

As a physician, I am very aware of the hazards to human health that arise from exposures to chemicals and pollutants that are released during fracking. Fracking is essentially a dirty process that contaminates surrounding surface and ground waters, air, and soil. People living in the vicinity of fracking activities suffer a multitude of health problems, including cancer and earlier deaths. Toxic waste is transported to other areas, spreading the suffering yet more.

Fracking is also associated with noise and light pollution—more trauma to fenceline communities. It damages road infrastructure. And offers a false promise of job and financial gain to workers and neighboring communities. Why is this acceptable? Yes, it is not in your back yard so it is ok, I presume.

As an environmentalist, I am very aware of the continued destruction to our ecosystems that is resulting in species declines. All the hazards presented to humans extend, of course, to the natural world.

Why is this acceptable? Do we not respect and feel responsible to protect the natural world? Do we not understand that we are connected to the natural world, and actually depend on it?

Senate Bill 219 achieves the opposite of what was must occur. Allowing faster drilling approvals with thus less informed decision-making, removing of funds presently meant for environmental protection, weakening legal abilities of local communities to challenge drilling decisions. These are all steps to grow fracking and remove protections from it.

Please do not approve SB219.

Sincerely,

Kathy Smachlo, MD