

_____, 2015

The Honorable
Samuel Thompson
NJ Legislative Senator
2501 Hwy 516, Suite 101
Old Bridge, NJ 08857

RE: *In the Matter of the Petition of New Jersey Natural Gas Company for Approval and Authorization to Construct and Operate the Southern Reliability Link Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.4, Docket No. GE15040402;*

In the Matter of the Petition of New Jersey Natural Gas Company for a Determination Concerning Southern Reliability Link Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-19 and N.J.S.A. 48:9-25.4, Docket No. G015040403

In the Matter of the Garden State Expansion Project, proposed by Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company, LLC, FERC Docket No. CP15-89-000

Dear Senator Samuel Thompson,

I am writing to express my strong opposition of the **New Jersey Natural Gas Southern Reliability Link** and the **Transcontinental Gas Company (TRANSCO) Garden State Expansion Project**. I have concerns about the need for building the High Pressure Natural Gas Pipeline, as well as the Compressor Station. I feel both will have a negative impact on the communities of Bordentown City, Bordentown Township, Chesterfield, North Hanover, New Hanover, Springfield & Upper Freehold.

These gas infrastructures do not provide any benefit to local residents, yet we are forced to absorb the adverse environmental and economic impacts, not to mention the safety risks during the construction phase and the dangers these infrastructures present in the event of leaks and explosions once fully operational.

The proposed route of this Pipeline is running within 100 feet or less of dozens of homes, businesses, churches, municipal services (police department, emergency squad and fire department), public parks, historical structures that are over 200 years old, a golf course and one known private school. Any type of explosion or leak could have devastating consequences. The extensive installation process will cause road closures and detours up to 6.45 miles in length onto roads that are not designed to accommodate the 6300+ vehicles that use County Route 528 and 664 daily. Many of these roads have substandard geometry and may also have weight restrictions in place. The volume of traffic directed to narrow and winding local roads may lead to more accidents endangering the lives of both motorists and pedestrians. This proposed route will have significant negative repercussions on emergency vehicle access, school bus routes and evacuation routes. New Jersey Natural Gas was cited by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities for at least seventy-eight (78) separate violations in the past year, which is very alarming.

In addition to the Pipeline, the proposed Compressor Station (Station #203, Chesterfield, NJ) by Transco is of serious concern. There are many inaccuracies stated in FERC's Environmental Assessment of the project (Docket #CP15-89). Chesterfield Township has submitted "**Comments on the Environmental Assessment Report on Behalf of the Township of Chesterfield by Peter McCoy, P.A.**" which explains each issue in detail. I urge you to review this important document. It can be found online in the FERC docket.

Examples of inaccuracies include:

- The statement that there are no public or private wells identified within 150 feet and up to one mile of the site (there are, in fact, many homes located along County Route 528, east of the NJ Turnpike, within 150 feet and up to one mile with wells and septic systems).
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- The section on "Air Emission Impacts and Mitigation" only lists construction emissions

The commission also made a decision to defer addressing the Delaware River Keepers' (DRK) motion to intervene. The DRK motion outlines the negative impacts and Transco's expansion project in detail. The DRK motion deserves to be studied and addressed by the commission.

Furthermore, the Environmental Assessment overlooks the **cumulative impacts** of the Garden State Expansion Project Compressor Station and the Southern Reliability Link Pipeline. These projects, along with the PennEast project (Docket No. CP15-558) appear to be segmented in order to break up the approval process, which avoids critical environmental regulation. The same supply and quantity of gas flow through the three projects. Both the Garden State Expansion Project and the Southern Reliability Link have the same capacity and in-service date that precisely match a previous agreement signed by New Jersey Natural Gas, which obligates its utility ratepayers to purchase the identical amount of natural gas from PennEast.

FERC and the EPA need to acknowledge the absolute and confirmed health impacts to local residents forced to live near these Compressor Stations and Pipelines, and place the public health above all else. Acceptable limits of emissions need revised regulations, as well as locations of high-pressured gas Pipelines.

I strongly urge you to carefully review both the **NJNG Southern Reliability Link** and **Transco's Garden State Expansion** projects in detail, **FERC's Environmental Assessment** and **Chesterfield Township's Comment on the Environmental Assessment**.

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Robert Menendez
NJ Legislative Senator
528 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Tom MacArthur
Congressional Representative
PO Box 122
Marlton, NJ 08053

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Ronald Dancer
NJ Assemblyman
405 Rt. 539
Cream Ridge, NJ 08514

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Robert Clifton
NJ Assemblyman
516 Rt 33 West, Bldg 2, Suite 2
Millstone, NJ 08535

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Cory Booker
NJ Legislative Senator
One Port Center
2 Riverside Drive, Suite 505
Camden, NJ 08101

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