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COMMITTEE ON
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July 25, 2013

The Honorable Ernest Moniz
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Moniz:

I am writing to request that the Department of Energy enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) under which the Academy will carry out an independent examination of FracFocus to determine if the website in its current form provides the information that Federal and State agencies need to conduct their regulatory functions associated with hydraulic fracturing. An independent, unbiased review of the website is particularly important because FracFocus is currently relied upon by several States, and is being considered by the Department of the Interior, for public disclosure relating to hydraulic fracturing.

The Academy's review, which will be informed by a public workshop, should examine the following:

- (1) General background and operating procedures of FracFocus version 2.0;
 - (2) Procedures regarding ensuring the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of disclosed information (including any requirements for standard use of terminology);
 - (3) Standards and processes used for determining whether withheld information is proprietary;
 - (4) Data retention and management protocols, including conformance with any relevant federal standards relating to data management;
 - (5) Ease of accessibility and use of data (including, *e.g.*, the ability to aggregate data);
 - (6) Possibilities for the FracFocus site to display results of pre-fracking and post-fracking water quality monitoring;
 - (7) Examples of other instances where Federal and State governments rely on a private database in undertaking its program administration and enforcement responsibilities;
- and

- (8) Any other recommendations for improving FracFocus that will assist Federal and State agencies in conducting their regulatory functions associated with hydraulic fracturing

I believe that such a review by the NAS will be helpful in efforts to ensure that the public has the benefit of effective and full disclosure relating to hydraulic fracturing operations. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Energy and Natural Resources Committee

cc: The Honorable Sally Jewell
Dr. Ralph Cicerone