

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



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Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)

Full Committee Markup of H.R. 2850, the EPA Hydraulic Fracturing Study Improvement Act

Chairman Smith: The next item we consider today is H.R. 2850, the “EPA Hydraulic Fracturing Study Improvement Act.”

This simple, four-page bill addresses the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) ongoing study of the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water.

The bill does two things. First, it requires the EPA to follow basic scientific principles in carrying out the study, which has been designated a Highly Influential Scientific Assessment.

Second, the bill requires that the EPA’s study go beyond simply identifying “possible impacts” of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water. The study must provide objective estimates of the probability, uncertainty and consequence of any such impacts.

This addresses a concern identified on multiple occasions by stakeholders and independent experts since the EPA first proposed its study design in 2011.

Requiring the EPA to provide context to any identified risks will maximize the study’s utility to both scientists and decision-makers. And it will limit the possibility that findings will be misinterpreted or misused.

This basic principle has been emphasized repeatedly in Committee hearings and correspondence over the last two years. And its inclusion will enhance not only the credibility of the EPA’s work on hydraulic fracturing but also our ability to ensure continued safe and responsible production of America’s vast oil and gas resources.

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