

# The Ithaca JOURNAL

## Arcuri joins call to withdraw DEC drilling statement

### Congressman calls for more safeguards for water

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TRUMANSBURG -- Congressman Michael A. Arcuri has literally signed on to an effort activists believe will ensure safer natural-gas drilling in New York.

Arcuri put his name on the "Withdraw the Draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) Coalition Letter," Monday afternoon at the Taughannock Falls overlook. The letter, composed by Toxics Targeting President Walter Hang, was sent to [Gov. David Paterson](#) and the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

About a dozen people were on hand for Arcuri's visit, including Hang, Ulysses Supervisor Roxanne Marino, Trumansburg Mayor Martin Petrovic, Tompkins County Legislature Chair Martha Robertson, and a number of environmental activists.

Arcuri, a Utica [Democrat](#) seeking a third term from the 24th District, signed the letter because he believes that the SGEIS doesn't go far enough to protect the environment and public from the potential hazards from natural gas drilling, according to a statement from his office. The DEC issued the draft SGEIS in September to analyze the effects of shale gas development using horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing.

More than 10,000 people have signed the letter, which will be re-sent to Paterson with Arcuri's signature, Hang said. He culled through tens of thousands of DEC spill reports and found that fires, explosions, wastewater discharge and water contamination had occurred in areas where drilling and hydrofracking had been done, he added.

Arcuri's opponent, businessman Richard Hanna, said last week he does not support hydraulic fracturing but the decision should be left to science.

"What were asking is, ... let's take a step back, let's pump the brakes a little bit and let's make sure before we take this dramatic step forward, that we're taking every possible precaution," Arcuri said.

While commending Paterson's budget efforts, Arcuri stressed that cutting DEC funding when there may be increased drilling is "a recipe for disaster," and drilling licensing fees are supposed to pay for DEC staff who ensure [safe](#) drilling.

We need gas and oil, but while we can live without those things, we can't live without water, he added.

Arcuri's signature is important because his district includes a huge part of the shale formation, Hang said.