



# *Society of Environmental Journalists*

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February 6, 2012

The Honorable U.S. Representative Andy Harris, Chairman  
Energy and Environment Subcommittee of the  
House Committee on Science, Space and Technology  
506 Cannon HOB  
Washington D.C. 20515

VIA FACSIMILE (202) 226-0113 and U.S. Postal Service

Dear Representative Harris,

The Society of Environmental Journalists writes today to condemn in the strongest possible terms your ejection of Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Josh Fox from the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology's Energy and Environment Subcommittee hearing concerning the Environmental Protection Agency's policies and the enforcement of water quality issues surrounding natural gas drilling or "fracking."

SEJ is the largest and oldest organization of journalists who cover topics related to the environment. Its members work in a variety of media including television, radio, print, and online. SEJ monitors the transparency of government agencies, including EPA, through its Freedom on Information Task Force and the associated Watchdog Project.

Journalists come in all stripes, and documentary filmmakers have a long and storied history of informing the public about important policy matters, especially the sorts of environmental protection issues Mr. Fox covered in his film, "Gasland." It is our understanding that he hoped to film your committee's Feb. 1, 2012, hearing as part of his work on a follow-up film on the ongoing controversies over fracking.

Media reports indicate that Mr. Fox was removed because he did not have proper credentials to cover a House of Representatives hearing. Clearly, this sort of clerical issue could have easily been handled by your staff without resorting to ejecting Mr. Fox from the proceedings.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Whetzel, President of SEJ Board of Directors  
Ken Ward Jr., Chairman of the SEJ Freedom of Information Task Force  
Robert McClure, SEJ Board Member

*Strengthening the quality, reach and viability of journalism across all media  
to advance public understanding of environmental issues*