

COMMITTEE ON
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY**
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
Hearing on Lessons Learned: EPA's Investigations of Hydraulic Fracturing**

Chairman Smith: It seems that each week there is more good news about the incredible benefits of the fracking energy revolution that is underway across America. Whether it's the manufacturing renaissance taking place in this country thanks to cheap natural gas, the creation of over one million jobs and counting, or the potential for liquefied natural gas exports to spur economic growth, the benefits of shale gas production can hardly be overstated.

The fracking process is turning out to be a way to achieve energy independence, strengthen our national security and stimulate the economy, all with minimal impact to the environment. However, some choose to ignore these benefits and instead focus on finding ways to restrain, if not stifle, the new development. The EPA has too often been complicit in this effort. They have attempted to link fracking to water contamination in at least three cases, only to be forced to retract their statements after further scrutiny proved them to be unfounded.

Their track record and bias makes the EPA's ongoing study of the relationship between hydraulic fracturing and drinking water resources even more troubling. I am concerned that the EPA has failed to include a risk assessment as part of this study, instead choosing to simply identify potential risks without providing any context or consideration of their likelihood. This deficiency would significantly undermine the study's objectivity and ultimately impair its utility.

Recent Science Advisory Board reviewers have noted this deficiency as well. In comments last month on the EPA study, one reviewer stated, "There is no quantitative risk assessment included in EPA's research effort. Thus, the reader has no sense of how risky any operation may be in ultimately impacting drinking water." This is a concern that I hope the EPA will address in today's hearing.

The Agency should base its work on sound science rather than regulatory ambition. However, if the Agency fails to do this, a legislative remedy may be warranted to address the study's deficiencies. Thank you and I yield back.

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