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**NEW JERSEY STATE LEGISLATURE
16TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT**

OCT 14 2015

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October 6, 2015

Cheryl LaFleur
Chairman
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First St. NE
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Chairman LaFleur,

As you are aware, PennEast Pipeline Company recently took the significant step of filing its formal application for this project with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The PennEast pipeline is of considerable concern to the citizens of Delaware Township and the Borough of Stockton, whom we represent in the 16th Legislative District.

In light of the formal application filing, we want to reiterate our deep concern about the environmental, public safety and financial impact the proposed pipeline will have on Delaware Township, Borough of Stockton and all of the affected municipalities. Each of these municipalities have considerable amounts of preserved open space and farmland. We owe a duty to taxpayers to ensure that development does not harm the integrity of these environmentally sensitive and previously preserved areas – areas taxpayers have invested in to protect. It is our hope that FERC will consider with the utmost sensitivity the pipeline's impact on these preserved farmlands, open space and the Delaware River watershed.

We respectfully request that FERC do a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Reason being, it is crucial for any project of this magnitude to be thoroughly examined in light of its cumulative impacts. Your examination should require consideration of other pipelines and pipeline proposals in the surrounding region. We strongly believe that without a PEIS, FERC will not be able to fully and accurately understand the pipeline's impact.

Additionally, the potential use of eminent domain to gain access to the properties of landowners opposed to the pipeline greatly concerns us. It is our understanding that if PennEast receives its Certificate of Authority, it would be able to use eminent domain to seize both private property and preserved space for the purposes of gaining easements for pipeline construction. We urge FERC to act to ensure that PennEast Pipeline Company exhausts all other efforts in good faith before resorting to eminent domain.

Sustainable energy independence is certainly a key element of our national security. And so, as elected representatives and policy makers, we welcome and celebrate this country's current and unprecedented era of natural resource exploration, made possible by numerous technological advances specific to oil and natural gas discovery and extraction.

If we welcome and celebrate the myriad benefits of this unprecedented era, it is incumbent upon us, as duly elected representatives and policy makers, to also welcome the corresponding challenges specific to the transport and delivery of oil and natural gas. In simpler terms, we must be vigilant in ensuring that human health and safety and environmental impacts are unequivocally first and foremost in considering any pipeline proposal. In addition, when it comes to balancing business interests with that of affected communities, we must also be vigilant in ensuring any pipeline proposal is unequivocally equitable in each and every respect, and that any and all alternative pipeline options have been similarly considered.

Regarding the proposed pipeline's impacts and interests, we offer the following:

- The proposed pipeline crosses at least 18 New Jersey C-1 streams:
 - Wickcheoke Creek and nine of its tributaries
 - Alexauken Creek and five of its tributaries
 - Lockatong Creek and its one tributary and headwater area
- The proposed pipeline crosses properties previously purchased and protected by:
 - New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres
 - New Jersey Department of Agriculture
 - Hunterdon County
 - Delaware Township
 - Federal Farm and Ranch Protection, and
 - New Jersey Water Supply Authority
- The proposed pipeline crosses or affects properties purchased by non-profit land conservation and protection organizations, including:
 - New Jersey Conservation Foundation
 - D&R Greenway
 - Hunterdon Land Trust
- The taxpayers of New Jersey, Hunterdon County, and Delaware Township, as well as foundations, individual donors, and farmers/landowners, have invested approximately \$7.4 million to permanently preserve properties along the pipeline's proposed route
- The proposed pipeline crosses more than 2,000 acres, 169 buildings, and historically significant view sheds, land use patterns, watersheds and landscapes of the Rosemont Ridge Agricultural District, which received New Jersey and Federal Historic Designation in 2010

To the very best of our knowledge, no pipeline has ever been developed in a more bucolic, previously preserved, and historically significant and designated area. In fact, the vast, vast majority of residents in this area are not natural gas customers – they happily accept the inconveniences of alternative and often more expensive unregulated energy (e.g., propane and home heating oil) as the price paid for the most desirable of pastoral settings.

Also to be seriously considered is land values in this area are hypersensitive to development in any and all forms. In purely financial terms, citizens will, all things considered, experience significant and permanent lost land value as a result of any pipeline transpiercing the area, where, by the way, no other utility easements exists, other than electric/telephone. Let us be clear, currently, there are no existing utility corridors in this area, nor has any such corridor previously been remotely contemplated or considered. Said another way, no easement-related monetary reward or payment will ever truly compensate landowners for that which will forever altered by a pipeline.

As for the proposed route, it is quite curious that the pipeline seems to almost exclusively intersect previously preserved farmland. Let us suggest that developing a pipeline along this route is driven purely by company self-interest and akin, for example, to building solar arrays on previously preserved farmland, which has been overwhelmingly rejected by the populace and banned by New Jersey's State Agriculture Development Board.

The PennEast Pipeline will permanently scar an exceptionally pristine, rich agricultural heritage that truly defines and sustains residents of the area. Simply put, this untouched area is, in and of itself, a way of life for local residents, most of whom relocated there purposely to avoid development of any kind.

To address the substantive concerns detailed herein and effectively represent our mutual constituents, we ask that you leverage your authority to advocate for alternative options for the transport and delivery of natural gas to New Jersey and, in so doing, coordinate a plan-of-action that stops development of the PennEast Pipeline.

Thank you once more for taking the time to carefully consider the contents of this letter and for your continued engagement with the community and us on this issue. We look forward to following-up with your office.

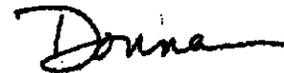
Sincerely yours,



Senator Christopher
'Kip' Bateman



Assemblyman Jack M. Ciattarelli



Assemblywoman Donna Simon

cc: NJ Congressional Delegation

Senator Robert "Bob" Menendez
Senator Corey Booker
Congressman Donald Norcross
Congressman Frank LoBiondo
Congressman Tom MacArthur
Congressman Christopher "Chris" Smith
Congressman Scott Garrett
Congressman Frank Pallone Jr.
Congressman Leonard Lance
Congressman Albio Sires
Congressman Bill Pascrell Jr.
Congressman Donald Payne Jr.
Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen
Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman