

**TESTIMONY OF THE HONORABLE BILL PERKINS, 30TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT,
BEFORE THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
ON THE REVISED DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL GENERAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON
HIGH VOLUME HYDRAULIC FRACTURING**

Good afternoon, I am New York State Senator Bill Perkins. I represent the 30th Senatorial District which includes Harlem, the Upper West Side of Manhattan and the southern portion of Washington Heights. I would first like to commend the Department of Environmental Conservation for their time and efforts in researching and creating the Revised Draft Supplemental General Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) on high volume hydraulic fracturing (hydrofracking) in the state's shale deposits. I would also like to thank the Department for holding this hearing and giving me the opportunity to express my grave apprehensions about the SGEIS and the prospect of allowing the process of shale hydrofracking in the State of New York.

In spite of the release of the SGEIS this past September the process of hydrofracking remains controversial. Serious questions, concerns and fear about hydrofracking and the adequacy of the SGEIS still exist. There is an overarching concern of whether the DEC sufficiently analyzed the cumulative and public health implications of hydrofracking. This is especially alarming considering that the EPA is still conducting its own study, the initial results are anticipated to be released 2012 and the final report in 2014. Further concerns include: DEC does not ban the use of toxic chemicals in the hydrofracking process, DEC does not classify the resulting waste water as hazardous waste, and it allows waste water to be sent to treatment plants although there is currently no treatment plant equipped to handle it.

With respect to my particular district, I know that the SGEIS calls for a prohibition on issuing licenses for hydrofracking within the New York City (and Syracuse) watershed and within a 4000 ft buffer zone around the watershed. I am also aware that site specific review is required prior to allowing the issuance of licenses within 1000 ft of the New York City (and Syracuse) water infrastructure system. There are concerns that the safety measures are simply not enough to protect the city's water supply or air quality. These concerns are only reinforced by the Delaware River Basin Committee's recent decision to postpone voting on draft hydrofracking regulations to give committee members more time to review the regulations and their implications.

New York City has one of the few sources of natural unfiltered water in the country. It has operated the Catskill/Delaware water system under a Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) waiver from the Environmental Protection Agency since 1997. This waiver has allowed the city to forgo building a water filtration plant. However, there are serious concerns as to whether the city's aging and leaking water infrastructure will be adequately protected by the 1000 ft buffer zone proposed by the SGEIS. It has been suggested that the aging tunnels and aqueducts could be compromised by the external pressure caused by hydrofracking. If the city is no longer able to prove to the EPA that it can protect the water system, the EPA can order the city to build a filtration plant which is estimated to cost the city \$20 billion to build. This cost to the city could likely result in the raising of water rates which poses a direct threat to the city's poorest residents

some of whom are my constituents. Additionally, the building of a filtration plant would likely result in funding cuts to other services provided by the city such as police, infrastructure, health care, transportation, fire, and sewage services. All of which have the potential to adversely affect many of my constituents who rely heavily on these services.

Although the SGEIS proposes restrictions on hydrofracking in New York City it does not propose to do so in many other regions of the state. This is alarming because what occurs in one part of the state affects us all. Air pollution and water contamination as a result of hydrofracking upstate can have an impact downstate. Air and water are both permeable and fluid and as such will not just remain upstate but possess the ability to travel downstate. According to scientific research, gas emitted during the hydrofracking process can travel up to 200 miles. Further, polluted air and contaminated water can contaminate produce and livestock grown upstate and subsequently sold downstate. Hydrofracking in the state whether it takes place directly in your own backyard or farther away has the potential to impact every citizen of this state. As such we need a SGEIS that fully and comprehensively discusses the hydrofracking process and all of its implications. In conclusion I believe that the SGEIS leaves too many critical questions unanswered. The DEC should take its cues from the EPA and the Delaware River Basin Committee and devote more time and research to this crucial matter. Until we have the complete picture of what hydrofracking in the state of New York will truly look like, I will continue to stand in opposition to it.

Thank you