

**PETITION TO THE 2014 ROCKY MOUNTAIN ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**TITLE: CHURCH MEMBERS WHO MAY ENGAGE IN DECISIONS ABOUT HYDRAULIC FRACTURING IN THEIR COMMUNITIES**

**ACTION TO BE VOTED ON:**

1 Therefore, be it resolved that the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference encourages United Methodists and  
2 congregations to engage in conversations about hydraulic fracking with their local communities and governments to  
3 bring a faith based perspective to the conversation. The Church and Society Conference Committee shall provide  
4 resources for those engaging in these conversations with their local governments. Wider partnerships with the General  
5 Board of Church and Society and with other United Methodist Conferences engaged in "fracking" issues are also  
6 encouraged.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2014.

**TERMINATION DATE:** June 30, 2015

**ORIGINATOR OF THE PETITION**

**Name:** Sue Mullins

**PERSON TO PRESENT PETITION TO CONFERENCE:**

(Note. The presenter must be available to attend one training session with the legislative committee officers at the opening of Annual Conference Session. All information below **must** be complete with Petition.) **A person may be presenter of only ONE petition.**

**Name:** Rev. Patricia Johnson

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**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

**(Please Note: ALL Petitions will be reviewed by the Treasurer and Petition's Coordinator for financial ramifications)**

Will there be any financial impact to the Conference? **NO**

If YES, fill in appropriate information below.

(To be completed by Originator of Petition)

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Period: \_\_\_\_\_ (Not to exceed one year.)

Funds provided by Annual Conference/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Funds provided by external agency: \_\_\_\_\_

(To be completed by Conference Council on Finance and Administration)

Reviewed by Council on Finance and Administration (date) April 24, 2014

Included in the Proposed 2015 Budget (Yes/No): No In the amount of N/A

Recommendation by Council concerning funding: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**RATIONALE:**

Whereas hydraulic fracturing is now carried out in 30 of the 50 United States, and

Whereas this issue brings with it a complexity of impacts: economic, environmental, property values, health, traffic, road conditions, and relationships among members of the community, and

Whereas United Methodists uphold the Bible, which states “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world, and all who live in it” (Psalm 24:1-2), in addition to tradition, reason and experience as guidelines for faith and practice, and

Whereas the United Methodist Social Principles address our stewardship of water, air, soil, minerals, plants (§ 160.A), energy resources utilization (§ 160.B), and global climate stewardship (§ 160.D), and contain statements on rural life (§ 162.P), sustainable agriculture (§ 162.Q) and the many facets of the economic community (§ 163), including property (§ 163.A), consumption (§ 163.D), family farms (§ 163.H) and corporate responsibility (§ 163.I),

We, as caretakers of God’s good creation, must bear in mind that it is our duty to seek out energy solutions rooted in our values of justice and sustainability.

Fracking has been used for several years in western states such as Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Texas. Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, was developed by Halliburton to reach gas deposits trapped beneath layers of shale a mile or more below the earth’s surface. Shale is fractured or fracked when anywhere from one to nine million gallons of water mixed with other substances to form a fracking fluid are forced down through a well bore under extremely high pressure. The gas mixed with the fracking fluids, which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says are toxic, and other underground liquids are thus extracted.

Those opposed to fracking are concerned nonetheless with health and the environment. They question the safety of the process, where will gas companies get the millions of gallons of water needed, where will it be stored once it’s brought back to the surface mixed with fluids from deep underground and those toxic chemicals. A point of contention is that gas companies are not required to disclose the chemicals employed in fracking, no doubt as a way to keep their fluid recipes secret from competitors.

Congress granted an exemption ... that allows fracking to be unencumbered by the Safe Drinking Water Act.

In 2005 Congress granted an exemption, called the “Halliburton Loophole” in some quarters, that allows fracking to be unencumbered by the Safe Drinking Water Act, which regulates other forms of underground injection.

John Wesley said, “I believe in my heart that faith in Jesus Christ can and will lead us beyond an exclusive concern for the well-being of other human beings to the broader concern for the well-being of the birds in our backyards, the fish in our rivers, and every living creature on the face of the earth.” Wesley was concerned about people’s health due to the air quality in London compromised by smoke from coal furnaces in people’s homes. (partial quote from the General Board of Church & Society website [www.gbcs.org](http://www.gbcs.org) )