Arguments For And Against Hydrofracking: Opinion Essay

It is with great gratitude that you yourself have invited me to share my views on hydraulic fracturing also known as “hydrofracking”. Before I state whether I am for hydrofracking or not, I would like to provide some background knowledge. Hydrofracking is a drilling technique that supplies energy in the way of natural gas and oil (Frumkin, 2016). Particularly, in New York, the Marcellus Shale helps to allocate energy to different states around the U.S. This process is extremely useful. Hydrofracking is a major benefit for the people of New York and others around the world, it is thus far the safest way to retrieve natural gas compared to coal, and other states rely on it. With that, I would like to further explain my views on why I am in favor of hydrofracking.

Hydraulic fracturing is shown to be greatly beneficial to mankind, and a powerful system that industries have ever seen. It has provided more cost-effective energy supply to homes and professional facilities, lowered death rates, administered employment opportunities, and decreased environmental and health issues for workers and in nearby community residents (Tumlison & Song, 2019). Also, fracking is valuable because its supply is abundant in the United States making it easier to find, distribute and consume without purchasing it from foreign traders (Overholt, 2013). Lastly, natural gas is affordable for low income families for purchasing gasoline for vehicles.

Although a great supply of energy was distributed throughout the world during the era when coal was the source of energy, it did more harm than good to its population. According to the American Thoracic Society, it has been concluded that coal miners are suffering from injuries, chronic diseases such as lung cancer and respiratory hazards, and even deaths (Wagner, 2018). A coal miners’ condition was becoming tremendously detrimental to an individual’s health that in 1969 Congress passed the Coal Mine Safety and Health Act (Wagner, 2018).This act drastically reduced the death and injure rates for coal miners (Wagner, 2018). Soon later, the Marcellus Shale, hydraulic fracturing was invented and improved everyday life and health. Data has shown that fracking is less harmful than coal to produce natural gas due the decrease of substantial amounts of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere (Evan, 2016). Also, hydraulic fracking offers more employment opportunities and economic growth. Paul Feezel, a resident from Ohio, stated local jobs are becoming available for anyone who possess a CDL license and a dump truck can get work hauling gravel or pipes due to the rise fracking (Lydersen, 2013). In 2013, From the years 2007 to 2013, gas bills have declined significantly because of the upsurge of hydrofracking (Dews, 2018).

As I previously stated, the Marcellus Shale is advantageous to the world around us and is estimated to be the second largest natural gas bearing shale formation in the world (Center on Rural Education and Communities, 2019). According to U.S. Geological Survey, in 2011, the Marcellus Shale within in the Appalachian Basin Province extended through the eastern region of the United States supplying parts of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia with resources to contract natural gas and oil (Coleman et al., 2011). In 2010, Pennsylvania drilled 1,956 new wells and in May 2017, they had 10,097 active unconventional wells (Isom, 2017). The amplification of wells led to massive job growth in boom counties which created occupations in the oil and gas industry by

more than 300 percent (Isom, 2017). According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, more than 80,000 oil and gas wells in Ohio were stimulated with hydraulic fracturing from 1952 to 2014 prompting residential consumer gas bills to reduce by $13 billion per year between 2007 to 2013 (Fracking in Ohio). This data proves that a more people are benefiting from the great supply of natural gas verses natural gas being detrimental.

As the governor of New York, it is your priority to be a servant for the people of New York. I assure you that if hydraulic fracturing is banned you will be doing a great disservice to the state. As it has been mentioned, supplying natural gas with coal being its source would cause depletion in the overall state's health, wealth, and opportunities for growth. Also, if banned, how would the natural gas be supplied? And you it be immediately replaced because if not you will see a difference in the everyday lives of your people. With that, I would like to leave you with this thought. Cigarette smoking causes numerous cases of lung cancer and deaths per year (Samet et al., 2009). However, smoking is not banned in New York, so why consider banning hydrofracking. Granted, hydrofracking does cause some health concerns, but at least energy comes with it. On the other hand, smoking only has negative consequences. In closing, as a leader, it is your duty to make decisions, policies and laws that will equip us not burden us. If you ban hydraulic fracking you will only be doing the opposite of equipping us.

References

1. Center on Rural Education and Communities. (2019, January 30). Retrieved April 17, 2020, from https://ed.psu.edu/crec/research/marcellus-shale-natural-gas-development
2. Coleman, J., Milici, R., Cook, T., Charpentier, R., Kirshbaum, M., Klett, T., . . . Schenk, C. (2011). Assessment of Undiscovered Oil and Gas Resources of the Devonian Marcellus Shale of the Appalachian Basin Province, 2011. Retrieved April 17, 2020, from https://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2011/3092/
3. Dews, F. (2018, July 19). The economic benefits of fracking. Retrieved April 18, 2020, from https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2015/03/23/the-economic-benefits-of-fracking/
4. Evan. (2016, December 05). Is fracking really a better alternative to coal? Retrieved April 18, 2020, from https://blogs.umass.edu/natsci397a-eross/is-fracking-really-a-better-alternative-to-coal/
5. Fracking in Ohio. (n.d.). Retrieved April 19, 2020, from https://ballotpedia.org/Fracking_in_Ohio
6. Frumkin, H. (2016). Environmental Health from Global to Local (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
7. Isom, B. (2017, December). A Tale of Two States: The Economic Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing in New York and Pennsylvania. Retrieved April 18, 2020, from https://www.strata.org/pdf/2017/tale-2-states.pdf
8. Lydersen, K. (2013, January 10). U.S. Chamber's fracking job boom: Behind the numbers. Retrieved April 18, 2020, from https://www.globalenergyinstitute.org/us-chamber%E2%80%99s-fracking-job-boom-behind-numbers
9. Overholt, M. (2013, October 15). The Pros Of Hydrofracking. Retrieved April 19, 2020, from https://www.tigergeneral.com/advantages-of-hydrofracking/
10. Samet, J., Avila-Tang, E., Boffetta, P., Hannan, L., Olivo-Marston, S., Thun, M., & Rudin, C. (2009, September 15). Lung cancer in never smokers: Clinical epidemiology and environmental risk factors. Retrieved April 18, 2020, from

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3170525/
11. The Science and Technology of Hydraulic Fracturing. (n.d.). Retrieved April 19, 2020, from https://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/policy/publicpolicies/sustainability/hydraulic-fracturing-statement.html
12. Tumlison, C., & Song, G. (2019, March). Cultural Values, Trust, and Benefit-Risk Perceptions of Hydraulic Fracturing: A Comparative Analysis of Policy Elites and the General Public. Retrieved April 18, 2020, from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30248188
13. Wagner, G. R. (2018). The Public Health Conundrum of Coal Mining. Annals of the American Thoracic Society, 15(1), 11-13. doi:10.1513/annalsats.201709-725oi