

**EPA Science Advisory Board
Hydraulic Fracturing Research Advisory Panel
Public Teleconference February 1, 2016
Oral Statement of Kathleen Blankenship**

I am speaking today to voice my support for the draft report, “Assessment of Potential Impacts of Hydraulic Fracturing for Oil and Gas on Drinking Water Resources” (Assessment Report). This scientifically exhaustive report includes extensive evidence that states are effectively regulating hydraulic fracturing and that it has not led to widespread, systemic impacts on drinking water. The oil and gas industry has been hydraulically fracturing wells safely for over 50 years without damaging precious water resources, and I am confident the industry will continue to safely and responsibly drill and fracture our wells. Our domestic oil and gas production has had a very positive impact on our economy and the local economies where we are actively drilling and producing. It is critical for the future of our country that we continue to allow the industry to safely develop our oil and gas resources. With 95% of the wells drilled today using hydraulic fracturing, an ideologically-motivated attack on fracturing from the EPA could have severe consequences on our nation's energy production.

As a member of the energy sector, I know firsthand that our industry is responsible in protecting the environment and public health. It is gratifying to see that independent, peer-reviewed research confirms that hydraulic fracturing is a safe process.

I also want to strongly urge the Science Advisory Board (SAB) and its Hydraulic Fracturing Research Advisory Panel to stand behind the science of the report. Our nation must develop energy and environmental policies built on sound science.

The Assessment Report’s conclusions are rightly based on extensive peer-reviewed scientific studies, papers, and technical reports. The final report and its conclusions should not be modified in capitulation to political pressure and misinformation.

As I understand, under its statutory charter, the SAB exists “to provide independent advice and peer review to EPA’s Administrator on the scientific and technical aspects of environmental issues.” The five-year effort to develop the Assessment Report, which includes approximately 950 sources of credible scientific findings and analysis, surely meets any reasonable criteria for “scientific and technical adequacy.” EPA has spent over \$32 million on this study, and there is no reason to continue revisiting this issue when the evidence is clear. It is time for the EPA to bring this study to a close.

Thank you for your consideration of my views. I appreciate your efforts to support science-based policies and look forward to a positive outcome to this matter.