

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today issued the following statement regarding the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) release of its draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) for natural gas drilling activities in New York. Hinchey submitted comments to the DEC in December 2008 regarding the agency's draft scope for the SGEIS. Those comments can be read by clicking [here](#):

Hinchey is the author of legislative language approved by the House earlier this year that formally urges the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct a study on the impact that hydraulic fracturing has on drinking water supplies. The congressman is also the coauthor of the Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals (FRAC) Act of 2009, which would restore the EPA's authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing as it relates to drinking water supplies. Additionally, the bill would require companies to honestly disclose the contents of fracking fluid in order to increase public awareness and to enable state and local regulators to properly control the chemicals being pumped into the ground.

"I am very grateful for the work that Commissioner Grannis and the entire DEC staff did to produce this comprehensive draft environmental impact statement. New York may soon see an extensive level of natural gas drilling and it's imperative that we take every step possible to ensure the protection of the environment from the potentially harmful practice of hydraulic fracturing. We cannot afford to make a mistake that could result in irreparable damage being done to our drinking water supplies and the overall environment.

"Given that the draft report released today is 800 pages long, it will take some time to read the full document and get a full grasp of what the DEC is proposing. I'm encouraged by the seriousness with which the DEC undertook the drafting of this important document. As I begin to carefully read through the draft report I'm hopeful it will be abundantly clear that the DEC is doing everything within its power to protect our state's residents, their drinking water supplies, and the environment as a whole. I also encourage the state to extend the comment period from 60 days to 90 days so that everyone has time to review the draft report and offer their feedback."