

## Another View: Judge fracking on science, not hype

By Dave Quast Special to The Bee

It is common to compare New York and California as they are often at the forefront of the biggest policy issues facing the nation. The governors of these two bellwether states have approached the issue of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, very differently and for that Californians can be grateful.

In New York, Gov. Andrew Cuomo's health commissioner announced that the state would continue its ban on fracking even though the state health department couldn't find evidence that fracking is harmful. In fact, New York's report noted that out of 250 million California water samples tested, none were contaminated due to fracking.

Rather than allowing activist-generated hype to cloud the discussion ("[It's time for California to end risky fracking](#)," Viewpoints, Feb. 4), Gov. Jerry Brown and the Legislature focused on the expertise of scientists and approved the nation's toughest regulations for fracking while allowing it to continue, as it has routinely since the 1950s.

These regulations, enacted through [Senate Bill 4](#), include public disclosure of chemicals used, notification of surrounding landowners, water testing and well integrity testing. These safeguards were developed in a thorough, deliberate process that included dozens of public hearings.

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The [first draft of three peer-reviewed volumes of a study](#) required by SB 4 was released last month by a panel of independent scientists from the California Council on Science and Technology. Media reports described the research as "the most authoritative survey yet released of fracking in the Golden State." According to state Oil and Gas Supervisor Steve Bohlen, "most of the significant environmental impacts identified can be reduced to the level of 'less-than-significant,' including potential impacts to groundwater and surface water, as well as the threat of seismic activity."

National leaders also support hydraulic fracturing. President Barack Obama has embraced this technology for its role in providing safe, affordable power and for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Bolstered by science, California's policymakers have chosen to protect our environment and boost our economy. The more energy we produce in California, the more we will be able to provide affordable energy for consumers, create jobs, generate significant tax revenue and reduce our dependence on foreign fuels, all while lowering global carbon emissions.

Despite baseless attacks of anti-energy activists, those are benefits that California cannot afford to ignore.

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