Senator Maziarz supports DEC plan to permit hydrofracking

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As Chairman of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, I have long been optimistic about drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale through 'hydrofracking.' This technology will increase the supply of natural gas available to us all. We need natural gas to heat our homes, use our appliances, and make everything from steel to plastic to fertilizer to electricity.

New York must have more access to more sources of energy. The new ReCharge NY program, the renewal of the power plant siting law, and creating a new mechanism to implement energy efficiency upgrades highlight the important progress we are making this year in strengthening our energy infrastructure and using it to help our economy. The Marcellus Shale is our next opportunity. Studies have shown we can drill productively there, and we can drill safely there.

At last, it sounds like we have a roadmap for allowing the drilling to proceed. The Governor and his administration deserve credit for finally showing us a light at the end of the tunnel. The DEC's recommendations strike the right balance between helping our state meet its energy needs and putting thorough safeguards in place to protect our environment and our communities.

I will advocate for these recommendations to be adopted and then, once the bureaucratic regulatory process is in place, for the DEC to begin issuing permits. This should take months, not years.

We have been missing the boat for far too long. Tapping these gas reserves keeps the engine of our economy going not only by providing fuel, but also by creating thousands of good jobs in Upstate New York. These jobs will help sustain families and communities across the Southern Tier. A moratorium on hydrofracking is tantamount to a moratorium to economic progress in this important region of the state.

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