

Testimony: SB0878 - Oil and Natural Gas - Hydraulic Fracturing - Authorization
Committee: Education, Energy, and Environment
Hearing Date: February 27, 2025
Position: Oppose

Dear Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

I am pleading with you to vote NO on Senate Bill 0878. I have happily lived in Garrett County since 1981, but several years ago I was fully prepared to leave in order to avoid the negative impacts of fracking. When Governor Hogan signed the fracking ban in 2017, I was so very relieved that my beloved home, community, and environment were safe from this dangerous practice. The thought that we are once again facing the threat of fracking is very upsetting.

Most people in Garrett County depend on wells to provide them with safe drinking water. Once a drinking water supply is contaminated it's impossible to clean. What does a family or town do when their drinking water becomes polluted? Who would buy a property with contaminated wells or springs? Would you want to rely on a water buffalo for your family water supply? Where does a farmer obtain the large quantities of water needed for crops and livestock?

Even with "state-of-the-art" BMP's accidents can and will happen. People and wildlife need plenty of clean, safe drinking water. The overall likelihood of a negative impact from fracking to public health is simply too high. Keep in mind, that this is not just a Garrett County issue. Many of our streams feed the Potomac River, a drinking water source for many Maryland citizens. Water supplies are already threatened due to severe droughts in many areas. Does it make sense to pollute the little water that remains?

I previously owned almost 70 acres of forested land. I refused to sign a gas lease and placed it under a conservation easement to protect it in perpetuity. I've downsized to a smaller senior-friendly home but still rely on well water. To me, the choice is clear. The risks posed by fracking are simply not acceptable. Maryland should choose instead to keep its water and air clean for the benefit of current and future generations.

Maryland must continue to ban fracking in order to protect its communities and natural resources. In the not-too-distant future, clean water will be much more valuable than oil and natural gas.

Respectfully,

Liz McDowell
90 Moonridge Lane
Grantsville, MD 21536
301-895-3686