

Dear Senators,

Maryland banned fracking in 2017, the first state to do so legislatively. That matter was settled in 2017. Why is someone bringing it up again? Has something changed? The only thing new in the last eight years is that, while we knew in 2017 that the likely results of fracking would be harmful to the environment and health, we now have more incontrovertible evidence pointing to pollution of wells and drinking water, destruction of roads, and the problem of disposal of the water and toxic chemicals used in the fracking process in adjoining West Virginia and Pennsylvania. And we also know that the promise of an economic boom from fracking in those states has not come to fruition. The oil and gas industry promised that Pennsylvania would see 125,000 permanent, high-paying fracking-related jobs; the actual result is 12,500 jobs, or just 10% of the industry estimate.

In 2017 legislators spent a tremendous amount of time in hearings, responding to constituents, investigating and debating this issue. Several legislators traveled to Mountain Maryland to meet with citizens. If your committee has anything whatsoever to say about fracking now, it should be to congratulate yourselves on the wise decision that a bi-partisan supermajority of both chambers and a Republican Governor made eight years ago.

You should stop this bill in committee. We don't need to do this all over again.

We will have additional thoughts to share with you in the days to come.

--Bob and Mary Helen Spear, Swanton, Garrett County, Maryland