

“After what happened in the Gulf of Mexico, we have to do everything we can to ensure that any drilling that occurs is done in a way that protects our drinking water and natural environment. During my tenure in Congress, I have made environmental conservation and protection a top priority of mine, and I have opposed the reckless and dangerous methods of resource extraction currently being conducted throughout the country, including deepwater drilling, mountaintop removal mining and hydraulic fracturing. I have supported strengthening the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Air Act to ensure that the water we drink and the air we breathe is free from poisons and pollution. I look forward to lending my support to future legislation that protects our wildlife and wilderness, combats climate change, and promotes clean, sustainable energy alternatives.” – Maurice

- **Regulating Natural Gas Drilling:** After what happened with BP's devastating oil spill in the Gulf, we need to ensure that drilling for energy resources, wherever it occurs, is done in a way that protects our drinking water, environment and economy. New York is home to a portion of a geological formation known as the Marcellus Shale, which contains reserves of natural gas buried within it. In order to access those gas reserves, drilling companies use a controversial technique known as hydraulic fracturing. Maurice introduced the FRAC Act to close a loophole created in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that exempted hydraulic fracturing from the Safe Drinking Water Act and require the oil and gas industry to disclose the chemicals they use in their hydraulic fracturing processes. Hydraulic fracturing, also known as “fracking,” is a process whereby fluids are injected at high pressure into underground rock formations to blast them open and increase the flow of fossil fuels. This injection of unknown and potentially toxic chemicals often occurs near drinking water wells. Troubling incidents have occurred around the country where people became ill after fracking operations began in their communities. Some chemicals that are known to have been used in fracking include diesel fuel, benzene, industrial solvents, and other carcinogens and endocrine disrupters. The FRAC Act is an important first step in creating safety regulations and allowing for greater scrutiny of the natural gas industry.

- **Protecting Our Drinking Water:** Maurice included language in the Financial Year 2010 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill that directed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct a new study of the risks that hydraulic fracturing poses to drinking water. Past EPA studies on this topic have been limited and are widely regarded as biased. Maurice's measure will ensure that the EPA takes a new, independent and thorough examination of hydraulic fracturing. The EPA is in the process of reviewing public comment on the study's design and work should begin in the near future.

- **Reforming Offshore Drilling Regulations and Holding BP Accountable:** Maurice strongly supported the CLEAR Act, a comprehensive response bill to the BP oil spill disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, which will increase safety, help restore the Gulf Coast, crackdown on ethical lapses, require businesses to be responsible for their actions, and close royalty loopholes to ensure the American people receive their fair share for the extraction of public resources. The bill directly responds to the Deepwater Horizon disaster while also looking forward and attempting to prevent the next catastrophe. The bill would require strong new safety standards for offshore drilling, including independent certifications of critical equipment, demonstrations of

the ability to respond to future blowouts or major spills, increased inspections, stiffer penalties for safety violations, and an end to the practice of issuing environmental waivers for drilling plans. It would also require all drilling rigs off U.S. coasts to fully adhere to U.S. safety standards. The legislation would create a training academy for federal oil and gas inspectors to help ensure that only qualified individuals serve as inspectors under strict ethical standards. The CLEAR Act is a vital first step toward preventing future environmental disasters. It is now up to the Senate to take action.

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