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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1902

October 20, 2015

Mr. Jonathan Steverson
Secretary, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Secretary Steverson,

I write to express my concern about hydraulic fracturing and expanding efforts to develop oil and gas exploration in North Florida.

A constituent recently brought to my attention an application to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to begin seismic testing in parts of Calhoun and Gulf Counties to determine whether there are recoverable oil and gas reserves in the area. I worry those activities might be a first step toward hydraulic fracturing in North Florida.

North Florida is home to beautiful natural treasures, from the beaches of Panama City to Wakulla Springs. Our water supply is also unique to the country in that it's protected by porous limestone bedrock. It's my understanding that hydraulic fracturing is, at best, unproven in this unique geology and could lead developers to employ even more potentially damaging practices, including using more dangerous chemicals and techniques.

Oil and gas development in Florida, particularly hydraulic fracturing, poses a great threat because of the risk of chemical water-contamination, and because fracking is a very water intensive process. In North Florida, our most important industries are tourism and agriculture — both of which are also highly water dependent and seem incompatible with the environmental risks associated with hydraulic fracturing.

Our region knows all too well the harm an environmental disaster can cause. The BP oil spill inflicted tremendous harm on our economy and the Apalachicola Bay's ecology has been under attack for years. I'm fighting in Congress to protect North Florida's springs and oceans — and worry fracking presents yet another threat to our North Florida way of life.

I urge your prompt attention to this matter, to protect against threats to North Florida's unique environment and our economy.

Sincerely,



Gwen Graham