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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TERRORISM, NONPROLIFERATION AND TRADE

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

According to statements attributed to you yesterday in the press, you are considering deeming the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study into the possible water contamination from hydraulic fracturing in Pavillon, Wyoming, as a Highly Influential Scientific Study (HISA). As you well know, this would mean that the draft study would undergo a heightened peer review before a final report is issued by the EPA.

As you also know, hydraulic fracturing is a process that has been used by the oil and gas industry for over 60 years and over one million wells have been fracked. If you recall, earlier this year you said before Congress, 'I'm not aware of any proven case where the fracking process itself has affected water, although investigations are ongoing.' I think it is safe to assume this is the ongoing investigation you alluded to in your testimony. Furthermore, I would hope that you would make sure this report receives the utmost seriousness by you and undergoes a peer reviewed HISA, the most thorough review possible by the USEPA.

In my home state of Ohio, which according to the State Review of Oil and Natural Gas Environmental Regulations (STRONGER) has a well managed and professional regulatory system currently in place, the combination of hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling has the potential to create over 200,000 jobs in the next four years alone. Currently, Ohio's unemployment rate is 9.0% and in portions of my district in Eastern and Southern Ohio unemployment is as high as 13.4%. Ohio can't wait any longer for job creation to come. The resources in the Marcellus and Utica Shales in Ohio have the potential to make Ohio the new energy and manufacturing center not only of the United States but of the world.

Like you, I want to ensure that we produce this energy in a safe way that ensures our drinking water is protected, and that production is regulated in a smart and efficient way that does not stop economic growth. Furthermore, as STRONGER has pointed out, the state regulators in Ohio are doing an excellent job of regulating the industry and I believe it should stay that way.

In closing, it is clear our country can't wait for job creation and I believe that a national focus on energy security will reassert the kind of American exceptionalism that all Americans are looking for in our national leadership. I look forward to your response and to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,


Bill Johnson

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