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3/7/2017

Dear Chair Helm and members of the House Energy and Environment Committee,

Beyond Toxics is a statewide environmental justice organization with thousands of members who are opposed to fracking. We support **HB 2711** and want to explain why.

Does fracking violate human rights?

On the face of it, yes. At least that's according to Physicians for Social Responsibility and Concerned Health Professionals of New York. They compiled and annotated a thorough *Compendium* of several hundred scientific, medical, and media findings that detail evidence for the risks and harms associated with fracking. The conclusion of the most recent edition (November 2016) is that:

Fracking poses significant threats to air, water, health, public safety, climate stability, seismic stability, community cohesion, and long-term economic vitality....[and] there is no evidence that fracking can operate without threatening public health directly or without imperiling climate stability upon which public health depends.

Put that together with the recognized rights to health, security of person, clean water, and the enjoyment of one's property, along with mothers' and children's rights to special protection and care, and yes, prima facie evidence clearly implicates fracking and other forms of oil and gas production in putting these rights at risk. Three recent Human Rights Impact Assessments of fracking also conclude that fracking and other forms of oil and gas production put human rights norms at risk.

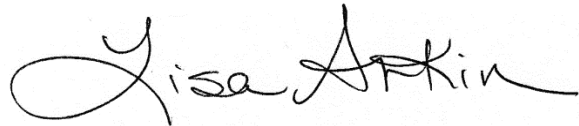
All together, findings to date from scientific, medical, and journalistic investigations combine to demonstrate that fracking poses significant threats to air, water, health, public safety, climate stability, seismic stability, community cohesion, and long-term economic vitality. Emerging data from a rapidly expanding body of evidence continue to reveal a plethora of recurring problems and harms that cannot be averted or cannot be sufficiently averted through regulatory frameworks.

There is no evidence that fracking can operate without threatening public health directly or without imperiling climate stability upon which public health depends. In the words of investigative journalist Andrew Nikiforuk:

*Industry swore that its cracking rock technology was safe and proven, but science now tells a different story. Brute force combined with ignorance ... has authored thousands of earthquakes ... [and] called forth clouds of migrating methane.... The science is complicated but clear: cracking rock with fluids is a chaotic activity and no computer model can predict where those fractures will go. The regulatory record shows that they often go out of zone; extend into water; and rattle existing oil and gas wells, and these rattled wells are leaking more methane.*

We support HB 2711 because Oregonians have no idea what the long-term effects of fracking might be.... Ignoring the body of evidence, to us, is not a viable option anymore.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Arkin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L" and "A".

Lisa Arkin, Executive Director