February 27, 2013

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
New York State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We, the undersigned medical professionals, elected officials, organizations, and concerned New Yorkers, write to thank you. We support your decision to allow rule-making deadlines to lapse in order to grant Department of Health (DOH) Commissioner Nirav Shah additional time to continue the Health Review of the Department of Environmental Conservation’s (DEC) draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) for High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing (HVHF). As DOH Commissioner Shah emphasizes in his recent letter to DEC Commissioner Joseph Martens, understanding the potential impact of HVHF on public health involves answering complex questions. We therefore applaud you for not rushing the DOH through this essential process in order to meet an arbitrary deadline.

In particular, we agree with DOH Commissioner Shah’s assertion, as expressed in his February 12 communiqué to DEC Commissioner Martens, that “the time to ensure the impacts on public health are considered is before a state permits drilling.” On February 13, you were quoted as saying that the decision on HVHF is “too important to make a mistake.” We agree.

We look no farther than our southern border to see the terrible results of moving ahead with HVHF without properly considering the public health consequences from a range of drilling-related impacts. These impacts include 24/7 noise pollution; vehicular accidents; diesel exhaust; well casing/cement failures; direct contamination of wells with methane from deep-level fracture zones; hazardous air pollutants from venting and flaring operations; chemical spills; improper disposal of radioactive waste water; silica dust; stream sedimentation; and, of course, climate-altering methane emissions to air.

With your decision to stop the clock, we hope that you will be guiding our state along a different path—by carefully considering any and all public health impacts before deciding whether to allow fracking in New York. Such a consideration must include a close examination of health impacts in other parts of the nation where HVHF is ongoing. Commissioner Shah’s letter mentions three such studies, which, as Dr. Shah points out, represent the first comprehensive studies of HVHF health impacts at either the federal or state level. It is encouraging that Dr. Shah and his team are taking these studies into account and meeting with the principal investigators of each of them.

At the same time, we strongly disagree with DEC Commissioner Martens’ statement of the same day that asserts that issuance of permits may not be delayed by lack of regulations. You have often stated that HVHF will only move forward in New York State with the nation’s strongest protections in place. An announcement that permits can go forward with no regulations at all contradicts that claim.
We now ask for three further and necessary measures.

First, we ask that you wait for the completion of these three comprehensive studies referenced in Dr. Shah’s letter before deciding whether or not to go forward with permitting a single HVHF well. The NYS DOH health review of HVHF should not be completed until the results from this trio of studies are included. Right now, we lack the meaningful data that these studies will provide. Your oft-stated promise that the science will determine your decision means waiting for that science to emerge.

Second, a secret public health review is a contradiction in terms. We ask that you open up the Department of Health’s inquiry to public comment and participation. Just as New Yorkers vigorously participated in the Department of Environmental Conservation’s proposed regulations and the draft SGEIS, they, along with New York’s health professionals, should also play a key role in this public health review. New York citizens should be allowed to know the charge that Dr. Shah gave the three outside reviewers who are assisting him and to view the documents that they have been given. Upon completion of the draft health review, a public hearing and a formal public comment period must commence.

Lastly, and most importantly, we reiterate our call for a comprehensive, independent Health Impact Assessment (HIA) that is site-specific for New York. As Department of Environmental Commissioner Martens has reminded us on several occasions, HVHF in New York State, if it does take place, would be governed by regulations different than those in any other state. Additionally, our state’s drinking water system is unique. No other major city, for example, relies on aging, 100-miles-long, century-old aqueducts that lie directly atop a fault-riddled shale bedrock. But New York City does.

Likewise, in our Southern Tier region, an interconnected web of surface streams and primary aquifers creates a hydrological system that is unique to New York. The pattern of our air currents and air quality indices are also unique, as are the agricultural practices in our world-renowned wine-producing regions. We remind you that New York State is one of the most densely populated states in the union. Among all states, we are the nation’s third largest dairy producer as well as its third largest producer of organic food. These products are not only a vigorous part of our economy, they contribute to our public health as well. In short, while a public health review of data on the health impacts of fracking from other states can provide us much important insight, it is no substitute for a New York-specific HIA.

Thank you again for your commitment to protect the public health of New Yorkers. We look forward to working with Commissioner Shah as he continues to evaluate the public health impacts of HVHF. We agree with the standard set by Commissioner Martens for HVHF on September 20, 2012: “Obviously if there was a public health concern that could not be addressed we would not proceed.” We believe that this is the standard that must be met.

Sincerely,
HEALTH & MEDICAL ORGANIZATIONS:
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Academy of Pediatrics, District II New York State
American Lung Association in New York
Breast Cancer Action
Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester
Breast Cancer Fund
Breast Cancer Network of Western New York
Breast Cancer Options
Center for Environmental Health
Children's Health Fund
Clean Air Council
Concerned Health Professionals of New York
CRAAB! (Capital Region Action Against Breast Cancer)
Empire State Consumer Project
Great Neck Breast Cancer Coalition
Healthy Schools Network, Inc.
Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition, Inc.
Institute for Health and the Environment, University at Albany
LGBT Cancer Project
Maryland Environmental Health Network
New York State Breast Cancer Network, the only statewide coalition of community based breast cancer organizations in New York
New York State Prostate Cancer Coalition
Physicians for Social Responsibility, National (1985 Nobel Peace Prize laureate)
Physicians for Social Responsibility, NYC
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Philadelphia
Physicians for Social Responsibility, San Francisco-Bay Area
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Washington State
Science and Environmental Health Network
SHARE Self-help for Women with Breast or Ovarian Cancer
Southwest Pennsylvania Environmental Health Project
Staff of the Ithaca Health Alliance

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS/SCIENTISTS:
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Richard A Bennett MD PhD, Bassett Medical Center, Child/Adolescent Psychiatrist
Michelle Bamberger MS DVM, Veterinarian
Frederick M. Barken MD
Steven Barnett MD, Family Physician
Kevin Fiscella MD MPH, Family Medicine
Donna Flayhan PhD, Director, The Lower Manhattan Public Health Project
Shannon Gearhart, MD, Physicians for Social Responsibility - New York City
Yurbi Gorby PhD, Howard A. Bitman Chair, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
David Gould MD MBA
Robert M. Gould MD, President San Francisco-Bay Area Chapter, Physicians for Social Responsibility
Elizabeth Hess RN MS FNP, Gannett Health Center, Cornell University
Claire Robinson Howard ANP NPP, Nurse Practitioner in Adult Health and Psychiatry
Robert W. Howarth PhD, David R. Atkinson Professor of Ecology and Environmental Biology, Cornell University
Katie Huffling MS RN CNM, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments, Director of Programs
Diane White Husic PhD, Professor of Biological Sciences, Moravian College, PA
Anthony Ingraffea PhD, Dwight C. Baum Professorship in Engineering, Cornell University
Kenneth Jaffe MD
Lila Kalinich MD, Professor, Columbia University
Andrew S. Kanter MD MPH, Assistant Professor of Clinical and Biomedical Informatics, College of Physicians & Surgeons; Director, Global Health Informatics Center, Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health
Mehemosh Khan MD, Berkshire Health System, Pittsfield, MA
Abby Kinchy, PhD and Kim Fortun, PhD, Fracking Research Group, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
William Klepack MD, Family Physician
Katrina Korfmacher PhD
Marina Kubicek RN BSN
Carol Kwiatkowski PhD, Executive Director, TEDX, The Endocrine Disruption Exchange
Karen LaFace MD
Charles Levenstein PhD MS, Professor Emeritus of Work Environment, University of Massachusetts Lowell
Stephen Malamud MD
Jonathan F Mauser MD
Arnold Matlin MD
Michelle McNamara RN
Mary Menapace RN, Women’s Services Upstate Medical University
Elise Miller MEd, Director, Collaborative on Health and the Environment
Celeen Miller, The Wellness Connection
Thomas Nash MD, New York Presbyterian Hospital–Weill Cornell Medical College of Cornell University
Elizabeth Naumburg MD, Associate Dean, Advising Professor of Family Medicine, University of Rochester School of Medicine
Judy Nelli CFNP, Family Care Medical Group
Kathleen Nolan MD MSL, Catskill Mountainkeeper Regional Director for the High Peaks
Melanie Novick RN BSN
Michael R. O'Brien MD, University at Buffalo, Resident Physician
Beth Olearczyk MD, Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, Attending Physician, Bassett Healthcare
Robert E. Oswald PhD, Professor, Department of Molecular Medicine, Cornell University
Jerome A. Paulson MD FAAP, Professor of Pediatrics and of Environmental & Occupational Health George Washington University, Medical Director for National & Global Affairs, Director of the Mid-Atlantic Center for Children’s Health & the Environment, Child Health Advocacy Institute
Vincent M. Pedre III MD Medical Director, Pedre Integrative Health Clinical Instructor, Mount Sinai Medical Center
Simona L. Perry PhD, c.a.s.e. Consulting Services
Kim Pieniazek RN
Naomi Pless MD
Margaret A Rafferty DNP MPH RN, New York City College of Technology, The City University of New York Baccalaureate Program Coordinator, Associate Professor
Irwin Redlener MD
Jennifer Rockwell RN
Ted Schettler MD MPH, Science and Environmental Health Network, Science Director
Stephen S Schneider DDS Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon
Jill Schneiderman, PhD, Professor of Earth Science, Vassar College
Peter Schwartz MD
Avniel Shetreat-Klein MD
Maya Shetreat-Klein MD
Seth B. Shonkoff PhD MPH, Physicians, Scientists, and Engineers for Healthy Energy, UC Berkeley
Craig Slatin ScD MPH, Professor, Department of Community Health and Sustainability, University of Massachusetts Lowell, Editor, New Solutions: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Health Policy
Kristin Smith RN BS
Ken Spaeth MD MPH, Hofstra University School of Health Sciences, Assistant Professor
Lorie Stannard RN MS DNO-s FNP-C
Sandra Steingraber, PhD, Ithaca College
Douglas Stockman MD
Stephen Strasser MD  
Andrea Torrado MD, Northeast Pediatrics  
Jose Torrado MD FACOG, Cayuga Medical Center, Current Chair of the Dept of OB/GYN  
Julie Jacobson Vann PhD MS RN, Senior Researcher, American Institutes for Research  
James W. Walker MD  
David Wallinga MD, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Cynthia Walter PhD, Associate Professor Biology, Saint Vincent College, PA  
Ingrid Watkins MD  
Barbara Warren RN MS, Citizens' Environmental Coalition, Executive Director  
Richard Weiskopf MD, Internal Medicine, Upstate Medical University, volunteer faculty  
Mary Wheat MD, Columbia University Medical Center, Special Lecturer, Department of Medicine  
Gerri Wiley RN PHN  
Geniene Wilson MD AAHIVS, Institute for Family Health  
George Woodwell PhD, NRDC Distinguished Scientist, founder, Woods Hole Research Center, Woods Hole, MA  
Margo Yntema RN

NATIONAL/STATE ORGANIZATIONS (non-medical):  
350.org  
Artists Against Fracking  
Catskill Mountainkeeper  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Media and Democracy  
Citizen Action of New York  
Citizens Campaign for the Environment  
Citizens for Healthy Communities  
Clean Air Council  
Clean and Healthy New York  
Clean Production Action  
Clean Water Council  
Damascus Citizens for Sustainability
Dear Governor Cuomo, Jon Bowermaster, Director

Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Earthworks Oil & Gas Accountability Project
Empire State Consumer Project
Environment New York
Environmental Advocates of New York
Environmental Working Group
Food & Water Watch
Frack Action
Grassroots Environmental Education
Green Umbrella
Hudson River Sloop Clearwater
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
New Yorkers for Sustainable Energy Solutions Statewide
NYH2O
NYPIRG
PeaceWeavers
Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter

Story of Stuff, Annie Leonard, Director and author
Thunder Mountain Foods
United For Action
Working Families Party

NOTABLE INDIVIDUALS:
Al Appleton, former Commissioner of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection and creator of the acclaimed New York City Catskill Watershed Protection Program
David Barsamian, director, Alternative Radio
Lois Gibbs, Love Canal organizer; Executive Director, Center for Health, Environment & Justice
Arun Gandhi
Josh Fox, filmmaker
Don Hazen, executive editor, Alternet.org
Melissa Leo
Bill McKibben, founder, 350.org
Natalie Merchant
Elisabeth N. Radow, Esq., Radow Law PLLC
Mark Ruffalo
Maya Schenwar, director, Truthout.org
Pete Seeger
Douglas A. Shields, former president, Pittsburgh City Council
Gloria Steinem
Debra Winger

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:
Back To Democracy
bCARP
Brewery Ommegang
Capital District Against Fracking
Citizens for Water
Citizens Radon Watch
Citizens' Environmental Coalition
City of Binghamton Residents Against Hydrofracking
Coalition Against the Rockaway Pipeline
Concerned Citizens of Rural Broome County
Elmirans & Friends Against Fracking
Environmental Leadership and Action Network, Ithaca College
FaCT (Faith Communities Together for frac Awareness)
Finger Lakes Cleanwaters Initiative, Inc., Chris Tate, Director
Fleasied
Frack Free Genesee
Friends of Times Beach
Gas Drilling Awareness for Cortland County
Gas Free Seneca
Geneseo Environmental Organization, SUNY Geneseo
Gray Panthers, NYC Network
Great Neck Breast Cancer Coalition
GreenWatch
Groton Resource Awareness Coalition GRAC
Intercultural Studies
Jay Burney for Habitat and Natural Resources Work Group, Western New York Environmental Alliance
Lake Success Environmental Commission
LakeHouse Graphics
Learning Sustainability Campaign
Light Alliance Foundation, Inc.
Long Island Progressive Coalition
Marbletown Citizens Defense Against Fracking
Marcellus Accountability Project for Tompkins County
New York City Friends of Clearwater
New Yorkers for Clean Water Inc.
Olive Defense Against Fracking
Otsego 2000
PAUSE - People Advocating Use of Sustainable Energy
Plymouth Friends of Clean Water
Protect Pittsfield
Protecting Our Waters
PUSH Buffalo
R-CAUSE (Rochesterians Concerned About Unsafe Shale-gas Extraction)
Reach Out America
Residents Against Fracking Tioga
Residents Opposing to Unsafe Shale Gas Extraction
Rochester Defense Against Fracking
Sanford-Oquaga Area Concerned Citizens
Save The Southern Tier
Shaleshock CNY
Southern Cayuga Anti-Fracking Alliance
SPACE CAMP RADIO
Stop the Minisink Compressor Station
Students for Global Change at SUNY Oswego
Sullivan Area Citizens for Responsible Energy Development (SACRED)
SUNY Cortland Environmental Justice Committee of the Center for Gender and
The Carbon Squeeze
United for Action
Vestal Residents for Safe Energy
Water Equality
West Harlem Environmental Action
Westchester for Change
Western NY Drilling Defense
Wittenberg Center for Alternative Resources
Youth Now Activist Network

PA GROUPS:
Charles Kernaghan and Barbara Briggs for Institute for Labour and Human Rights, Pittsburgh
Marcellus Outreach, Butler
Marcellus Protest
Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and Air
Tour de Frack
Upper Burwell Citizens Against Marcellus Pollution
Westmoreland Marcellus Citizens’ Group

OH GROUPS:
Appalachian Ohio Sierra Club
Athens County Fracking Action Network
Buckeye Forest Council
Burning River Anti-Fracking Network
Concerned Citizens of Medina County
Concerned Citizens Ohio
Concerned Citizens Ohio/Shalersville
Concerned Citizens Portage County
Frackfree American National Coalition
FrackFree Mahoning Valley
Fresh Water Accountability Project Ohio
Green Environmental Coalition
Ohio Alliance for People and the Environment Board
Ohio Citizen Action
Ohio Environmental Council
Ohio Fraction
Ohio Sierra Club Forests and Public Lands Committee
Southwest Ohio Alliance to Save Our Water

IL GROUPS:
George J. Gordon, Chairperson, Land Use and Development Committee,
McClean County Board
Illinois People’s Action
Illinois Wesleyan University, Sierra Student Coalition
Industrial Sociology, Illinois State University
JWP Audubon Chapter, National Aududon
No New Nukes, Central Illinois
SAFE: Southern Illinoisans Against Fracturing Our Environment
Stop the Frack Attack on IL
The Land Connection
Veltin Joseph Boudreaux, MD, MS, Bloomington
Vision 202--a Transition Town Initiative (Bloomington-Normal)
William C. Rau, PhD,

ELECTED OFFICIALS:
Mary Adams, RN, MPH, City of Rochester, Commissioner of Education
Diane Addesso, Town of Worcester, Deputy Supervisor
Robert T. Aiello, County of Ulster, Legislator
Dan Aman, Town of Brighton, Clerk
Stephanie Aprigliano-Kiyak, City of Dunkirk, Councilmember
Kathie Arnold, County of Cortland, Legislator
Jacqueline Augustine, City of Geneva, Councilor
Don Barber, Town of Caroline, Supervisor
Bonnie Bennett, Village of Aurora, Mayor
George J. Bianchi, Town of Frankfort, Deputy Supervisor
Debra Brock, Town of Preble, Board Member
Cynthia Brock, City of Ithaca, Alderperson
Doug Bullock, County of Albany, Legislator
Will Burbank, County of Tompkins, Legislator
Linda Burkhardt, Town of Olive, Councilmember
Dominick Calsolaro, City of Albany, Councilmember
Robert K. Camera, City of Geneva, Councilmember
Scott Carlsen, Town of Wawarsing, Supervisor
Christopher Case, City of Plattsburgh, Councilor
Carl Chipman, Town of Rochester, Supervisor
Carol Chock, County of Tompkins, Legislator
Stephen Churchill, Town of Seneca Falls, Supervisor
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Agnes Compagnone, RPA-C, City of Beacon, Councilmember
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Leslie Connors, Town of Danby, Councilmember
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Kathy Halton, Town of Danby, Councilmember
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Terry Harvey, Town of McDonough, Councilmember
Ruth Hopkins, Town of Lansing, Councilmember
Vera Howe-Straight, Town of Enfield, Councilmember
Julie Huntsman, Town of Otsego, Councilmember
Letitia James, City of New York, Councilmember
Brian Kehoe, Village of Catskill, Trustee
Jean Kessner, City of Syracuse, Councilmember
Penelope King, Town of Meredith, Clerk
Dan Klein, Town of Danby, Councilmember
David Koenigsberg, Village of Dobbs Ferry, Trustee
Michael Kolczynski, Town of Savannah, Supervisor
Gary Koutnik, County of Otsego, County Representative
Cindy Kurpil Gieger, County of Sullivan, Legislator
Susan Labuhn, County of Cattaraugus, Legislator
William Labuhn, City of Salamanca, Councilman
William Lancaster, Town of Richmondville, Board Member
Linda Lavine, Town of Dryden, Councilmember
Patricia Leary, Town of Ithaca, Councilmember
Lorena Lenard, Town of Sangerfield, Councilmember
Edward T. Lentz, Town of New Lisbon, Councilmember
Lynn Leopold, Village of Lansing, Trustee
Arnold Lobdell, Village of Burke, Councilmember
Michael J. LoCurto, City of Buffalo, Councilmember
James Loomis, Village of Van Etten, Trustee
Fion MacCrea, Town of Alfred, Councilmember
Laura Malloy, Town of Laurens, Councilmember
Amy Mann, Village of Cazenovia, Deputy Mayor
Christine Marshall, Village of Altamont, Trustee
Susan McConnell, Town of Marshall, Councilmember
Robert J. Meelan, Town of Kirkland, Supervisor
Kevin Millar, CRNA, MSN, Village of Owego, Mayor
William Moehle, Town of Brighton, Supervisor
Deborah Mohlenhoff, City of Ithaca, Alderperson
Patrick Murphy, Town of Colden, Councilmember
Seph Murtagh, City of Ithaca, Councilmember
Nina Nichols, City of Troy, Councilmember
Deborah Nottke, Village of Trumansburg, Deputy Mayor
Louise Novros, Town of Brighton, Councilmember
Alan Ominsky, Village of Aurora, Trustee
Jacklyn Ortiz, City of Rochester, Councilmember-at-Large
Raymond Parker, County of Cortland, Legislator
A. Martin Petrovic, Village of Trumansburg, Mayor
Gerald Pietraszek, Town of Colden, Councilmember
Jeffrey L. Pond, City of Salamanca, Mayor
Casey Powers, Town of Newfield, Councilmember
Diane Pusateri, Village of Churchville, Trustee
Virginia Rasmussen, Village of Alfred, Trustee
Larry H Richardson, Town of Cochecton, Councilmember
David Rivera, City of Buffalo, Councilmember
Martha Robertson, County of Tompkins, Chair of the Legislature
Ronal L. Rocco, Town of Cortlandville, Councilmember
Hector Rodriguez, County of Ulster, Legislator
Beth Rosenthal, County of Otsego, County Representative
Amy Rosmarin, Town of North Salem, Councilmember
Jane Russell, Town of Pulteney, Supervisor
Philip M. Sacco, County of Oneida, Legislator
Thomas Salamone, School District of Minisink Valley, Board Member
Bennett Sandler, Town of Otsego, Councilmember
Amanda Scully, Town of Highland, Councilmember
Marcia Shaw, Town of Meredith, Treasurer
Paul Shepard, Town of Shelter Island, Councilmember
Frederick Sinclair, County of Allegany, Legislator
Sue Skidmore, City of Elmira, Mayor
Steve Smith, City of Ithaca, Alderperson
Aaron Snow, Town of Caroline, Councilmember
Elaine Spaul, City of Rochester, Councilmember
Paul Stein, Town of Pittsfield, Councilmember
Dan Sturm, Town of Bethel, Supervisor
Kate Supron, Village of Cayuga Heights, Mayor
Brian Sweeney, Town of Middletown, Councilmember
Peter Swiderski, Village of Hastings-On-Hudson, Mayor
Marie Taylor, Village of Aurora, Trustee
Elizabeth Thomas, Town of Ulysses, Councilmember
Ronald D. Townsend, County of Oneida, Legislator
Sue Vaccaro, Town of Tully, Clerk
Vicky Vassmer-Simpson, Town of Bethel, Councilmember
Rickey Venditti, Town of Wales, Supervisor
Frank X. Vescera, City of Utica, Councilmember
John L. Wallace, Town of Frankfort, Councilmember
Debra Watkins, Village of Trumansburg, Trustee
Lea Webb, City of Binghamton, Councilmember
Elizabeth Weberg, Village of East Aurora, Deputy Mayor
Jay Wenk, Town of Woodstock, Councilmember  
Irene Wesier, DVM, Town of Caroline, Councilmember  
Wendy Whetsel, Town of Putnam Valley, Councilmember  
Kevin Whitney, County of Cortland, Legislator  
Rodney Wiltshire, City of Troy, Councilmember  
Richard Winters, Village of Liberty, Mayor  
Alden H. Wolfe, New City, Vice Chairman of the Legislature  
Robert Wood, Town of Oneonta, Supervisor  
Daniel V. Woolaver, Town of Rush, Councilmember  
Jerald Wrubel, Town of Geneseo, Board Member  
Susan Zimet, Town of New Paltz, Supervisor

**FAITH:**
Carol DeAngelo, SC, LMSW, MDiv, Director of Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation, Sisters of Charity of Center, Bronx NY  
Rabbi Aderet Drucker, Congregation B'nai Shalom, Walnut Creek, CA  
Rabbi Michael Goldman, White Plains  
The Rev. Fletcher Harper, Executive Director, GreenFaith, Highland Park, NJ  
Interfaith Impact of NYS, Rob Smith, Executive Director  
Rabbi Douglas E. Kranz, Congregation Bnai Yisrael, Amonk  
NY State Council of Churches  
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia  
Rev. Dr. Michael Tino, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Westchester, Mount Kisco