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December 13, 2011

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

As the one year anniversary of your strong leadership in New York approaches, we write concerning hydraulic fracturing, or fracking -- one of the most visible and controversial environmental issues in recent New York State history -- and about New York State's broader energy agenda.

As you know, many New Yorkers are raising legitimate questions regarding the public health, natural resource, energy and economic implications of a potentially large-scale fracking program in New York. Successfully addressing and resolving these questions is, of course, a matter of great importance to both you and the State's environmental community.

We are writing today to request a meeting so that we can share our candid thoughts, and hear yours, about how you and your team can move forward on this issue in a way that is protective of human health and the state's environment -- a goal we know you share.

Among the concepts we would like to discuss is the idea of having the State designate certain "Special Areas" because of their unusual ecological, hydrological, recreational or historic significance, placed off-limits to drilling, including the magnificent Catskill Park, which governors since Theodore Roosevelt have acted to protect. Of course, there are other protective measures that would need to be included in any comprehensive drilling plan and we would like the opportunity to offer you our thoughts on those issues too.

Now that your team is about to begin to review the heavy load of public comments and develop final policy recommendations, we believe that a meeting with you to discuss these issues in more detail would be mutually beneficial, and could be helpful to you in successfully resolving this thorny and important issue.

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