

## RESEARCH CONFIRMS GAS DRILLING IN OHIO WOULD BRING 66,000 NEW JOBS BY 2014



The results of an eight-month long study made by academicians recruited by Ohio's business sector have been released on Tuesday. The in-depth study says that oil and gas drilling would lead to at least \$4.9 billion investment and creation of 65,000 new jobs in Ohio, by 2014. Findings of the study were placed before the media and a special interest group of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce that focused on energy. However, the benefits would come only if the controversial practice of fracking or hydraulic fracturing of shale was allowed. The report was created by energy and geology experts from Ohio State University, Marietta College's Department of Petroleum and experts from the Cleveland State University. According to the report, almost 66,000 jobs would be created both directly and indirectly accompanying the growth of shale drilling. The report also found that \$433 million would be earned in local and state taxes and wages and benefits paid by energy companies would total \$3.3 billion by 2014. According to the growth pattern predicted, the industry would generate \$1.7 billion for Ohio this year, \$5.8 billion in 2013 and close to \$10 billion in 2014. Ned Hill, dean of urban affairs at Cleveland State University said that shale drilling by hydraulic fracturing had the potential to transform the economy of Ohio. However, environmentalists are concerned. State Rep. Robert Hagan said the industry is moving too fast without appropriate checks and balances. He said he was on a campaign to collect signatures on the issue as his constituency has been struck by a series of 11 earthquakes, all of which are linked to high-pressure injection of wastewater into the ground. While Robert Hagan recognizes the economic potentials of the industry, he says, "We admit that it's moving, but we will not say that we are going to ignore the safety factors, the environmental factors ... We will have more than 110 inspectors and field staff in our oil and gas division to make sure all laws and environmental regulations are observed and enforced." Hagan and other Democrats like Kenny Yuko and Mike Foley are supporting a proposal to raise state severance taxes on recovery gas wells to 7 percent. The reasoning is that the gas industry should pay for the upkeep of checks and balances and the additional staff needed to enforce rules relevant to gas drilling. The Governor, John Kasich has declared a moratorium with a 5-mile radius of a deep-injection well that was closed down following the series of earthquakes in Hagan's constituency, Youngstown. However, experts have said that thought the process of hydraulic fracturing is similar, in the case of Youngstown the fracturing was unintended and the result of deep-injection of wastewater. The method of injection of water in deep-injection wells (wastewater) and that in wells for exploring or extracting oil and natural gas, may be similar but carried out under different industry conditions.

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