RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ____________ TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE IN SUPPORT OF BANNING FRACKING IN CALIFORNIA

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, is a method of oil and gas production that involves blasting millions of gallons of water, mixed with toxic chemicals, under high pressure into the earth, breaking up rock formations to allow oil and gas extraction;

WHEREAS, fracking has been documented in ten California counties — Colusa, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Monterey, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Sutter and Ventura — as well as in state and federal waters off California and may be taking place elsewhere in California1;

WHEREAS, fracking requires large amounts of water, with average water use per well in other shale plays of up to 5.6 million gallons per well2 and the amount of water used in California is unknown;

WHEREAS, fracking routinely employs numerous toxic chemicals, including methanol, benzene, naphthalene and trimethylbenzene, and can also expose people to harm from lead, arsenic and radioactive materials brought back to the surface with fracking flowback fluid3;

WHEREAS, about 25 percent of fracking chemicals can cause cancer and many others cause numerous other health problems4;

WHEREAS, evidence is mounting throughout the country that these chemicals are making their way into aquifers and drinking water5;

WHEREAS, water quality can be threatened by methane contamination tied to drilling and the fracturing of rock formations as demonstrated by recent studies6 and highlighted by footage of people in fracked areas setting fire to methane-laced water from kitchen faucets;

WHEREAS, fracking and drilling can release dangerous amounts of air pollution, including benzene, toluene, xylene, and precursors to ground-level ozone, which increase risk of respiratory illness for people living near drilling sites7;

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5 See, e.g., U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Draft Investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyoming (2011); Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Consent Order and Agreement in the matter of Cabot Oil and Gas Corp et al. re Clean Streams Law, the Oil and Gas Act, and the Solid Waste Management Act (Nov. 4, 2009).
WHEREAS, fracking and drilling often release large amounts of methane, a highly potent greenhouse gas, with the leakage rate in the Los Angeles basin estimated at 17% of gas produced in the region;

WHEREAS, fracking would likely lead to the consumption of huge fossil fuel deposits, such as the Monterey Shale, a geological formation under the San Joaquin and the Los Angeles basins that holds an estimated 15 billion barrels of recoverable shale oil, adding large amounts of carbon pollution to the atmosphere;

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the International Energy Agency have concluded that we must keep roughly 2/3rds of proven reserves of fossil fuels in the ground if we are to have a decent chance of avoiding climate catastrophe.

WHEREAS, fracking fluid disposal into waste injection wells has caused earthquakes, and fracking itself has been found to have caused earthquakes in Canada and the United Kingdom;

WHEREAS, the expansion of fracking and related industrial development threatens to harm or kill endangered species like the California condor, San Joaquin kit fox, and blunt-nosed leopard lizard that live nearby;

WHEREAS, New York, New Jersey and Vermont have enacted bans or moratoriums on fracking;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the _______ City Council, on behalf of the residents of _______, do hereby urge the Governor of the State of California and our state legislature to ban fracking in California.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk shall forward a copy of this resolution To the Governor of California and City’s representatives in the State Senate and Assembly.

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