



Keeping Northwest California wild since 1977

March 20, 2014

The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell
The Honorable Mark Leno
California State Senate
Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 1132—Oil and Gas Fracking and Well Stimulation Moratorium—Support

Dear Senator Mitchell and Senator Leno:

On behalf of the Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC) and our 14,579 members and online activists, we would like to thank you for introducing SB 1132. I am writing to express support for this bill. As you know, it will impose a moratorium on oil and gas well stimulation. It will also expand a planned study of fracking and well stimulation, and establish a transparent review process to ensure the study is complete. That process will establish findings about whether these techniques will harm California's public health, environment, and economic sustainability. The findings will be transmitted to the governor, who will determine if the moratorium should be lifted.

Fracking, acidizing and other well stimulation techniques involve injecting chemicals, acids and other materials into the ground to facilitate oil and gas production. These extreme extraction techniques and their associated activities have been linked to groundwater and surface water contamination, air pollution, increased greenhouse gas emissions, loss of farmland and open space and earthquakes around the country. These techniques also rely on high volumes of water that, because of the nature of the processes, is polluted to an extent that makes that water permanently toxic and not re-usable for most purposes. The water is effectively removed from the water cycle. In California, the majority of well stimulation occurs in areas of extreme drought.

In California, the oil and gas industry's use of well stimulation has been increasing and is expected to accelerate in the future. Given these techniques' long-term consequence and known harmful impacts elsewhere, it is entirely appropriate for California to impose a moratorium on fracking, acidizing and all well stimulation while the state reviews the current and future effects here. Such a "time out" will allow Californians to systematically consider whether our state is an appropriate site for these activities.

SB 1132 establishes a reasonably cautious approach that will help ensure that California's important assets—including a healthy workforce, clean water, growing clean energy sectors, greenhouse gas reduction and a resilient economy—are not permanently damaged. Again, we support SB 1132.

Sincerely,

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