

CO-SPONSORSHIP MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members

FROM: Representative Mary Isaacson

DATE: December 8, 2020

SUBJECT: Hydraulic Fracturing Operations – Tracer Fluids

In recent years, purported cases of water quality impairment caused by natural gas drilling operations have increased steadily in Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, in most instances, the source of water quality impairment cannot be easily determined.

In an effort to rectify this problem, I will be introducing legislation that would require the use of tracers in hydraulic fracturing (fracking) fluids. Tracers are chemicals or other materials that are placed or injected into borehole fluid to detect or identify the types of fluids used in fracking operations.

Specifically, this legislation would require that well operators add tracer substances directly to fracking fluids before the fluids are used in fracking operations. The addition of tracer substances would allow for the identification of fluids used by natural gas well operators which, in turn, would help regulators identify the party responsible for related water quality impairment. Under this proposal, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection would be tasked with developing regulations for the safe use of tracer substances.

I believe we have a responsibility to ensure that the water that all Pennsylvania residents use is safe, and invite you to join me in this effort.