



May 21, 2013

The Honorable Das Williams
State Capitol, Room 4005
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 982 (Williams) – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblyman Williams:

I am writing on behalf of the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) to express our support for your AB 982, which will require oil and gas drilling firms using hydraulic fracturing to prepare and carry out a groundwater monitoring plan before drilling is conducted. The bill also requires drillers to identify how much water it plans to use in its fracking operations, the source of the water used for fracking, and how fracking wastewater will be disposed.

As a supporter of California's family farmers and the long-term sustainability of California agriculture, CAFF is very concerned about the potential impacts of fracking on the state's water quality as well as its water supply. We believe the requirements in AB 982 are timely and essential for the following reasons:

- Fracking involves high-pressure injection of water containing a wide variety of chemicals that can contaminate groundwater. The oil and gas industry strongly resists disclosing which chemicals they use, and DOGGR's proposed regulations do not appear to require disclosure, making groundwater monitoring all the more important as a way to track the impacts of fracking on groundwater supplies.
- Though the oil and gas industry claims fracking has been done in California for decades without incident, numerous water supplies near oil and gas fracking sites in other states have been contaminated with chemicals known to be used in fracking. Many of these cases are dismissed or ignored by state and local regulators because of the lack of baseline data on groundwater quality before fracking occurred – exactly the kind of data AB 982 would require to be collected.
- The Monterey shale formation, with three times as much recoverable oil as the Bakken formation in North Dakota and Montana, has the potential to massively increase fracking in California. The Monterey formation underlies key farming regions in California, including the Salinas Valley, the San Joaquin Valley, and the Ventura coastal plain.

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- Fracking is a water-intensive process; up to 5 million gallons can be used in a typical operation. The impact of fracking on the state's already constrained water supplies will be multiplied if the Monterey formation is fully developed.

Oil and gas are valuable energy resources, but they certainly are not important enough to risk threatening the quality or supply of California's essential water resources. AB 982 requires oil and gas drillers using fracking to take common-sense measures to ensure that the state's groundwater and surface water supplies will be protected, and for that reason CAFF strongly supports AB 982 and is pleased to work with you for its passage.

Sincerely,



David Runsten
Policy Director