

Senators Kennedy, Miner and Demicco,

My name is Gretchen Peck. My husband, Donald, and I live at 761 Montauk Avenue in New London. We moved here two years ago, after more than two decades of living in Pennsylvania -- otherwise known as "Ground Zero for the Marcellus Shale."

As residents of Pennsylvania, we observed industry run roughshod over citizens. Not only were citizens bilked out of payments on lease agreements, but industry and government colluded to silence concerned citizens who spoke out against fracking. A "domestic terrorist watch list" was compiled of names and faces of people who attended anti-fracking protests. A Bill to place a "gag Order" on doctors -- prohibiting them from suggesting that sick patients may have been exposed to drilling chemicals or having healthcare conversations when the cause was known.

We fought back when eminent domain was invoked for pipelines. We fought back in Harrisburg when the Republican-controlled legislation tried to override local municipal bans on fracking and fracking waste disposal. We spent more than a decade fighting, and in the end, the drillers keep drilling, the water keeps being spoiled, and little by little citizens Rights are infringed upon or overwritten.

We watched with horror as private wells, land and our State's most precious resources were unnecessarily polluted with legally undisclosed drilling chemicals. We have seen how the waste - - what industry innocuously refers to as "produced water" -- be mismanaged. Some is stored in open air pits, which are vulnerable to weather and natural deterioration over time, introducing those contaminants to groundwater and local waterways. Some is sold to third-party disposal companies, who then resell the toxic slurry to municipalities for road de-icing, also an incredibly short-sighted and dangerous practice. Still more of the waste from the Marcellus Shale is shipped off to other states (like Ohio or Oklahoma), where it is disposed into injection wells -- known to be the cause of the costly seismic events in those States now.

Testimony about fracking nearly always focuses on geology and natural resources. For me, it is not just an issue about the environment and public health and safety. It's an issue of ethics. If the State of Connecticut were ever to consider accepting fracking waste, it should be with trusted, responsible industry partners. But they cannot be found. They do not exist.

Here in New London, our City Council is considering a local ban on fracking waste disposal, and it seems to have the full support of not only the Council but also the town, which filled City Hall on the nights this Bill was being debated and opened for public comment. Some here have said that it's just "a feel-good" piece of legislation, that it doesn't really mean anything, especially if the State were not to support a State-wide ban. But I believe it inserts an extra layer of legal protections and recourse that may feel good but also can't hurt.

Others have said that Connecticut isn't in danger, that not being a shale-rich region somehow insulates our State from harm.

But I am here to tell you: All that it would take is for New York to lift its moratorium on fracking, and drillers would rush in and be immediately in the market for a local patsy to take

their toxic waste. They'll come to Hartford and they'll attempt to curry favor with legislators. Then, they'll look for local dumping zones, and they're not going to go to Greenwich or Norwalk or Madison. They're going to go to poor towns, hurting towns with earnest people in government who are going to think hard about taking that industry money. Some might be tempted.

We can't take that chance. We must act now and lay down the law that our State, its wonderful Nutmeggers and our natural resources will not be sold out. Thank you.

Regards,
Gretchen

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