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JUST THE FACTS: IPAMS Urges DeGette to Stick to the Facts, Drop the NY Times Talking Points, Fear-Mongering Tactics (2009)

Colorado congresswoman Diana DeGette is among the leaders in Washington working to ban the safe, responsible, well-regulated 60-year old energy production technique known as **hydraulic fracturing**. Her bill, dubbed the "**FRAC Act**," endeavors to strip states of their ability and right to safely regulate fracing, paving the way for the EPA and unelected Washington bureaucrats to halt the production of **job-creating, homegrown American energy**.

In a **release earlier today**, the **Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States (IPAMS)** – a **key Energy In Depth partner** – made public a recent letter the group sent to Congresswoman DeGette urging her to "stop the spread of misinformation" about hydraulic fracturing's **long and clear record of environmental safety**.

Here are key **excerpts from the IPAMS letter** to Congresswoman DeGette:

- We continue to be confused about the inaccurate information from your office on fracking, even though we and many other members of our industry have tried to explain the process. We feel that the rhetoric coming from groups with a clear agenda to stop responsible natural gas and oil development is affecting the legislation.
- Your letter echoes the statement "Hydraulic fracturing has been implicated in a growing number of water pollution cases across the country. . . . The safety of the nation's water supply should not have to rely on luck or the public relations talents of the oil and gas industry." The sixty year safety record of fracking has nothing to do with our public relations, but rather with our engineering talents. That record continues to this day. . . . We were encouraged in our meeting with you when you said your goal is to get credible, scientific data about fracking. You can imagine our dismay at seeing your letter use anecdotes and innuendos to solicit sponsors.
- The Energy Policy Act of 2005 merely clarified the intent of the SDWA. While we have tried to explain this to your staff, perhaps it is better coming from former EPA administrator and current energy czar Carol Browner who said "EPA does not regulate – and does not believe it is legally required to regulate – the hydraulic fracturing of methane production wells . . . Moreover, given the horizontal and vertical distance between the drinking water well and the closest methane gas production wells, the possibility of contamination or endangerment of [drinking water] in the area is extremely remote."
- Unlike the unaccountable editorial staff at the New York Times with no fiduciary or public health responsibilities, legislators must balance the costs and benefits of any decision to regulate. The long safety record of fracking and the energy security that results clearly show that the benefits gained from natural gas development far outweighing the extremely low risk of fracking.

IPAMS isn't alone in working to set the record straight and to hold public officials, news outlets, and even the occasional pajama-clad blogger to account for misstatements and distortion. The above referenced **New York Times editorial** was **quickly and squarely debunked** by **Energy In Depth**, and just this morning, the Cleveland Plain Dealer ran a piece from Energy In Depth's Lee Fuller in response to a light-on-facts column published last week:

Energy In Depth in the New York Times:

- Regulation of fracturing, a natural gas drilling process in use since the 1940s, has always been left to the states, not the Environmental Protection Agency. The Times endorses legislation that it says will "restore" E.P.A. authority over the process. But how can you restore something to the E.P.A. that it never had in the first place?

Energy In Depth in the Cleveland Plain Dealer:

- *Cox claims that the bipartisan 2005 energy bill “exempted” fracturing work from federal regulation. This claim is demonstrably false. While states have heavily regulated fracturing activity for decades, it’s never been under the authority of the EPA.*