

Lamb: Election is referendum on reckless drilling

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Burden of proof not on anti-fracking movement, Lamb says.



Written by [Steve Reilly](#)

BINGHAMTON — Asking voters to consider November’s election “a referendum on reckless drilling,” Democratic congressional candidate Dan Lamb on Tuesday sought to push the debate over hydraulic fracturing to the forefront of his campaign against incumbent Rep. Richard Hanna.

In a 10-minute address during a rally at Binghamton’s Confluence Park, Lamb said it would be “reckless and potentially catastrophic,” to permit natural [gas](#) drilling in New York without conducting more studies and implementing more environmental safeguards.

“I’m here today ... to say to Washington, Albany and the shale gas industry that we will not allow you to pollute our air, poison our water, scar our landscape for short-term [profits](#) and for jobs for out-of-state workers,” Lamb said.

Hanna, R-Barneveld, has also expressed reservations about fracking. However, Lamb criticized the freshman lawmaker for not taking action to strengthen the federal government’s role in regulating the [natural gas](#) extraction technique.

Lamb said he would work to bolster the U.S. [Environmental Protection](#) Agency's ongoing study on fracking and add his support to a piece of federal legislation called the "FRAC Act" that would make fracking subject to federal environmental regulations from which it is currently exempt.

"My opponent, on this issue, does what he does on just about every issue. He tries to tell people what they want to hear while concealing his agenda," Lamb said. "Here's the truth: Richard Hanna has said he wants [safe](#) drilling, but he hasn't signed on to the FRAC Act ... And he hasn't lifted a finger to hold this industry accountable. He's AWOL on this issue."

In a statement Tuesday, Hanna reiterated his position that he only supports fracking in New York "if it is proven by science to be safe and would not put our water supply at risk."

"Hydraulic fracturing has the potential to produce significant positive [economic](#) benefits, but should not be done at the risk of our aquifers," Hanna said. "Fracking should continue to be primarily regulated by bodies closer to the people — state and local governments."

Fracking opponents, including Binghamton Mayor Matthew T. Ryan, [Ithaca activist Walter Hang](#) and Cornell [University](#) professor Robert Howarth spoke in support of Lamb at Tuesday's rally.

Hanna and Lamb are vying for the seat representing the newly-drawn 22nd Congressional District, which spans all or parts of eight counties stretching from the Pennsylvania border to Lake Ontario.



Democratic Congressional candidate Dan Lamb discussed his views on hydraulic fracturing during a Tuesday rally at Confluence Park in Binghamton. / STEVE REILLY / Staff Photo