

Dr. Ray Gosine, Chair, NLHFRP  
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Dear Mr. Gosine,

I am sure that you and the other members of the hydraulic fracturing review panel are somewhat embarrassed to have been given a directive in the "Guidance Related To Hydraulic Fracturing" manual (page 10, Part 3) from the Minister of Natural Resources that fracking "can be used safely if done properly within an appropriate regulatory framework." Doesn't this undermine your ability to perform an unbiased study of your own, to draw your own conclusions? Isn't the judge swaying the jury?

Most people on a jury would also be somewhat uncomfortable to learn that three of the five-man jury,(Graham Gagnon, Maurice Dusseault, and Wade Locke) have already spoken publicly in favor of fracking, the very matter under review. Isn't the scope of the panel too narrow?

The multi-dimensional implications of fracking on communities and the people who live in them doesn't have a spokesperson on your panel. Fracking does not happen in a vacuum. What will happen to the homes of people living in areas targeted for fracking? If people try to sell their property, who will buy it, given the fear of ground water contamination, the reality of air emissions, the contamination of soil from the leaking of abandoned wells, the 24-7noise of the drilling and the transport of dangerous substances in huge trucks on often dangerous roads. unremitting stress of it all.

Extensive research of fracking's impact on health was a key player in New York State's decision to say "no" to fracking. Is that why no voice for health concerns was invited to sit on your panel review? Cancer is one of the main causes of death in Western Newfoundland. Do you really think that "an appropriate regulatory framework" will keep fracking's toxins out of the air, water, and soil, and out of human and animal bodies? Anyone who can speak to the priceless, fragile eco-system and the present richness of our clean air, water, and soil is missing from the panel. Is our health less valuable than the health of people in New York?

The aboriginal population of the island is working very hard to renew and continue their commitment to protect this land for future generations. Some of the members of your panel will speak passionately about the short-term economic benefits of fracking. One of the province's spiritual leaders would counter that passion for quick profit by speaking passionately about the moral implications of putting as industry with such a toxic legacy in one of the as-yet healthy places on the earth.

You may argue that everyone has the opportunity to make submissions about all such issues to the panel for its consideration. This is not the same as inviting them to sit on the panel where their

vote would be recognized when the "to frack or not to frack" question is decided. It is one thing to be a witness at a trial. It is another thing to be a juror.

Just imagine if your panel refused the directive to vote in favor of fracking, and as informed global citizens, you decided that this province, which is already producing so much off-shore oil, would be wiser to invest some of the profits from that industry in diverse, sustainable, renewable sources of income than to give fracking a green light.

Other provinces, states, and countries, having carefully studied all the implications of fracking, have decided that fracking cannot be done safely within any regulatory framework . They have decided that this particular method of extracting oil and gas is not a good way to prosper, that the long-term price of fracking far outweighs the short-term benefits. Just imagine! You can too!

Imagine if, during your deliberations, you on the panel took time to hear the silent plea of generations not yet born, asking you to leave the air, water, and soil of this earth cleaner than you found it. Imagine how much depends on you.

Sincerely,  
Mary McCormack