

S. O'Leary

May 18th, 2015

Dr. Ray Gosine Chair
Hydraulic Fracturing Review panel
IIC-3067 Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NL
A1C 5S7

Dear Dr. Gosine and Review Panelists,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the issue of potential hydraulic fracturing in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Born and raised in St. John's with west coast Newfoundland roots, I am a strong supporter of equal opportunities, an avid community volunteer, and a member of the Qalipu Mik'maq First Nations Band. I am a deeply committed, long-time communicator, social advocate and environmentalist.

In my professional experience as former St. John's City Councillor at Large and Mayoral Candidate, I was a hands-on motivator with a positive approach to the broad range of issues from directing a multi-million dollar budget for the City of St. John's to addressing the needs of ordinary citizens, including advocacy on issues of poverty, environmental stewardship and food security. In this role, I was a successful advocate for environmental issues such as the banning of non-essential cosmetic pesticides in the province, the re-instatement of the Environmental Advisory Committee at the City of St. John's which lapsed 11 years without notice, reinstating the relationship and acting as representative for the Stewardship Association of NL, making staff and Council aware of our existing wetland preservation contracts including Lundrigan's Marsh and so much more.

I provide this information so you can understand my background and my deep concern about the potential of hydraulic fracturing on the west coast or any part of the province of Newfoundland & Labrador.

First, of all, I am not a scientist, but as activist and politician, I do a substantial amount of research on existing practices. I am firm believer in progressive visioning but as well, not wasting valuable time, tax money and energy on having to reinvent the wheel. It is important to note the vast number of jurisdictions around North America in particular, that are divesting in hydraulic fracturing. This is happening as a direct result of negative impacts on human and animal health,

wasteful water usage, climate change contribution and once again, short term gain for long term pain style of industrial development.

The right to clean water and a healthy water table that feeds us all has to remain at the centre of this investigation. It is amazing that at this point in time, when so many have divested and banned fracking due to these established negative impacts, that we are even considering this in our province.

Once again, we see a quick solution approach to economic gain for our government. The potential for a diversified economy that is both ecologically sound and diverse, instead of our further dependence upon this particular method of fossil fuel production is astounding. Are we to continue to be last to catch up on the dangers of this practice? As Newfoundlanders, we cannot continue to be the last to the table instead of learning to be ahead of the curve.

The west coast boasts an incredible eco-tourism industry, one that should be further developed and enhanced and certainly not destroyed by a potential fracking industry. The threat of losing UNESCO status at Gros Morne would also be incredibly shortsighted.

Dr. Gosine, as an avid trail hiker and outdoorswoman, I know I can relate to you in particular in your love of the great NL outdoors and the importance and responsibility we bear in maintaining a safe ecosystem for our health, our families, our environment and for our economic future. Let's not sell the shop for such a short term and destructive land use when there are so many other sustainable economic options to consider. I have read and fully support the submission provided as well by the Council of Canadians to your review panel. <http://canadians.org/.../fracking/submission-nlhfrp-0515.pdf>

Thank you for your time and efforts and this opportunity to submit my opposition to hydraulic fracturing in our province.

Kind regards,
S. O'Leary