

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 30, 2014

The Honorable Shaun Donovan
Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Donovan,

It was recently reported that the Department of the Interior (DOI) has transmitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) its final rule governing the practice of hydraulic fracturing on public lands. As OMB finalizes this rule we urge you to issue the strongest possible safeguards to ensure that public health, safety and our environment are protected.

According to the Interior Department, more than 90 percent of all new oil and gas wells drilled on public lands employ hydraulic fracturing. The rapid expansion of the utilization of this process in the United States has caused significant concern regarding the possible contamination of groundwater sources, air pollution and the protection of public health and safety.

As stewards of these lands and resources for the American people it is therefore critical that the final rule for hydraulic fracturing on public lands offers stringent protections for the safety of workers, our water, air, lands and public health. This rule will be the first time in more than 30 years that the Interior Department has updated its regulations to manage hydraulic fracturing on public lands. This rule can and should serve as a model to all states for how to properly protect public health, worker safety and the environment while continuing to allow for the safe development of American resources.

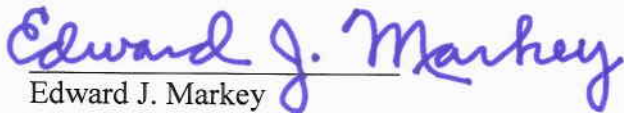
It is imperative that the final rule include strong standards to protect public health and the environment, including but not limited to:

- 1.) Robust requirements for public disclosure of all chemicals and other additives, including prior to the commencement and after completion of fracking operations to ensure transparency and the protection of public health;
- 2.) A fully transparent, permanent, and searchable database to house chemical disclosures that can be accessed for free by the public;
- 3.) Strong and consistent requirements for well construction and integrity and wastewater management for every well drilled on public lands that ensure water quality is not impacted by drilling operations and that worker safety is protected.


A number of states where oil and gas production has been increasing have already put in place strong protections along these lines, demonstrating that such requirements can be implemented in a way that allows for continued robust oil and gas development. The DOI rule should serve to build on existing state standards in a way that ensures there is a floor of protection in all states. We urge you to ensure that the final rule for hydraulic fracturing on public lands contains strong protections for public health, the safety of workers and the environment.

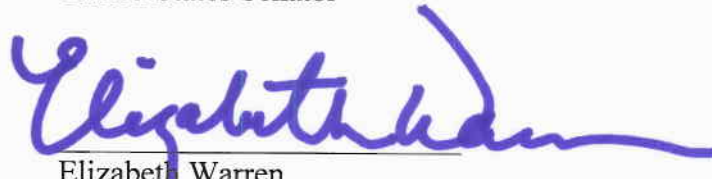
We thank you for your attention to this matter.


Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator


Jeff Merkley
United States Senator

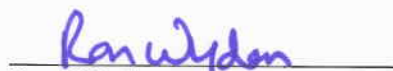

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

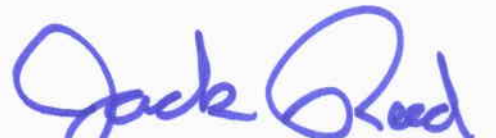

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