



Kriss Worthington

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ACTION CALENDAR

November 12, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington

Subject: Send Letter to Alameda County Board of Supervisors to Pass a Moratorium
 Against Hydraulic Fracturing

RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to Alameda County Board of Supervisors to pass a moratorium against hydraulic fracturing.

BACKGROUND

CREDO Mobilize calls for action to send letters of support to all counties across California to pass moratoriums on fracking. Santa Cruz County and Marin County have already taken steps to pass a moratorium on fracking within the past two months. Los Angeles is the process of considering a moratorium.

Hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, is a process in which rock is fractured by using a pressurized mixture of water, sand, and chemicals to increase oil and gas production. Fracking is suspected to be a large source of pollution to water and air quality, as well as adverse effects on health, in and around states that use the fracking process.

In May 2011, the Berkeley City Council passed a resolution in support of FRAC Act, H.R. 1084/S.587, and BREATHE Act, H.R. 1204, which supported the repeal of the Fracking Exemption to the Safe Drinking Water Act and required disclosure of chemicals used in fracking. Prior to the FRAC Act and BREATHE Act being passed, it was not required by federal law that oil and gas industries publicly disclose chemical formulas of hydraulic fracturing liquids.

In January 2013, the Council passed a resolution calling for a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in California until adequate regulatory safeguards are adopted.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachment: 1. Letter to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors

Alameda County Board of Supervisors
County of Alameda Administration Building
1221 Oak St., #536
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Alameda County Board of Supervisors,

The Berkeley City Council urges the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to pass a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing—also known as fracking—joining the recent series of county-issued fracking moratoriums across the state. Together, these county resolutions send a clear message to Governor Brown to end fracking in California and end open access to our state by natural gas and oil interests.

Fracking uses chemicals such as lead, uranium, mercury and hydrochloric acid which contaminates drinking water supply and can lead to numerous health issues among residents near fracking operations. In communities such as Pennsylvania, North Dakota, Texas, and Colorado that have hosted fracking operation over the past ten years, residents suffer from toxic spills, tap water that catches on fire from its chemical load, air pollution from constant diesel truck traffic, light and noise pollution, and falling property values.

Fracking operations have made their way to 10 California counties in Central and Southern California, the state waters off Los Angeles, and other various sites that remain untracked and unregulated. California's failure to pass a full moratorium on fracking has given oil and natural gas companies the green light to begin exploring fracking operations to new lands.

Both Santa Cruz and Marin Counties have passed moratoriums on fracking in their counties, and a proposal for a moratorium is currently in process in Los Angeles City Council. If every county in the state passes a moratorium on fracking, this will provide the broad political authority to demand that California state do the same, before the consequences to the citizens of California of an unregulated, socially irresponsible, and environmentally destructive energy industry get any worse. Therefore, the Berkeley City Council urges the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to act now by passing a county-wide moratorium on fracking. Many of the environmental organizations against fracking include: Sierra Club, 350 Bay Area, CREDO Action and many more.

Attached are the board memo and ordinance passed by Santa Cruz County in support of their own moratorium:

http://sccounty01.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/bds/Govstream/BDSvData/non_legacy/agendas/2013/20130910/PDF/033.pdf

Sincerely,
The Berkeley City Council