

Hydraulic fracturing has been banned in many jurisdictions because of the dangers to human health and the environment. Governments which have said no to the process have done so after long and careful investigations. I cannot see how the risks and the unknowns would be any different in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Where fracking has been permitted it is done so with the admonition that it be carried out within strict safety guidelines. The fossil fuel industry is largely self regulated. That means putting more trust into oil companies than I think is wise. Their track record in other places is far from stellar. With the present economic conditions in this province our government will not be able to employ more environmental monitors than are currently in place which, by all accounts, is very few. As a matter of fact, I have spoken to people who have worked on every oil well drilled on the island in recent years and they all stated that they have never seen a government inspector of any kind on a drill site. I strongly urge the panel to recommend that hydraulic fracturing not be carried on in Newfoundland and Labrador.