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March 5, 2013

Energy and Technology Committee
Re: Bill 6533 An Act Concerning Hydraulic Fracturing

Honorable Members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

The Watershed Partnership strongly supports Bill 6533 and urges its passage.

Hydraulic fracturing waste is highly toxic. Hundreds of different chemicals are found in fracking waste many of which are leached from the shale that is fractured.

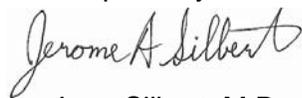
Many of these substances can be carcinogenic and some are radioactive. They have the potential of contaminating the waters of the state of Connecticut. The rush to exploit shale gas has already resulted in contamination of wells in Pennsylvania and aquifers in Colorado.

The unconscionable federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 that has come to be known as the "Halliburton Loophole," exempts gas drilling and extraction from requirements in the underground injection control (UIC) program of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). Other exemptions are also present in the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act.

Even the claim that natural gas is cleaner than coal has been brought into question. If more than 3% of natural gas leaks into the atmosphere within the life cycle of its production and use. It's its effect on global heating is no different than coal for at least 20 years. This is because natural gas traps 72 times more heat than CO₂.

There are far too many uncertainties to put Connecticut's waters at risk. I'm doubtful that fracking waste can ever be safely disposed of at a reasonable cost. But until that time comes, the prudent thing to do is to ban the treatment, discharge, disposal or storage of any hydraulic fracturing waste in our state.

Respectfully,



Jerry Silbert, M.D.
Executive Director
The Watershed Partnership, Inc