Lynne Vanderslice

First Selectwoman

Wilton Town Hall

238 Danbury Rd

Wilton, Ct 06897

Dear Ms. Vanderslice:

I am urging you to join fellow Connecticut First Selectwomen and Selectmen who have passed local ordinances banning fracking waste in their towns. The ordinance passed in 36 CT towns, most recently in Redding, bans all drilling and extraction wastes from all processes for both oil and gas wells. Wilton can do the same to protect its residents. Recently, a state-wide ban--CT Senate Bill 103--was introduced, but if passed, it would only ban certain wastes from one process: hydraulic fracturing, and for gas wells only. We need a stronger local ban, especially since Hartford has failed to pass a ban three times in the last five years.

It is well established that fracking wastes are toxic and radioactive, containing more than 1,000 chemicals including known carcinogens that cause breast, bone, liver, kidney, skin, and bladder cancers. In the eight states that accept and regulate fracking waste, thousands of spills causing chemical and radioactive contamination are occurring, and the diseases associated with these chemicals are on the rise. The cost of remediating the spills is enormous, and there is doubt about whether remediation can even be done successfully. Once these toxins spill, they are with us for a long time. For example, it takes 4,000 years for radium to break down and the end product is lead. Clearly, regulating does not keep communities safe. We need a ban.

Though Wilton has no wastewater or hazardous waste treatment facilities, without a ban, the town could be exposed to this waste in secondary forms, such as in road de-icing brine and as an additive to construction fill. Accepting the waste from oil and gas extraction in neighboring states offers no benefit to our town and the potential for harm cannot be overstated. A ban would protect taxpayers from future remediation costs and, most importantly, protect the health and wellbeing of Wilton residents for generations to come.

Less than 25 miles from Wilton, Westchester County passed a permanent fracking waste ban in 2012, signed into law by the Republican County Executive. Republican-dominated Putnam County followed the next year. Across the Sound, both Nassau and Suffolk Counties passed waste bans years ago and have gone back to amend and strengthen them since. All five boroughs of New York City banned fracking waste in 2016. The State of Vermont and many parts of New Jersey also have bans in place.

CT is just waking up to the problem. As mentioned above, recently Redding was the 36th town to pass a ban. Ridgefield has a vote scheduled later this month and, in Weston, the ordinance is under review by town counsel. Just outside our watershed, Bridgeport, Fairfield, Greenwich, and Darien are all considering bans. In all, 15 CT municipalities have bans pending. Please join them by prioritizing the health and wellbeing of Wilton’s residents by passing a ban on fracking waste.

Sincerely,