



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## DEC Extends Public Comment Period For Proposed Natural Gas Drilling Regs

JAMES L. SEWARD November 5, 2009

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ONEONTA, 11/04/09 -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today applauded the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) extension of the public comment period on the draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) for natural gas drilling applications.

**“I am pleased the DEC has agreed to extend the public comment period on the draft SGEIS until the end of the year,”** said Senator Seward. **“The proposed regulations are over 800 pages long, and it is reasonable to allow local government leaders and homeowners some extra time to review the document that will be used to regulate energy and environmental practices for years to come.”**

Seward also reaffirmed his call for additional public hearings on the draft SGEIS.

**“It is imperative that local citizens and governments are afforded every possible opportunity to comment before the regulations are finalized,”** Seward added. **“With only four hearings scheduled, I feel many will be unfairly left out of the process.”**

Seward has written a letter to DEC Commissioner Alexander “Pete” Grannis requesting additional hearing sites, including Oneonta. Seward says there is a demonstrated local interest in the topic and additional hearings should be scheduled to accommodate concerned citizens. At this time, the nearest public hearing site is more than an hour’s drive for many of his constituents.

**“Utilizing the tremendous energy resources in the Marcellus Shale formation could play a significant role in helping us to reduce our dependence on foreign oil while at the same time providing a boost to the local economy. We must make sure, however, that our local governments are properly informed of drilling activities every step of the way, and that our roads and water supply are properly protected,”** Seward concluded.