



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Antoine M. Thompson

Thompson Offers Responsible Hydro-Fracking Legislation. "Protecting Our Drinking Water."

Antoine M Thompson

August 4, 2010

ISSUE:

- [Environment](#)

COMMITTEE:

- [Environmental Conservation](#)

For Immediate Release:

August 4, 2010

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Buffalo, NY – Crucial legislation to protect drinking water was passed by the New York State Senate by a vote of 48 to 9. Sponsored by New York State Senator Antoine Thompson (D-parts of Erie & Niagara Counties), the bill (S8129B) suspends permits for hydro-fracking in New York State until May 15, 2011, giving the

Department of Environmental Conservation, the Legislature and the incoming Governor time to enact safeguards to protect New York's water.

Thompson, who is Chair of the NY Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, says, "In a recent round of hearings, the DEC received more than 14,000 comments on this issue. More time is needed to digest those comments and make an informed judgment if adequate safeguards can be put in place to allow hydro-fracking while still protecting our valuable and irreplaceable fresh water. The decisions we make on this issue will determine the economic and environmental vitality of communities across the state for decades to come. In light of the Gulf of Mexico drilling disaster, my colleagues and I believe that a 10 month delay to get it right is prudent and necessary."

Hydro-fracking, short for hydraulic fracturing, involves pumping millions of gallons of chemical laced water into shale deposits to fracture the shale and release natural gas held in seams in the shale. This practice has been allowed in Pennsylvania and other states, and neighbors of some of the drilling sites have experienced contaminated wells and other water pollution issues. Internet sites also show videos of residents being able to light a fire in the methane coming out of their water faucets. Industry sources vehemently deny that hydro-fracking is responsible for water pollution.

The US Environmental Protection Agency has launched a nationwide study of hydro-fracking in an attempt to resolve some of the critical public health and safety questions surrounding this practice.