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ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

March 8, 2013

The Honorable Pricey Harrison
North Carolina House of Representatives
57th District – Guilford County
16 W. Jones Street, Room 1218
Raleigh, NC 27601

Dear Representative Harrison,

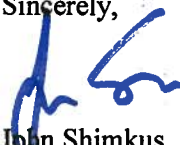
Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy on February 15, 2013, to testify at the hearing entitled “The Role of the States in Protecting the Environment Under Current Law.”

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for 10 business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and then (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please e-mail your responses, in Word or PDF format, to Nick.Abraham@mail.house.gov by the close of business on Friday, March 22, 2013.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



John Shimkus
Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy

cc: The Honorable Paul Tonko, Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy

Attachment

The Honorable Janice D. Schakowski

The right-to-know about chemicals used in fracking fluids is not contingent on the geologic formations in which they are used. Several states, with varying geology, have adopted very similar laws requiring disclosure of chemicals used in fracking fluids.

Colorado recently enacted a new rule requiring groundwater testing both before and after drilling and well completion operations. Currently, Colorado is the only state that requires this.

As with disclosure of fracking chemicals, this rule could and should apply in any state, regardless of geology. Residents of every state should be protected by early detection of potential groundwater contamination from oil and gas drilling operations. Whether a family lives in Maryland or Colorado or Texas or Pennsylvania, they each have a right to know whether drilling has affected their groundwater. One approach is to have each state enact a rule like Colorado's. But not all states will be able to adopt strong rules.

1. Ms. Harrison, you are engaged daily in battles to establish environmental protections at the state level, and your state of North Carolina is in the process of determining what requirements should apply to hydraulically fractured oil and gas wells. How would you describe the likelihood of passing a law like Colorado's requiring groundwater monitoring before and after drilling and well completion?
2. Could regulators in North Carolina adopt such a requirement without the Legislature passing a law?

The oil and gas industry makes the case that the states have the expertise needed to ensure that oil and gas resources are developed safely and responsibly. But what's true for Texas or Colorado may not be true for a state with little history of large-scale oil and gas development.

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3. Is North Carolina's regulatory system currently equipped to handle development of the state's shale gas resources? What are the most significant weaknesses in the state's existing safeguards?