

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4322

To clarify that a State has the sole authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on Federal land within the boundaries of the State.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 29, 2012

Mr. GOHMERT (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. BERG, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. HALL, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. CARTER, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. THORNBERRY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To clarify that a State has the sole authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on Federal land within the boundaries of the State.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fracturing Regula-
5 tions are Effective in State Hands Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) hydraulic fracturing is a commercially viable
4 practice that has been used in the United States for
5 more than 60 years in more than 1,000,000 wells;

6 (2) the Ground Water Protection Council, a na-
7 tional association of State water regulators that is
8 considered to be a leading groundwater protection
9 organization in the United States, released a report
10 entitled “State Oil and Natural Gas Regulations De-
11 signed to Protect Water Resources” and dated May
12 2009 finding that the “current State regulation of
13 oil and gas activities is environmentally proactive
14 and preventive”;

15 (3) that report also concluded that “[a]ll oil
16 and gas producing States have regulations which are
17 designed to provide protection for water resources”;

18 (4) a 2004 study by the Environmental Protec-
19 tion Agency, entitled “Evaluation of Impacts to Un-
20 derground Sources of Drinking Water by Hydraulic
21 Fracturing of Coalbed Methane Reservoirs”, found
22 no evidence of drinking water wells contaminated by
23 fracture fluid from the fracked formation;

24 (5) a 2009 report by the Ground Water Protec-
25 tion Council, entitled “State Oil and Natural Gas
26 Regulations Designed to Protect Water Resources”,

1 found a “lack of evidence” that hydraulic fracturing
2 conducted in both deep and shallow formations pre-
3 sents a risk of endangerment to ground water;

4 (6) a January 2009 resolution by the Interstate
5 Oil and Gas Compact Commission stated “The
6 states, who regulate production, have comprehensive
7 laws and regulations to ensure operations are safe
8 and to protect drinking water. States have found no
9 verified cases of groundwater contamination associ-
10 ated with hydraulic fracturing.”;

11 (7) on May 24, 2011, before the Oversight and
12 Government Reform Committee of the House of
13 Representatives, Lisa Jackson, the Administrator of
14 the Environmental Protection Agency, testified that
15 she was “not aware of any proven case where the
16 fracking process itself has affected water”;

17 (8) in 2011, Bureau of Land Management Di-
18 rector Bob Abbey stated, “We have not seen evi-
19 dence of any adverse effect as a result of the use of
20 the chemicals that are part of that fracking tech-
21 nology.”;

22 (9)(A) activities relating to hydraulic fracturing
23 (such as surface discharges, wastewater disposal,
24 and air emissions) are already regulated at the Fed-

1 eral level under a variety of environmental statutes,
2 including portions of—

3 (i) the Federal Water Pollution Con-
4 trol Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.);

5 (ii) the Safe Drinking Water Act (42
6 U.S.C. 300f et seq.); and

7 (iii) the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C.
8 7401 et seq.); but

9 (B) Congress has continually elected not to in-
10 clude the hydraulic fracturing process in the under-
11 ground injection control program under the Safe
12 Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.);

13 (10) in 2011, the Secretary of the Interior an-
14 nounced the intention to promulgate new Federal
15 regulations governing hydraulic fracturing on Fed-
16 eral land; and

17 (11) a February 2012 study by the Energy In-
18 stitute at the University of Texas at Austin, entitled
19 “Fact-Based Regulation for Environmental Protec-
20 tion in Shale Gas Development”, found that “[n]o
21 evidence of chemicals from hydraulic fracturing fluid
22 has been found in aquifers as a result of fracturing
23 operations”.

24 **SEC. 3. DEFINITION OF FEDERAL LAND.**

25 In this Act, the term “Federal land” means—

1 (1) public lands (as defined in section 103 of
2 the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of
3 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702));

4 (2) National Forest System land;

5 (3) land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of
6 Reclamation; and

7 (4) land under the jurisdiction of the Corps of
8 Engineers.

9 **SEC. 4. STATE AUTHORITY.**

10 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—A State shall have the sole au-
11 thority to promulgate or enforce any regulation, guidance,
12 or permit requirement regarding the underground injec-
13 tion of fluids or propping agents pursuant to the hydraulic
14 fracturing process, or any component of that process, re-
15 lating to oil, gas, or geothermal production activities on
16 or under any land within the boundaries of the State.

17 (b) **FEDERAL LAND.**—The underground injection of
18 fluids or propping agents pursuant to the hydraulic frac-
19 turing process, or any components of that process, relating
20 to oil, gas, or geothermal production activities on Federal
21 land shall be subject to the law of the State in which the
22 land is located.

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