional Economic Development Councils, and creating the innovative Start-Up NY; and

Whereas, the Town of New Paltz will work with Governor Cuomo and New York State Agencies as is most effective to implement existing renewable energy and efficiency programs as well as to partner on economic development initiatives including the New York State Regional Economic Development Councils and the Start-Up NY as vehicles to catalyze investment and jobs programs;

Now Therefore Be it Resolved, that the Town of New Paltz urges Governor Cuomo and the New York State agencies which he leads to take swift action in developing and adopting an economic development plan that will significantly reduce the state’s greenhouse gas emissions as well as rapidly create and deploy renewable energy and energy efficiency programs throughout municipalities in New York State;

And that the Town of New Paltz stands ready to work with the Governor to achieve these goals that will in the process create safe, sustainable jobs for New Yorkers and pioneer the path forward for the nation to solve the climate crisis and provide real, clean solutions for generations to come.