

An open letter to Governor Murphy and NJ Legislators - 11.29.23

You're deciding now: a more affordable, healthier and fairer future or Doubling down on our dirty energy economic past!

Dear Governor Murphy and Members of the NJ Senate and Assembly,

The undersigned 60+ (list still information) leading justice, labor, community, faith, progressive, business and environmental groups write to you today because New Jersey is on the brink of transformational change for better or worse and you will play a key role in deciding which path we take.

A robust clean energy economy with tens of thousands of new life supporting green jobs fairly distributed throughout all demographic groups or climate havoc and economic and environmental injustice based on continued and increased reliance on dirty fossil fuels.

Two bills pending in this Lame Duck legislature couldn't paint this picture better.

S2978/A4658 requires 100% of retail electricity sales in New Jersey to come from "clean" sources of energy by 2035. Senator Smith, et al. have been laboring for over a year, taking input from all sectors, balancing affordability, justice, labor, business, and environmental concerns. While the bill has made great progress, grave dangers also hide in false climate solutions like carbon capture, mis-named "renewable natural gas" (RNG) and hydrogen and should be excluded in the bill and any clean energy plan. With a few additional strengthening environmental justice and labor amendments, **the Senate Environment Committee will pass it on December 18th and it should move forward.**

A577/S1366 lets gas utilities and the fossil fuel industry increasingly profit from burning more unneeded dirty gas at the expense of New Jersey ratepayers. The bill requires BPU to let utilities hike consumers' electric and heating bills to subsidize RNG procurement and infrastructure. RNG is 3-18 times more costly than the current market price for natural gas. The bill can't be fixed -- the only question is how unaffordable and dirty would the bill be. Any version of it would increase the burning of unaffordable dirty gasses, increase emissions of co-pollutants with overburdened communities being disproportionately harmed, and increase climate emissions despite the bill's stated intentions not to do so. **It is scheduled for an Assembly committee vote on November 30th and must not move forward.**

Please be the leaders New Jersey needs. Lead us to where we need to go -- truly clean energy -- not where we've been -- dirty fossil fuels.

Accordingly, we urge you in the strongest of terms, in this lame duck session, to do all you can to ensure S2978/A4658 is strengthened and then moves forward while A577/S1366 does not move forward.

Sincerely,

List still in formation:

BikeSOMA

BlueWaveNJ

Central Jersey Coalition Against endless war

Central Jersey Environmental Defenders

Action Together New Jersey

Clean Water Action

Coalition for Peace Action

Coalition to Ban Unsafe Oil Trains

CWA Local 1081

Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Divest NJ
Don't Gas the Meadowlands Coalition
ECOPOETRY.ORG
Elected Officials to Protect America - NJ
Empower NJ
Environment New Jersey
Envl. Justice Team, Unitarian Society of Ridgewood
Faith in New Jersey
First Congregational Church of Montclair
Food & Water Watch
Franciscan Response to Fossil Fuels
GreenFaith
HCDNNJ
Highland Park Ecology and Environmental Group
Indivisible Central NJ
Ironbound Community Corporation
JOLT
League of Women Voters of New Jersey
Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership
MnM Consulting
NAACP Metuchen-Edison-Piscataway Branch
Natural Ground 1
NB Earth Talks
Neighborhood Sun
New Jersey Environmental Lobby

New Jersey Policy Perspective
Newark Communities for Accountable Policing
Newark Science and Sustainability Inc
Newark Water Coalition
NJ Environmental Justice Alliance
NJ Sierra Club - Skylands Group
NJ Working Families Alliance
North Jersey Sierra Group
Northern New Jersey NOW
Northjersey Pipeline Walkers
Our Green West Orange
Our Revolution Ocean County, NJ
People Over Pipelines
People's Organization for Progress
Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Plants & Ponds LLC
Rowan Divest
Skylands Group, SierraClub-NJ Chapter
Social Action Committee of the Ethical Cultures
Society of Essex County, NJ
SOMA Action
South Ward Environmental Alliance
Southern Burlington County NAACP
Vote Solar
Waterspirit
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center