



June 28, 2012

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, N.Y. 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

As one of the state's leading good-government organizations and a staunch advocate of transparency in government, NYPIRG is deeply troubled by the recent news that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation – the agency charged with the environmental review of the natural gas drilling method commonly known as hydrofracking – gave details of the draft permits and regulations to the oil and gas industry.

We believe it is incumbent upon government to act in an open, fair and impartial manner when deciding public policy, which is why the perceived and apparently actual unequal access that was granted to the oil and gas industry is especially alarming. While it's not surprising that regulators would have "sidebar conversations" with a broad spectrum of interested parties, it is highly disconcerting that draft regulations reportedly were shared with and possibly influenced by industry lobbyists when no similar opportunity was provided to members of the general public or environmental preservation, public health or healthcare professionals.

Therefore, any decisions your administration makes on this controversial issue are now tainted with the air of lack of transparency in the regulatory process and the question will linger as to whether the industry's opinions ultimately unduly influenced the substance.

In light of these revelations, NYPIRG urges you to immediately direct the DEC to halt progress towards the issuance of the final hydrofracking plan and related regulations and any permits, withdraw the current SGEIS, and allow a process held to the highest ethical standard to guide this public policy decision, not the gas industry.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Weber
Executive Director