

September 26, 2011

Dear Colleagues in Faith,

Please join us in signing a call to our public officials for the protection of our precious waterways here in the region of the Delaware River. The Delaware River Basin Commission, which oversees the watershed of the Delaware River, plans to vote next month on whether to lift a moratorium on drilling in the Delaware River Basin. The five commissioners are representatives of the governors of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware, as well as a representative of the Army Corps of Engineers, overseen by President Obama.

To sign the attached letter, please write to Rabbi Melissa Klein at blessingthewaters@gmail.com with your full name, title, location, and affiliations (for identification purpose only). We have power in numbers and diversity-- please reach out to spiritual leaders of all faiths in your area and invite them to sign on by October 10. We are building a strong coalition of people of faith, calling upon our leaders to focus on the long-range vision of caretaking for our earth and for our children's future.

Please send this letter to any faith leader in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, or Delaware whom you think would be interested.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to learn about the dangers and politics of fracking, we recommend the following web resources. In addition, a member of our committee would be happy to speak with you.

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/440/game-changer>

<http://foodandwaterwatch.org/factsheet/the-case-for-a-ban-on-gas-fracking/>

<http://protectingourwaters.wordpress.com/pamphlets/fracking-e-toolkit/>

<http://gaslandthemovie.com/whats-fracking>

With prayers that we may each discern true service of the Holy One,

Blessing the Waters Committee of Protecting Our Waters

October 10, 2011

Dear Delaware River Basin Commissioners:

Thank you for your service to our region and its waterways. We honor your commitment to discerning what is best for the future of our precious country and the public good. We have signed this urgent letter to you as faith leaders throughout the region who are alarmed about the long-term public health and economic consequences of opening up the Delaware River Basin to high-volume slickwater hydraulic fracturing (fracking).

The gas industry is lobbying to move forward quickly with plans for drilling throughout the Marcellus Shale, and industry reports claim that this method is safe; however, evidence from throughout the country where this method is being implemented presents a very different story. We cannot in good conscience allow this highly toxic method of extracting natural gas, which produces millions of gallons of radioactive and carcinogenic waste water, to contaminate the drinking water supplies of our cities and communities.

Our children and grandchildren do not need natural gas to survive, but they do need fresh water to drink and fresh air to breathe. Our faith traditions teach that we are here as caretakers of the earth, and we must beware of becoming distracted by short-term gains that gravely endanger our future as a nation. You have been chosen by history to be in the situation you are in now. We ask you to listen to your hearts and your conscience. In the 68,000 public comments you have received, certainly doubts have been raised for you about the safety of hydraulic fracturing - its effects on aquifers, rivers, wells, livestock, and people's health. We know that standing up to those who support hydraulic fracturing takes courage. If at least three of you stand up for what's right, you will have saved the Delaware River Basin. You will become models for public officials around the country who act according to their conscience for the public good. You have the opportunity to positively affect the course of history.

Thus, we plead that you make what will be an unpopular decision to the gas industry, in the name of our future as Americans: to maintain the moratorium on drilling in the Delaware River Basin.

We will be praying for your strength, courage, and well-being,

The Rev. Judith T. Beck, Episcopal Priest, Philadelphia, PA

Pastor Rose Bender, Whitehall Mennonite Church, Whitehall, PA

Rabbi Marjorie Berman, Spiritual Director, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College,
Clarks Summit, PA

Rabbi Leila Gal Berner, Ph.D., Kol Ami: The Northern Virginia Reconstructionist Community
Dept. of Biblical Studies, Alliance for Jewish Renewal Rabbinical Ordination Program
Scholar-in-Residence, Dept. of Philosophy and Religion, American University,
Washington, DC

The Rev. Jesse W. Brown, Jr., Grace Lutheran Church, Camden, NJ

Rabbi Anna Boswell-Levy, Congregation Tzedek v'Shalom, Newtown, PA

Sister Mary Elizabeth Clark, Sisters of St. Joseph Earth Center, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Howard A Cohen, Burning Bush Adventures, Bennington, VT

The Rev. Elizabeth W. Colton, Grace Church and the Incarnation (Episcopalian), Philadelphia, PA

The Reverend Shelly Davis, United Christian Church, Levittown, PA

Shelley DePaul, Assistant Chief, Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania, Easton, PA

Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell, Union Rabbi - East, Union for Reform Judaism, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Rachel Esserman, The Reporter Group, Vestal, NY

Rabbi Dayle A. Friedman, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Gail G. Glicksman, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA

The Reverend Sara J. Hale, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Yeadon, PA

Sister Mary Hamilton, Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Lauren Grabelle Herrmann, Kol Tzedek, Philadelphia, PA

Melissa Hickey, Director of Campus Ministry, Neumann University, Aston PA

Rabbi Linda Holtzman, Congregation Mishkan Shalom, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Miriam E. Hyman, Congregation B'nai Tikvah-Beth Israel, Sewell, NJ

Rabbi Rachel Kahn-Troster, Director of North American Programs,
Rabbis for Human Rights-North America, Teaneck, New Jersey

Rabbi Joanna Katz, Jewish Chaplain, Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, New Paltz, NY

Interfaith Minister Sharon Kind, Huntingdon Valley, PA

Rabbi Donna Kirshbaum, String of Pearls Congregation, Princeton, NJ

Rabbi Melissa Klein, Jewish Reconstructionist, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Myriam Klotz, Director of Yoga and Lay Programs,
Institute for Jewish Spirituality, Bala Cynwyd, PA

The Rev. Katherine Cartwright Knodel, Pastor, Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Resurrection,
Levittown, PA

Rabbi Yael Levy, Congregation Mishkan Shalom, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Mordechai Liebling, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, PA

Rabbi Marc Margolius, West End Synagogue, New York, NY

Pastor Amy Yoder McGloughlin, Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, PA

The Rev. Nancy L. Miller, United Methodist Church, Cape May Courthouse, NJ

Rabbi Yitzhak Nates, Narberth Havurah, Narberth, PA

The Rev. Patricia Pearce, Member at Large of the Philadelphia Presbytery, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Linda T. Potemken, Congregation Beth Israel of Media, Media, PA

The Rev. Cheryl Pynch, Summit Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Rayzel Raphael, Melrose Park, PA

The Rev. Leah Schade, United In Christ Lutheran Church, West Milton, PA;
PhD Candidate, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

The Rev. Brian C. Snyder, Bower Hill Community Church (Presbyterian), Mount Lebanon, PA

Rabbi David A. Teutsch, Director, Center for Jewish Ethics, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College,
Wyncote, PA

The Reverend Frank P. Toia, Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, Landsdale, PA

The Rev. Nate Walker, First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Arthur Waskow, Director, The Shalom Center, Philadelphia, PA

The Rev. Elliott M. Waters, Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg, Institute for Jewish Spirituality, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, Brooklyn, NY

Sister Mindy Welding, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Director of Campus Ministry,
Chestnut Hill College, Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Lina Zerbarini, Director, Weinberger Center for Jewish Life and Learning
Sid Jacobson JCC, East Hills, NY

(signatures as of October 2, 2011, organization for identification purposes only)