



US Oil & Gas Association
ADVOCATE FOR THE OIL & GAS INDUSTRY



February 15, 2012

The Honorable Doc Hastings
Chair
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hastings:

At the Committee hearing on the Department of Interior budget, Secretary Ken Salazar responded to a question from Representative Scott Tipton, in part, with the following comment regarding the Department's intent to develop regulations related to hydraulic fracturing:

Your question really goes to the fact that if you have states now coming on board and saying that they are going to develop their own regulatory regime, why is it necessary for the United States to develop its regulatory regime on public lands? My answer is to that is I think we have a responsibility; I believe we have a responsibility under laws of this country to make sure that the 700 million acres of the American citizen owned public estate that we are taking care of those lands in a way that any land manager or any land owner would do. In addition to that ... I would also add that I think there are many in the industry who have spoken to me who have said they would rather have a standard that they can follow from state to state, so they aren't subjected to ... most of the companies that are involved in hydraulic fracturing and natural gas production operate across many state lines and what I always hear from industry is that they don't like to deal with a patchwork of regulations; it makes it difficult for them to address different sets of regulations. Our regulations will deal only with the public estate, but it also seems to me that it may create the template for what ought to be happening across the country as well.


We, the undersigned organizations, want to explicitly state that our member companies support the current state processes for regulation of hydraulic fracturing. More importantly, we have repeatedly requested that the Department of Interior utilize the state operated FracFocus reporting system instead of attempting to create a different, costly and unnecessary new reporting process.

While we plan to continue to press for a FracFocus approach, we want to dispel any suggestions that there is a need for a new federal framework to address the fracturing chemical disclosure issue or to develop a national well construction model. Such a framework or model would be counterproductive given the efforts by state governments to tailor regulation to local demands.

Sincerely,



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