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Sierra Club Praises Bill to Impose Moratorium on Fracking

Sacramento –Senators Holly Mitchell and Mark Leno have introduced a bill to impose a moratorium on fracking and well stimulation in California until there is certainty that the practices will not harm public health, the environment and the economy.

Fracking and well stimulation are technologies that have in recent years been used in oil and natural gas fields around the country to literally break up and dissolve rock deep in the earth to gain access to previously inaccessible oil and gas reserves. The technologies employ hundreds of harsh and toxic chemicals, including acids, mixed with large quantities of water.

Fracking and well stimulation has been linked to high levels of air pollution, surface and groundwater pollution, high levels of water consumption, and earthquakes.

Senate Bill 1132 would impose a moratorium until completion of an expanded study of fracking's impacts and a determination that the public health, the environment, and the economy will not be harmed.

Statement from Kathryn Phillips, director, Sierra Club California:

“Senators Mitchell and Leno have placed before the legislature the opportunity to take the next logical step to protect Californians from a dangerous practice.

“Last year the legislature passed a bill, SB 4, that would begin regulation of these health-threatening practices. Since then, several new studies and reports from around the country have underscored just how harmful fracking and well stimulation are to public health, water supplies and the air. This bill builds on last year's actions and will ensure that Californians have complete information about fracking and well stimulation before those techniques are allowed to continue in California.

“More than half of Californians have said in public opinion surveys that they want an end to fracking in this state. It doesn't make sense to them to let big oil pump toxic chemicals into the ground, including near aquifers, and hope for the best. SB 1132 gives legislators a chance to demonstrate that they are listening to their constituents.”

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Sierra Club California is the legislative and regulatory advocacy arm of the 13 Sierra Club chapters in California, representing more than 380,000 members and supporters statewide.