



Mon. May 20, 2013

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Newspapers urge Illinois to move forward on fracking legislation

As lawmakers in Springfield deliberate passage of [a bill to regulate shale development](#) and hydraulic fracturing – legislation supported by the environmental community, industry, labor, as well as business and agriculture groups – editorial boards throughout the state have a singular message: *it's time to move forward*. The agreed-upon bill would establish some of the strictest rules for hydraulic fracturing in the country, while also allowing responsible, job-creating shale development to proceed.

[Chicago Tribune](#) (Editorial, 4/22/13):

- “The bill codifies **strong environmental protections** for the expansion of drilling deep into Illinois' New Albany Shale rock formations. It insulates Illinois from problems experienced in other states. It requires public notification before wells can be drilled. It requires a wastewater storage system to protect against spills. It includes groundwater monitoring and air pollution controls. It gives substantial oversight to the state's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Agency.”
- “It will provide revenue. Lots of revenue. **Taxes could generate more than \$1 million a year for the state from each successful well**, according to fracking proponents. It will put people to work. Southern Illinois has suffered significant population and job losses. Energy **exploration will open a new opportunity for economic development**, from the mining to the various spinoff businesses — restaurants, increased demand for steel and well-drilling equipment (some of which is produced in Chicago) ... even copying fees at the clerk's office, which is allowing Wayne County to convert to digital records.”

[Chicago Sun-Times](#) (Editorial, 3/17/13):

- “[W]e still need fossil fuels to run our economy. Tapping into the New Albany Shale under southern Illinois with fracking can provide that fuel while **bringing jobs and revenues to the state.**”
- “The legislation before the House Revenue and Finance Committee would impose **environmental safeguards that green groups say are the best in the country**. There's no guarantee that deal will still be around two years from now.”
- “No one from either side is dancing in the streets over this bill, but this is what compromise looks like. **It should become law.**”

[The Southern Illinoisan](#) (Editorial, 3/3/13)

- “Illinois is now poised to enact **the nation's most comprehensive and significant regulatory measure for hydraulic fracturing**, a process that could unlock the oil-producing potential for a significant portion of southeast Illinois. It could mean **as many as 60,000 new jobs over the next decade**, backers say, while ensuring the protection of the environment through strict regulations, oversight and enforcement.”
- “[I]f hydraulic fracturing is performed in compliance with the proposed legislation, overseen by the state DNR and environmentalists, and adjusted to meet the evolving safety guidelines of a developing science, **it is a golden economic development opportunity that may not be equaled for generations....It's**

important that the state not get in the way of this opportunity, which could yield jobs and crude by the end of this year if the needed approvals are not delayed.”

[Champaign/Urbana News-Gazette](#) (Editorial, 5/3/13):

- “Illinois **residents need jobs, government at all levels needs revenue** and passing a ‘fracking’ bill in Springfield is a good way to achieve both goals....But, suffice it to say, it won’t be in the public’s best interest for the General Assembly to adjourn without passing a ‘fracking’ bill.”
- “The legislation represents a potentially **strong economic boost for downstate**, where oil companies are already signing leases to explore for energy using this sophisticated new method.....**If the fracking bill does not pass, Illinois has thrown away another opportunity to boost its economy.**”

[Peoria Journal Star](#) (Editorial, 5/16/13)

- “[I]t will provide jobs and royalties in one of the most economically depressed areas of the state. The political **representation in that part of Illinois seems overwhelmingly for it**. Substantial, ongoing tax and permit fee revenues would come to a state budget desperately in need of them. Meanwhile, **who’s opposed to cheaper utility bills and energy independence** from the war-torn Middle East, with fracking in part responsible for a 20-year high in U.S. oil production and natural gas supplies at record levels?”

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- **Chicago Tribune:** [Illinois Chamber, AFL-CIO agree on HF compromise](#)
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- **EID:** [Illinois Lawmakers: Let’s Move Forward with HF](#)
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