

**Durham Board of County Commissioners
Resolution**

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” refers to a method of extracting natural gas that involves fracturing rock thousands of feet below the surface with a high-pressure mixture of sand, water and industrial chemicals in order to reach pockets of natural gas trapped in shale and coal deposits; and

WHEREAS, extensive hydraulic fracturing can affect the housing of Durham citizens, including confusion about property valuations, uncertainty about mineral rights, and increased rental costs for low-income renters, and

WHEREAS, local governments will incur increased costs for services such as regulatory compliance monitoring, maintenance of roads and bridges, and increased policing and other social services, etc., and

WHEREAS, local government should retain its ability, through zoning and its general police power, to assure that hydraulic fracturing, if legally authorized and feasible, is performed in a manner that minimizes negative impacts to local communities; and

WHEREAS, millions of gallons of fresh water will be required for each stimulation or fracturing of a gas well, which may occur 20 or more times in the lifetime of a well, and the resulting wastewater is contaminated with fracking chemicals, and toxic substances from underground shales, including corrosive salts, heavy metals and carcinogens such as benzene; and

WHEREAS, the wastewater which results from hydraulic fracturing operations has limited disposal options, and wastewater treatment plants are not equipped to remove these chemicals; and

WHEREAS, there are documented impacts on the environment and public health from other states where hydraulic fracturing is used, including contamination of drinking water wells, surface waters and air quality; and

WHEREAS, many residents of Durham County rely on private water wells and community water wells supplied from groundwater; and

WHEREAS, this is a poorly regulated industry due to a 2005 federal loophole exempting hydraulic fracturing from most federal environmental regulations including the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act; and

WHEREAS, the Triassic basin, which includes areas in Durham County and the City of Durham, has been identified as having geologic shales that contain underground deposits of this natural gas.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the members of the Durham County Board of Commissioners, urge the North Carolina General Assembly to take no action and pass no legislation that would legalize hydraulic fracturing or horizontal drilling in NC at least until the EPA study of hydraulic fracturing impacts on the full water life cycle is finalized (at least 2014), federal regulatory actions are considered, and the consequences of this process on the health, environment and economy of our state have been fully evaluated, in order to protect our environment and safeguard the property rights, health, and drinking water of our citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the leadership of the North Carolina General Assembly and the Durham Legislative Delegation.

This the 9th day of April, 2012

Michael D. Page, Chairman

Ellen W. Reckhow, Vice-Chairman

Joe W. Bowser

Pam Karriker

Brenda A. Howerton