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Dear Science Advisory Board members,

As doctors, nurses and others in the medical field, we are deeply concerned with the EPA draft report, *Assessment of the Potential Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing for Oil and Gas on Drinking Water Resources*.

EPA claims that “hydraulic fracturing activities have not led to widespread, systemic impacts to drinking water” yet this conclusion is not supported by the data presented in the report, nor the growing body of scientific evidence that points to water contamination as a result of fracking.

Despite industry secrecy and a lack of adequate testing, a growing number of studies have found a clear link between fracking and water contamination.

- A recent paper published in the [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#) found fracking chemicals in nearby drinking water wells.
- [A review](#) of peer-reviewed studies from 2009-2014 determined that 72 percent of them showed “indication of potential, positive association, or actual incidence of water contamination.”
- Duke University researchers found [elevated and sometimes dangerous levels of methane](#) in drinking water wells near fracking operations.

Evidence of fracking’s harms isn’t limited to independent scientific studies. The industry’s own data shows that 5 percent of fracking wells leak upon drilling and that number only grows over time. Additionally, state regulators [in Pennsylvania, Colorado, and New Mexico](#) alone have documented more than 1,000 cases of surface and groundwater contamination linked to fracking and other oil and gas development.

The EPA study reflects pressure from Congress and the oil and gas industry to severely limit its scope. The EPA did no new cases studies and the exclusion of Dimock, Pennsylvania; Pavillion, Wyoming; and Parker County, Texas is puzzling. Over the course of five years, [the industry succeeded in watering down the study](#) by refusing to allow baseline testing -- an account of the chemicals present in groundwater before drilling began. One of the companies that had initially agreed to testing, Chesapeake Energy, lobbied the EPA to limit when and where they could test, [EPA documents show](#).

The study also fails to examine how underground injection of wastewater containing toxic and even cancer-causing chemicals threatens our rivers, streams and drinking water.

Clean water is essential to human health and in light of the foregoing, we feel it is appropriate for the EPA to retract its topline conclusion and revise all public facing materials claiming hydraulic fracturing poses no “widespread, systemic” impacts on drinking water resources.

Sincerely,

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