



SUPPORT

A. 2427/S. 1538 (Englebright/Avella)

Relates to the uniform treatment of waste from the exploration, development, extraction, or production of crude oil or natural gas

The New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV) supports the passage of A. 2427/S. 1538 (Englebright/Avella). Certain wastes produced in conjunction with crude oil, natural gas and geothermal energy exploration and production are currently exempt from the regulations applicable to other hazardous wastes despite the fact that the wastes from the extraction and production of crude oil and natural gas may be hazardous.

Specifically, in the case of hydraulic fracturing or “hydrofracking”, carcinogenic benzene, toluene and formaldehyde are common chemicals used in the fluids injected deep into the earth to extract natural gas embedded in shale formations. The wastewater that returns to the surface may also contain naturally-occurring chemicals located within the earth such as salts, heavy metals and radioactive materials. The presence of hazardous materials in wastewater generated by hydrofracking and the need to manage, treat and dispose of such wastewater properly exists even if the actual fracking fluids do not contain hazardous chemicals.

Typical sewer treatment plants are not capable of properly treating the high levels of brine, radiation and other natural-occurring chemicals found in hydrofracking wastewater. This is particularly problematic from environmental and public health perspectives, because that wastewater is released directly into the streams and rivers that supply drinking water to millions of people. Although hydrofracking is not currently permitted in New York, there is pressure in New York to accept these wastes from neighboring Pennsylvania.

A. 2427/S. 1538 will address these concerns by making all hazardous waste produced from oil and gas drilling subject to the same regulations for hazardous waste generation, transportation, treatment storage and disposal that apply to hazardous waste generated by other industries in New York. For these reasons, NYLCV urges passage of A. 2427/S. 1538.

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