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Ms. Carol Collier, P.P., AICP  
Executive Director  
Delaware River Basin Commission  
P.O. Box 7367  
West Trenton, NJ 8628

December 20, 2010

Dear Ms. Collier,

The Women's City Club of New York is a longstanding multi-issue advocacy organization with a deep commitment to a healthy environment and sustainable development, among other policy priorities. Greatly concerned about the risks associated with new natural gas drilling processes, the WCC strongly supports the efforts of organizations dedicated to protecting the public and the environment from unsafe drilling.

Numerous reports exposing the dangers of hydraulic fracturing (hydrofracking) and other "exploratory drilling" methods have been issued. Hydrofracking involves blasting a mixture of water and toxic chemical additives horizontally through the rock formations deep under the surface of the earth in order to break up the rock and create a conduit for natural gas to flow out. Millions of gallons of water are required, and many of the chemicals used are toxic to the environment and to human health. Worse still, large sections of the proposed drilling areas underlie the watersheds that supply New Yorkers with drinking water.

Because of the dangers associated with this new and under-researched drilling method, the WCC supports not only the newly-enacted New York State moratorium on hydraulic fracturing through July of 2011 but also a broader suspension of fracking permits *until the public can be assured of an environmentally sound drilling process, including the disposal of waste water and other materials.* A moratorium should certainly be in place until the EPA completes its in-depth investigation of hydrofracking, an investigation that surely cannot be completed by July. The public also deserves absolute assurance that toxic chemicals will not be injected into the rock formations that underlie our drinking water. Finally, we are concerned about the tremendous consumption of water required by this process and encourage a scientific and policy debate about whether this is a *reasonable* use of a precious resource.

If an environmentally sound method of natural gas drilling does not yet exist, the gas industry should be sent back to the drawing board to develop one. For now, it is up to all of us, and to our politicians in particular, to hold industry responsible for its actions. We salute and join organizations that are leading the way by standing up for the environment and public health against the serious threats posed by hydrofracking and other experimental drilling. The WCC wholly supports these efforts.

Thank you,

Arden D. Down  
Environment & Infrastructure Chair

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