



NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

Via Electronic Mail

February 24, 2014

Los Angeles City Council
Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee
Council Member José Huizar
Council Member Gilbert Cedillo
Council Member Mitchell Englander
City Hall, Room 350
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-4801

Re: Protecting Public Health and Water Supply Reliability From the Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing (Council File 13-1152-S1) – SUPPORT

Dear Committee Chair Huizar and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council (“NRDC”), which has tens of thousands of members and activists in the greater Los Angeles area, I am writing to express our **strong support** for the above-referenced motion by Council Members Koretz and Bonin, File No. 13-1152-S1, which would direct certain City staff to prepare an ordinance to change the zoning code to prohibit all well stimulation activity, including hydraulic fracturing and acidizing, in the City of Los Angeles until specific conditions are met. Oil drilling operations that involve well stimulation are being linked to health and environmental concerns in numerous locations across the City, and this motion would help to address those concerns.

An increasing body of evidence shows that there are many reasons to be concerned about the effects of hydraulic fracturing and other well stimulation activities. Hydraulic fracturing involves injecting chemicals underground that can include toxics – like hydrofluoric acid, formaldehyde, and benzene – often through or adjacent to groundwater used for drinking and irrigation. Hydraulic fracturing also uses significant water resources, and any major ramping up of these operations would create another competing demand for California’s precious water supplies – a major cause for concern during this historic drought. Hydraulic fracturing has also been linked to induced earthquakes, a particular concern for southern California. Emissions from oil and gas facilities include toxic air contaminants, smog-forming pollutants, and global warming greenhouse gases. Scientific studies have linked hydraulic fracturing to adverse impacts on human health (*e.g.*, burning eyes, headaches, respiratory problems, elevated cancer

risk), worrisome patterns of birth defects, groundwater contamination, and damage to private property.

Despite these risks, hydraulic fracturing enjoys dangerous exemptions from critical federal environmental laws, including the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act. And at the state level, while last year's Senate Bill 4 imposed disclosure requirements and a permitting scheme for well stimulation activities for the first time, state laws and regulations remain woefully inadequate to protect Californians from the risks involved.

This motion will help protect Angelenos from the impacts of hydraulic fracturing and other well stimulation activities. I urge you to vote in favor of this motion. Thank you in advance for considering our comments.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Damon K. Nagami". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Damon Nagami
Senior Attorney
Director, Southern California Ecosystems Project