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December 12, 2013

Councilmember Koretz
City of Los Angeles
200 North Spring Street
Room 440
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: Motion 13-1152-S1 (Hydraulic fracturing)
POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear Councilmember Koretz:

On behalf of Heal the Bay, a nonprofit environmental group with over 15,000 members, I am writing in support of your motion (13-1152-S1) regarding hydraulic fracturing.

As an organization dedicated to ensuring that California’s coastal waters are safe, healthy and clean, we are extremely concerned about the potential threats to water quality and water supply from well-stimulation/fracking operations. Thus, a precautionary approach must be taken in monitoring, permitting and regulating these operations. We support the provisions that require additional scientific study, accountability, transparency, disclosure and regulatory oversight.

However, we ask for one clarification to the motion. The motion currently includes “waste disposal injection wells” in the prohibition. We ask that you clarify that the City’s Terminal Island Renewable Energy (“TIRE”) Project is not included in the scope of the prohibition. As you know, the TIRE project is important for the City’s biosolids handling.

We thank you for your attention to this important issue and urge the City Council to adopt this motion with the requested clarification. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Kirsten James
Science and Policy Director, Water Quality

cc: Councilmember Bonin, Councilmember Fuentes

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December 13, 2013

LA City Council President Herb Wesson
LA City Councilmember Jose Huizar, Chair, Planning Committee
LA City Councilmember Felipe Fuentes, Chair, Energy & Environment Committee
200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 430, 455, 465
Los Angeles, CA 90012

re: CF#13-1152-S1 - Fracking, Prohibition of Well Stimulation Activities
CF#13-1454 - Fracking - Mitigating Harmful Flooding Impacts, Spread of Contaminants

Dear Councilmembers Wesson, Huizar and Fuentes,

I am writing on behalf of Environment California, a non-profit environmental advocacy group with tens of thousands of members and supporters in the City of Los Angeles. I urge you to support the motion from Councilmembers Koretz and Bonin calling for a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing ("fracking"), acidizing, gravel-packing and other highly-pressurized oil well stimulation activities in the City of Los Angeles. These practices currently receive little or no oversight despite posing very real threats to the health and well-being of Los Angeles residents.

Fracking uses toxic chemicals and generates polluted wastewater. A 2011 Congressional study found 13 different cancer-causing chemicals in the fracking fluids used by oil and gas companies between 2005 and 2009.¹ California oil wells return five gallons of "produced water," often laced with contaminants such as boron, ammonia and organic compounds, for every barrel of oil extracted.²

Fracking threatens our air. Air sampling near fracking sites in 14 states has detected concentrations of hazardous air pollutants high enough to make people sick.³ Smog and soot pollution from heavy-duty trucks and other equipment also contribute to local and regional air pollution problems.

Fracking also accelerates dangerous climate change. Fracking releases methane, which is 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas.⁴ Fracking also keeps us dependent on fossil fuels at the exact moment when we need to be moving towards clean energy. A few weeks ago, 20 leading climate experts called on Governor Jerry Brown to impose a moratorium on fracking in California, including retired NASA climate scientist James Hansen of Columbia University, Michael Mann of Penn State University, Michael MacCracken of the Climate Institute, Ken Caldeira of the Carnegie Institution for Science and Anthony Ingraffea of Cornell University.

California is already suffering from the effects of climate change: the state is reeling

¹ U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Minority Staff, *Chemicals Used in Hydraulic Fracturing*, April 2011.

² Water Environment Foundation, *Evaluation of Potential Beneficial Reuse of San Ardo Produced Water*, 2006.

³ Environment California Research and Policy Center, *Fracking by the Numbers*, October 2013.

⁴ Environmental Protection Agency, *Overview of Greenhouse Gases*, accessed at <http://epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/gases/ch4.html> 12 December 2013.

from years of minimal rainfall, and just a few days ago, California lawmakers began calling on Governor Brown to declare drought conditions throughout the state.⁵ We should be doing everything in our power to halt dangerous climate change – which means putting a stop to hydraulic fracturing as soon as we can.

Unfortunately, current state restrictions on fracking are insufficient. The California Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources just released new statewide regulations on fracking as required by SB-4 (Pavley). These inadequate regulations will allow fracking to continue essentially unimpeded throughout the state.

DOGGR has shown itself to be incompetent in the regulation of existing wells. In a story printed by the *Los Angeles Times*, DOGGR stood by and did nothing to help the residents of the University Park neighborhood near Mount St. Mary's College who were suffering nosebleeds and obvious ill health from a reported 400% increase in oil drilling activities since 2010.⁶ Even an EPA representative became ill while inspecting the area.⁷ Senator Boxer had to intervene from Washington, D.C. before drilling was halted. It seems clear that DOGGR does not provide adequate oversight of fracking operations.

Environment California is calling on Governor Brown to ban fracking in our state as soon as possible. In the meantime, a moratorium is a vital step for protecting the health and safety of the people of Los Angeles. We urge you to support the motion from Councilmembers Koretz and Bonin for a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing, acidizing, gravel-packing and other highly-pressurized well stimulation activities in the City of Los Angeles.

Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Best,
Emily Kirkland
Clean Energy Associate
Environment California

⁵ "California Drought Declaration Called For By Lawmakers," *Associated Press*, 10 December 2013.

⁶ "Boxer asks EPA to ensure safety of L.A. neighborhood near oil field," *Los Angeles Times*, 26 September 2013.

⁷ "EPA officers sickened by fumes at South L.A. oil field," *Los Angeles Times*, 8 November 2013.