Dr. Sandra Steingraber, scientist, activist, author and driving force behind New York State’s fracking ban will testify at NM Senate Hearing in support of Fracking Moratorium

SANTA FE, NM – On Saturday February 13, Dr. Sandra Steingraber is scheduled to testify in support of SB 149, the bill sponsored by Senators Antoinette Sedillo-Lopez and Representative Patricia Roybal Caballero to put a moratorium on the drilling of new hydraulic fracturing wells in New Mexico to allow time for adequate study of potentially significant environmental and health impacts of fracking on New Mexico land, water and people. Testimony is contingent on committee scheduling.

An advocate for the precautionary principle, Dr. Steingraber argues that environmental decision making should follow four guidelines:

- taking preventive action in the face of uncertainty;
- shifting the burden of proof to the proponents of an activity;
- exploring a wide range of alternatives to possibly harmful actions;
- and increasing public participation in decision making.

Co-Founder of New Yorkers Against Fracking, Dr. Steingraber and her organization were instrumental in the passage of the New York State fracking ban, translating the science into plain English for political leaders, the media and the general public, and creating a compendium of more than 400 studies illustrating the health impacts of hydraulic fracturing.

A cancer survivor, Dr. Steingraber’s highly acclaimed book, Living Downstream: An Ecologist’s Personal Investigation of Cancer and the Environment, presents cancer as a human rights issue. Published in 1997, it was the first comprehensive effort to bring together data on toxic releases from US cancer registries. This was followed by Having Faith: An Ecologist’s Journey to Motherhood, selected as a best book of 2001 by the Library Journal, and Raising Elijah: Protecting Our Children in an Age of Environmental Crisis.

Steingraber was named a Ms. Magazine "Woman of the Year" and later received the Jennifer Altman Foundation's first annual Altman Award for "the inspiring and poetic use of science to elucidate the causes of cancer." The Sierra Club has called Steingraber "the new Rachel Carson," and Carson’s own alma mater, Chatham College, awarded her its biennial Rachel Carson Leadership Award. In 2006, Steingraber received a Hero Award from the Breast Cancer Fund, and in 2009, the Environmental Health Champion Award from Physicians for Social Responsibility, Los Angeles. Steingraber was the 2011 recipient of the Heinz Award for extraordinary service to the environment.

Steingraber has delivered the keynote addresses at conferences on human health and the environment throughout the United States and Canada and has lectured at many universities, medical schools, and hospitals—including Harvard, Yale, Cornell, Columbia, and the Woods Hole Research Center. She has testified in the European Parliament, before the President’s Cancer Panel, and has participated in briefings to Congress and before United Nations delegates in Geneva, Switzerland. Recognized for her ability to serve as a translator between scientists and activists, her testimony promises to be powerful and eye opening.

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