



NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

822 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ALBANY, NY 12248
TEL: 518-455-4941 FAX: 518-455-5939

242 WEST 27TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10001
TEL: 212-807-7900 FAX: 212-243-2035

E-MAIL: GOTTFR@ASSEMBLY.STATE.NY.US

COMMITTEES:

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RICHARD N. GOTTFRIED
75TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

August 4, 2011

The Honorable Steven Chu
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to ask you to address the lack of balance and local representation on the Natural Gas Subcommittee of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board. Recently, you asked this subcommittee to issue recommendations to make hydraulic fracturing safer.

As New York State elected officials, we are concerned about natural gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing in our state's portion of the Marcellus Shale. New York has had a de facto moratorium on drilling and fracturing in the Marcellus Shale since 2008, a necessary precaution to prevent contamination of water supplies and other environmental harm while we study the effects of shale gas drilling.

So far, your panel has excluded citizens from New York and other regions affected by fracking. Those whose way of life is at stake deserve a seat at the table where decisions are made. We insist that you add people from affected communities to the panel.

In addition, six of the seven subcommittee members, including panel chair John Deutch, have current financial ties to the natural gas and oil industry. Their inherent conflicts of interest cannot help but undermine the panel's credibility to study the potential threat of fracking. Mr. Deutch should step down, and you should name an independent panel chair and balance the committee with other independent experts.

Hydraulic fracturing is a critical issue for our water and our health. New Yorkers and all Americans deserve a panel that is impartial and gives ordinary people a voice.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried
Chair, Committee on Health
District 75

Senator Liz Krueger
Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee
District 26

Assembly Member Rhoda S. Jacobs
Assistant Speaker
District 42

Assembly Member Peter M. Rivera
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District 58

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Deputy Majority Whip
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Chair, Minority Conference
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Secretary, Majority Conference
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Assembly Member Barbara Lifton
Chair, Majority Steering Committee
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Assembly Member Alan Maisel
Chair, Majority House Operations
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Assembly Member Thomas J. Abinanti
District 92

Assembly Member Edward C. Braunstein
District 26

Assembly Member Marcos A. Crespo
District 85

Senator Thomas K. Duane
Assistant Minority Leader for Floor Operations
District 29

Senator Bill Perkins
Deputy Minority Whip
District 30

Senator Velmanette Montgomery
Assistant Minority Whip
District 18

Senator Eric L. Adams
District 20

Senator Tony Avella
District 11

Senator David Carlucci
District 38

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer
District 37

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Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick
District 66

Assembly Member George S. Latimer
District 91

Assembly Member Joseph R. Lentol
District 50

Assembly Member William B. Magnarelli
District 120

Assembly Member Joan L. Millman
District 52

Assembly Member Michael A. Montesano
District 15

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Assembly Member Robert K. Sweeney
District 11

Assembly Member Claudia Tenney
District 115

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District 2

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District 29, City of New York

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Filmore District, City of Buffalo

Council Member Joseph Golombek, Jr.
North District, City of Buffalo

Council Member Michael J. LoCurto
Delaware District, City of Buffalo

Council Member Darius Pridgen
Ellicott District, City of Buffalo

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Vice Chair, Tompkins County Legislature
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Tompkins County Legislature
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Pamela Mackesey
Tompkins County Legislature
District 1

Leslyn McBean-Clairborne
Tompkins County Legislature
District 2

Frank P. Proto
Tompkins County Legislature
District 7

Pat L. Pryor
Tompkins County Legislature
District 6

Thomas C. Buckel, Jr.
Onondaga County Legislature
District 7

Linda R. Ervin
Onondaga County Legislature
District 19

William T. Kinne
Onondaga County Legislaure
District 15

Councilman Svante Myrick
Fourth Ward, City of Ithaca

Supervisor Richard G. Driscoll
Town of Newfield