MARCH 15, 2011

A JOINT STATEMENT ON HYDROFRACKING IN NEW YORK STATE BY THE LEATHERSTOCKING CORPORATION AND BREWERY OMMEGANG

The Leatherstocking Corporation, The Otesaga Hotel, The Cooper Inn and The Leatherstocking Golf Course, join with Brewery Ommegang in Cooperstown, New York, to express our profound concern over the utilization of hydrofracking methods in the drilling for shale gas in Otsego County.

Much has been written about the dangers of hydrofracking. In fact, thousands of internal documents recently obtained by The New York Times from the Environmental Protection Agency, state regulators and drilling companies affirm that the risks to the environment, including our water, air, wetlands and wildlife, are greater than previously understood. In addition, the Board of Trustees of Bassett Medical Center and Medical Board, also based in Cooperstown, view the issue of hydrofracking as a public health issue of the highest priority.

The Otesaga, Cooper Inn and Leatherstocking Golf Course, together with Brewery Ommegang are among the most popular and successful tourist destinations in the region. Many thousands of visitors enjoy our facilities on the banks of Lake Otsego each year; the Hotel also hosts numerous business meetings, conventions, weddings and entertainment activities; and the Brewery is nationally recognized for some of the highest quality beers produced in the United States. We believe that the natural beauty of the lake and the surrounding area plays an important role in attracting visitors to our properties and that this is now imperiled by hydrofracking. In addition to the contamination of the watershed, other risks to our area include tanker traffic clogging our narrow and rural roads and the existence of unsightly drilling rigs spoiling the landscape. To be sure, the presence of hydrofracking will diminish the attractiveness of our area and render it less desirable as a tourism destination. Beyond spoiling the rural character of our environment and endangering our health, jobs will be lost and population migration from our area will be unavoidable. With hydrofracking activities dotting our landscape, property values are likely to decline thereby rendering the Cooperstown region a less desirable place to live, work and visit.

We jointly support New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo’s continuation of the 2010 Executive Order halting the issuance of new horizontal
hydrofracking permits pending the completion of a Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement and urge the Governor to consider the repeal of previously issued permits and the permanent and total cessation of all hydrofracking activities in the State of New York.

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