

August 13, 2019

Dear Senators,

As you begin consideration of the Department of Energy appropriation for Fiscal Year 2020, we, the undersigned community, health, environmental, and public interest groups, are writing to urge you to SUPPORT including the provision passed in the House bill, HR 2740, that “clarifies that the Department of Energy’s Section XVII Loan Program is providing loans only to clean energy projects that avoid, reduce, or sequester air pollutants or human-caused emissions of greenhouse gases.”

Additionally, we ask you to OPPOSE any effort to allow the Department of Energy (DOE) approval of the Appalachia Development Group’s (ADG’s) application for a \$1.9 billion Title XVII loan guarantee, for a massive fossil fuel and petrochemical infrastructure project (Appalachian Storage and Trading Hub Project) to be located in the Ohio River Valley region of Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, or Kentucky.

The Appalachian Storage and Trading Hub Project does not meet the project criteria provided by Section 1703 of Title XVII of the Energy Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. § 16513. Title XVII loan guarantees are designed to fund energy projects that “avoid, reduce or sequester air pollutants or anthropogenic [human-caused] emissions of greenhouse gases”. In contrast, the Appalachian Storage Hub Project could store and provide natural gas liquids to five or more large ethane crackers (petrochemical facilities that turn the natural gas liquid ethane into a chemical used to make plastic), and it would be interconnected to a labyrinth of leaky pipeline infrastructure and multiple underground natural gas liquid storage facilities. The facility would cement the demand for fracking and decades more of climate-altering releases during the upstream (drilling and fracking) and downstream (petrochemical and plastics manufacturing) part of the pipeline chain.

The Appalachian Storage and Trading Hub Project poses a major health risk for the region, effectively creating another “Cancer Alley”. This industry-proposed regional buildout of petrochemical infrastructure would emit large amounts of hazardous air and climate pollutants in a geographical location that has long suffered from extractive industries like coal mining and fracking, has borne the brunt of the opioid crisis, and continues to be an area of economic divestment. It would also lock in the demand for continued or amplified fracking, a destructive drilling method that has been linked to public health problems, accidental spills of toxic waste, air pollution, earthquakes and drinking water contamination. The colossal storage facility would most likely be sited along the Ohio River, the drinking water source for over 5 million people, endangering a vital water source. Studies have found that long-term exposure to these pollutants is associated with increased cancer risks, nausea, eye and throat irritation and respiratory problems, especially among children.

Plastics are a financially unstable investment risk. The public awareness about the damage of single-use plastic to wildlife is high, and efforts to reduce plastic use are advancing all over the

world. Many of the largest markets in the world are banning single use plastics, driving down demand. Additionally, the fracking industry which feeds the plastics industry is financially precarious, which makes a loan guarantee a high-risk financial decision. Fracking has not been profitable without historically low interest rates on loans, continual cash input from Wall Street, and an unceasing expansion of drilling. Many industry experts believe that industry speculation of shale reserves has been grossly overestimated and that the shale bubble is liable to burst with minor market fluctuations. It would be a travesty for taxpayers to take on the financial burden of a likely default.

The volumes of carbon emissions the Appalachian Storage and Trading Hub would intensify the current climate crisis. The United States and the World is in climate crisis making it imperative that we decrease our carbon emissions and move off of a fossil fuel driven economy. The Appalachian Storage Hub Project is a step in the wrong direction. The infrastructure built in Appalachia would lock in decades of not only air and water pollution that is directly hazardous to human health, but would also unleash a colossal amount of greenhouse gases, which will impact not only Appalachians, but people all over the globe.

Appalachia is an area of great natural beauty, culture, and resilience. The federal government should be playing an active role in supporting economic development in Appalachia. Rather than subsidies for fossil fuel infrastructure, the region needs multi-sector economic development that improves the health of the region and provides good-paying union jobs in green energy, sustainable agriculture, healthcare and more as our nation moves towards clean energy.

Again, for the reasons stated above, we urge you to include a provision in the Department of Energy Fiscal Year 2020 appropriation clarifying the DOE's Section XVII Loan Program is providing loans "only to clean energy projects that avoid, reduce, or sequester air pollutants or human-caused emissions of greenhouse gases." Additionally, we urge you to OPPOSE any effort to provide Section XVII Loan guarantee to projects like the proposed Appalachian Storage and Trading Hub.

Sincerely,

Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.  
Appalachian Voices  
Arvadans for Progressive Action  
Atchafalaya Basinkeeper  
Athens County's Future Action Network  
Berks Gas Truth  
Better Path Coalition  
Beyond Extreme Energy  
Big Initiatives  
Breast Cancer Action  
Breathe Easy Susquehanna County

Breathe Project  
Bronx Climate Justice North  
Buckeye Environmental Network  
Bucks County Concerned Citizens Against the Pipelines  
Bucks Environmental Action  
Catholic Network US  
Center for Coalfield Justice  
Center for Sustainability at Ramapo College of New Jersey  
CEO Pipe Organs/Golden Ponds Farm  
Chatham Research Group  
Chicago Area Peace Action  
Church Women United in New York State  
Citizens' Environmental Coalition  
Climate Action WI  
Coal River Mountain Watch  
Coalition to Ban Unsafe Oil Trains  
Coalition to Protect New York  
Columbus Community Bill of Rights  
Crawford Stewardship Project  
Dryden Resource Awareness Coalition  
Earth Ethics, Inc.  
Earthworks  
Eastern Panhandle Green Coalition  
Elmirans and Friends Against Fracking  
Extinction Rebellion Kentucky  
Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services  
Food & Water Watch  
Fox Valley Citizens for Peace & Justice  
Frac Sand Sentinel  
Frack Free Four Corners  
FrackbustersNY  
Franciscan Action Network  
FreshWater Accountability Project  
Fresnans against Fracking  
Friends of the Earth US  
Gas Free Seneca  
Global Witness  
GoGreenNY  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness  
Greater Highland Area Concerned Citizens  
Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition  
Greenpeace US  
Guernsey County Citizens Support on Drilling Issues  
Heartwood

Howard County Climate Action (Maryland)  
Illinois People's Action  
Acequia del Brazito  
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement  
Kentucky Interfaith Power & Light, Inc  
LAWPA  
Lebanon Pipeline Awareness  
Marcellus Outreach Butler  
Metro New York Catholic Climate Movement  
Mid-Ohio Valley Climate Action  
Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
Mountain Lakes Preservation Alliance  
Mountain Watershed Association  
Nature Coast Conservation, Inc.  
Network for Oil and Gas Accountability and Protection (NEOGAP)  
New Energy Economy  
New York Communities for Change  
New York Interfaith Power & Light  
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY)  
Northeast Organic Farming Association/Massachusetts Chapter (NOFA/Mass)  
NYC Grassroots Alliance  
NYC H2O  
NYCD16 Indivisible  
Occupy Bergen County  
Ocean Conservation Research  
Ohio River Foundation  
Oil Change U.S.  
OVEC - Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition  
Peacemakers of Schoharie County  
Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and Air  
Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
People Demanding Action  
People for a Healthy Environment  
Peoples Climate Movement-NY  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Physicians for Social Responsibility Philadelphia  
Plymouth Friends of Clean Water  
Presentation Sisters  
Progressive Democrats of America  
PSR Arizona  
Putnam Progressives  
Rachel Carson Council  
RadioactiveWasteAlert.org

Reach Out America  
Residents Allied for the Future of Tioga (RAFT)  
River Guardian Foundation  
Riverdale Jewish Earth Alliance  
Rochester People's Climate Coalition  
RootsAction.org  
SAFE: Southern Illinoisans Against Fracturing Our Environment  
Santa Cruz Climate Action network  
Save Our Illinois Land  
Save Our Streams PA  
SEED  
ShaleshockCNY  
Sisters of Charity Federation  
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York  
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia  
South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)  
Southwestern Indiana Citizens for Quality of Life  
SouthWings  
STAY Project  
Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion (SAPE)  
Sustainable Warwick  
The Alliance for Appalachia  
Tucson Climate Action Network  
Upper Green Side  
Valley Watch, Inc.  
What the Frack?! Arapahoe  
White Rabbit Grove RDNA  
Women's Action Coalition of Allegany County  
198 methods  
350 Bucks County  
350 Chicago  
350 Colorado  
350 Seattle  
350 Brooklyn