

Laura Fronckiewicz

Testimony for HB 14-1297

March 20, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today. I would appear in person but I am likely at home at this moment trying to get two children under 3 to nap or eat dinner. As a mother to two young boys, I care very deeply about this issue – as it directly affects my children's health. My concern was great enough to start a non-profit organization last year called Our Broomfield, and through this organization, I (along with many community members) worked tirelessly through my pregnancy, and the early months of my younger son's life to put a moratorium on the ballot in Broomfield. When I saw a zoning board meeting sign emerge near a local charter school indicating that Broomfield was exploring oil and gas production using unconventional drilling methods, I knew I had to act. Considered a 'purple' county, Broomfield successfully passed this moratorium despite the incredible industry spending and also despite a volunteer base of almost entirely overworked, exhausted parents. Our concern for our community spanned across the political spectrum – we have every political party represented: Democrat, Green, Republican, Independents and Libertarians.

Broomfield residents put a moratorium in effect pending the results of health impact studies, such as HB14-1297 would provide for. Inadequate study has been done on the effect of oil and gas drilling operations on our communities, especially the effect on those most vulnerable such as children. There is no rush to get the oil and gas out of the ground. We ask that the state and the industry to adhere to the 'precautionary principle' that states that it is the duty of the industry to prove that there is no harm to us prior to expanding their operations into highly populated areas. There are indicators in our area that there are air quality problems – increased incidence of asthma in children whose parents have had no issues with their lungs. Many families note higher incidence of nose bleeds in their children, including in our neighborhood in Broomfield, when there were no prior issues. These are red flags that indicate more study should be done before operations expand into our communities and next to our schools. Once health has been damaged, there is no turning back to correct the problem. Poisoning our children even a little bit is unacceptable. We need unbiased studies to examine this important public health issue.

Despite the industry's protestations to the contrary, there are studies that indicate that there is or may be a problem with oil and gas operations (inclusive of the production phase which has not adequately been studied). We ask that you pass this bill and provide funding for the necessary research before expanding at the rapid rate with which the industry has stated it plans to proceed.