



## Jerry Brown keeps getting heckled by anti-fracking protesters



By Lisa Hymas / December 02, 2013

California Gov. Jerry Brown (D) is finding the fracking issue to be increasingly irritating. Or more to the point, he's finding anti-fracking activists to be increasingly irritating.

Brown is a long-time environmental champion with a strong record of advancing clean energy and climate action, but he doesn't mind the fracking that's going on in his state. In fact, he kinda likes it.

The San Jose Mercury News reported a month ago on Brown's "most extensive remarks yet

defending his administration's fracking policy":

Brown said he saw no contradiction in calling climate change "the world's greatest existential challenge" Monday while refusing to impose a moratorium on fracking ...

"In terms of the larger fracking question — natural gas — because of that, and the lowered price, the carbon footprint of America has been reduced because of the substitution of natural gas for coal," Brown said. "So this is a complicated equation." ...

Asked whether fracking should be banned, as Monday's protesters were demanding, Brown said: "What would be the reason for that?"

Environmental activists who are calling for a moratorium list plenty of reasons: water pollution, air pollution, methane leakage from fracking operations, and the folly of continuing to rely on fossil fuels instead of focusing on a switch to clean energy.

And the enviros have a lot of company. A number of Hollywood celebs are calling for a ban. Famous foodies too. Last month, 20 leading climate scientists sent Brown a letter arguing that his support for fracking runs counter to his efforts to fight climate change. More recently, 27 former advisers to Brown wrote a letter asking him to impose a moratorium on fracking until more study is conducted into its environmental impacts.



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To make sure he doesn't forget all this anti-fracking fervor, activists now trail the governor around the state reminding him. The Sacramento Bee reports:

Environmentalists frustrated with Brown's permissiveness of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, have followed the Democratic governor to events throughout the state since September, heckling him for his approval of legislation establishing a permitting system for the controversial form of oil extraction.

The protests have become an awkward sideshow for the third-term governor, highlighting the deepening division between Brown and environmentalists — a reliably Democratic constituency — as he prepares for a re-election bid next year.

Could fracking be a decisive issue in the 2014 governor's race? Fifty-eight percent of California voters support a moratorium on fracking until more environmental studies are done, according to a June poll. But those voters probably won't have a viable anti-fracking candidate to support instead.

And Brown's fracking stance could make him more appealing to moderate Democrats and independents, argues Jack Pitney, a government professor at Claremont McKenna College. "There are probably people out there who are thinking, 'Well, if the environmentalist wackos are mad at him, he must be doing something right,'" Pitney told The Sacramento Bee.

But the environmentalists, wacko and otherwise, aren't going to be dissuaded. "It's a growing grass-roots movement across the state," Rose Braz of the Center for Biological Diversity told the Bee. "It's not going to go away. It really is not until the governor acts to halt fracking."

## Source

Jerry Brown followed to events, heckled by  
California environmentalists over fracking,  
The Sacramento Bee

Fracking and reducing climate change: Can  
Jerry Brown have it both ways?, San Jose  
Mercury News