

Statement for Immediate Release
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Statement from Organizations Working for the Complete Fracking Ban

**New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy Takes the Lead
for Clean Water**

***Governor calls for Ban on Fracking throughout the Delaware River
Basin including a ban on Frack Wastewater Discharges
and Water Withdrawals for Fracking***

Trenton, New Jersey – New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy announced today that he will cast a vote as the Chairman of the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) in support of a watershed-wide permanent ban on fracking and its associated activities, including a ban of wastewater storage, processing and discharges in the Basin, and a ban on water exports from the watershed to fuel fracking elsewhere. See Governor Murphy's letter here: https://nj.gov/governor/news/docs/20190128_Letter-DRBCProposeRules-HVHF.pdf

Public controversy has raged over the last year with over 100,000 petitions submitted to the Governors of the 4 states that are part of the Delaware River Basin and tens of thousands of people submitting comments calling for a complete ban on all aspects of fracking. In November 2017, the DRBC proposed draft regulations to ban hydraulic fracturing for shale gas in the Delaware River Basin but allow the storage, processing, and discharge of wastewater produced by fracking and allow water withdrawals from the watershed for fracking operations outside the basin. The DRBC is expected to vote in the coming months on the proposals.

Organizations working for the past 8 years to transform the temporary moratorium on drilling and fracking in the Basin into a permanent ban immediately joined Governor Murphy's appeal for the Governors of New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware to pledge support for a "yes" vote for the watershed-wide ban on fracking and a "no" vote on the proposed draft natural gas regulations that would allow fracking wastewater and water withdrawals for fracking, instead voting to ban all of these fracking-related activities.

The public and organizations committed to achieving a complete ban have long expressed that the Delaware River Basin, the source of water for at least 15 million people, and a nationally treasured Wild and Scenic River, cannot be put at risk by the damaging and polluting industrial processes of fracking. The DRBC, a powerful interstate institution responsible for the management of the water resources of the watershed since the 1960's, is governed by the Governors of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware and the Army Corps of Engineers representing the federal Administration. A vote of the majority of the 5 members will decide the fate of the proposed natural gas regulations.

In addition to voluminous comments submitted by the public during the DRBC's comment period on the proposals, detailing the unsolvable environmental problems caused by fracking, recent developments such as the EPA's report on the high toxicity of waste produced by fracking, the Trump Administration's movement to relax frack waste disposal regulations along with other federal environmental protections such as rolling back the nation's landmark "Clean Water Rule", new information about the secret chemicals in frack fluids and waste, and recent scientific reports with dire warnings about climate change – which is worsened by methane released by fracking – provide the context as the vote on the regulations approaches.

In New Jersey, Governor Murphy pledged his opposition to fracking in the Basin shortly after taking office last year at a press conference on the banks of the Delaware River and promised he would study the ramifications of allowing fracking wastewater and water withdrawals. New Jersey's Senate passed SCR150 urging the Governor to oppose the DRBC proposed language that would allow the disposal of fracking waste in the Delaware River Watershed and would allow the withdrawal of water for fracking because of the potential impacts on drinking water for 2.9 million New Jersey residents and the threats to the river and its irreplaceable natural, recreational and economic values.

Delaware River Frack Ban Coalition Organizing Committee

(Alphabetical order)
Catskill Mountainkeeper
Clean Water Action NJ

Damascus Citizens for Sustainability
Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Delaware Sierra Club
Environment New Jersey
Food and Water Watch
Natural Resources Defense Council
New Jersey Sierra Club

Organizations that submitted over 100,000 Petitions in December 2018

Berks Gas Truth
Bucks Environmental Action
Catskill Mountainkeeper
Clean Water Action NJ
CREDO
Damascus Citizens for Sustainability
Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Delaware Sierra Club
Environment New Jersey
Food and Water Watch
Natural Resources Defense Council
NJ Sierra Club
Pennsylvania Chapter Sierra Club
Pennsylvania Chapter Sierra Club
Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter
Think Ocean Delaware