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Californians Show Strong Opposition to Fracking at Today's State of the State Address

Crowd of protesters urges Governor Brown to halt fracking

Sacramento, Calif.—About 200 concerned Californians gathered outside the Capitol building today to implore Governor Brown to mitigate the state's drought by halting the water-intensive drilling technique called fracking (hydraulic fracturing), and other extreme oil extraction methods.

The protest, which took place while the governor gave his State of the State Address before a joint session of the California Legislature, represented Californians from across the state and was organized by 350.org, California State Grange, Center for Biological Diversity, Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment, CREDO, Food & Water Watch, Friends of the Earth, Oil Change International, and other members of the statewide coalition Californians Against Fracking.

While the protest took place on the lawn of the Capitol building, activists from Oil Change International and 350.org deployed a three-story banner across from the State House with the message: "Governor Brown: Climate Leaders Don't Frack. Ban Fracking Now." (**See photos from this morning's event here:** <http://fwwat.ch/CASOTSfrackprotest>)

"By allowing fracking to happen in California, Jerry Brown's actions are in direct conflict with his rhetoric today on water conservation and climate change," said Food & Water Watch California Director Adam Scow. "Brown's current water and energy policies mismanage the people of California's water supply, and this – not his 'green' talk – will be what defines his legacy."

"California is facing both a water crisis and a climate crisis, both of which would be made worse by fracking," said Hollin Kretzmann, an attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity. "Governor Brown has a huge opportunity to tackle both these challenges by banning fracking. A ban would prove he is a strong leader when it comes to protecting Californians."

"With the recent drought declaration, the writing is now truly on the wall. It's far past time for Governor Brown to protect our state's climate and precious water resources by banning fracking today," said David Turnbull, Campaigns Director of Oil Change International.

"Having just declared a drought emergency, it's time for Governor Brown to face the facts and recognize that digging up and burning California's reserves of dirty shale oil is only going to make this crisis worse," said Ross Hammond, senior campaigner, Friends of the Earth.

"It's hypocritical for Governor Brown to ask Californians to cut their personal water usage while pushing a plan that would allow the fracking industry to massively increase the amount of water it consumes and contaminates," said Zack Malitz, CREDO's Campaign Manager. "If Governor Brown moves forward with his fracking plan, he'll be forcing farmers and ranchers to compete with the fracking industry for water while exacerbating climate change and making California even more vulnerable to extreme drought in the future."

"The people most negatively affected by both the recent drought and fracking are low income communities of color in California's Central Valley," said Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment Senior Attorney Sofia Parino. "We need a leader who can both protect natural resources and be a champion for all communities. Governor Brown can do that by stopping fracking now."

"From the record dry temperatures to the wildfires across the state, the climate crisis is confronting the state every day. Governor Brown needs to live up to his legacy as a climate leader and ban fracking now," said fracking campaigner Linda Capato at 350.org.

Oil companies are gearing up to frack large reservoirs of unconventional shale oil in the Monterey Shale. Fracking uses large volumes of water mixed with dangerous chemicals to blast open rock formations and release oil and gas. Fracking releases large amounts of methane, a dangerously potent greenhouse gas. Rather than protecting our state, rules recently proposed by state officials will actually open the door to fracking, further endangering California's air, water, wildlife, public health and climate.

Members of Californians Against Fracking have protested at Governor Brown's speaking engagements around the state to call attention to the governor's failure to take meaningful action against the threats of fracking. Since the launch of Californians Against Fracking in May of 2013, more than 200,000 petitions have been signed urging Governor Brown to ban fracking in California. Farmers, environmental justice groups, public health advocates, local elected officials, students, celebrities and many others are calling on Governor Brown to halt fracking in California. Most recently, on January 14, Californians Against Fracking delivered over 100,000 public comments denouncing Governor Brown's fracking regulations and calling for a ban on fracking.

Photos from this morning's protest at the State of the State Address can be viewed and downloaded for press purposes here: <http://fwwat.ch/CASOTSfrackprotest>

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