

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

December 12, 2023

Sponsored by: Food & Water Watch, New York Public Interest Research Group, Frack Busters NY, Concerned Citizens of Dover, New York Progressive Action Network-Greene County, Third Act Upstate New York, Rivers & Mountains GreenFaith, and the Mid-Hudson Group of the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter.

Dear Governor Hochul,

We urge you to stop the expansion of the aging over 30-year-old Iroquois natural gas pipeline. The expansion project, if approved, will significantly increase the volume of fracked gas flowing through the pipeline by expanding two polluting compressor stations in the Hudson Valley region—in Athens and Dover—and two additional compressor stations along the pipeline's route in Connecticut.

This proposal poses an imminent threat to the health and well-being of our state and the communities we were elected to represent. Compressor stations have a documented history of emitting cancer-causing chemicals, including elevated levels of nitrogen oxide (NOx), fine particulate matter, carbon monoxide, benzene, and formaldehyde. The harmful effects of NOx and particulate matter pollution on respiratory health are well-established, contributing to chronic bronchitis, asthma, emphysema, aggravated heart diseases, difficulty breathing, and reduced life expectancy. New Yorkers have a right to clean air, clean water, and a healthful environment as a result of the Green Amendment (that passed overwhelmingly in 2021) and this proposal would be infringing upon those rights.

Pipeline infrastructure, including compressor stations, are historically dangerous. Simply add a spark to a two-minute compressor station gas leak and within two seconds an explosion could cause death or severe second degree burns to those nearby. According to an [NRDC](#) report published in 2019, natural gas pipelines led all pipeline infrastructure in injuries, deaths, fires, evacuations, and explosions. In August 2023, the [Environmental Defense Fund](#) reported on methane leaks from pipelines and found that U.S. natural gas pipelines are leaking between 1.2 million and 2.6 million tons of methane per year. In 2022, a report from the [U.S. PIRG Education Fund, Environment America Research & Policy Center and Frontier Group](#) revealed that 2,600 hazardous gas pipeline leaks in the United States caused more than \$4 billion in damages and emergency services, killed 122 people, and released 26.6 billion cubic feet of fuel as methane or carbon dioxide. Doctors Russo and Carpenter, from Institute for Health & the Environment in Rensselaer NY told the Sierra Club, [“In our opinion, the routine emissions surrounding the operation of natural gas compressor stations in New York State \(NYS\) increase the risk for most major categories of human disease in the state but especially in the communities where they are sited.”](#)

The Iroquois pipeline expansion by compressors proposal, if approved, would put New Yorkers at great risk and run fully astray of our state’s climate goals. We urge you to prioritize the well-being of the people of New York and the environment over the profits of the fossil fuel industry. Your leadership and commitment to the goals of New York's Climate Act are crucial in this pivotal moment. Continued investments in fossil fuels perpetuate our dependence on a dirty energy future.

Governor Hochul, you possess the obligation and the authority to safeguard our environment, our health, and our future. We implore you to deny the expansion of the Iroquois fracked gas pipeline and to champion a brighter, cleaner, and more sustainable future for all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

Michelle Hinchey, Senator, District 41
Jabari Brisport, Senator, District 25
Julia Salazar, Senator, District 18
Liz Krueger, Senator, District 28
Lea Webb, Senator, District 52
John Liu, Senator, District 16
Brad Hoylman-Sigal, Senator, District 47
Samra Brouk, Senator, District 55
Nathalia Fernandez, Senator, District 34
Brian Kavanagh, Senator, District 27
Gustavo Rivera, Senator, District 33

Didi Barrett, Assemblymember, District 106
Sarahana Shrestha, Assemblymember, District 103
Phillip Steck, Assemblymember, District 110
Harvey Epstein, Assemblymember, District 74
Steven Raga, Assemblymember, District 30
Robert Carroll, Assemblymember, District 44
Jo Anne Simon, Assemblymember, District 52
Al Stirpe, Assemblymember, District 127
Daniel O'Donnell, Assemblymember, District 69

Amy Serrago, Mayor, Village of Athens
Josh Lipsman, Trustee, Village of Athens
Michael Pirrone, Town Supervisor, Village of Athens

Yvette Valdés Smith, Dutchess County Legislator/Minority Leader
Nick Page, Dutchess County Legislator, District 18
Brennan Kearney, Dutchess County Legislator
Michael Whitton, Town Supervisor, Town of Clinton
Elizabeth Spinzia, Town Supervisor, Town of Rhinebeck
Leo Blackman, Town Board Member, Town of Amenia
Dan Aymar-Blair, City Council Member, City of Beacon
Vanessa Bertozzi, Trustee, Village of Rhinebeck
Marty Mygan, Town Councilman-Elect, Town of Pawling

Tistrya Houghtling, Supervisor (New Lebanon)/Minority Leader, Columbia County Board of Supervisors
Claire Cousin, Supervisor (1st Ward Hudson), Columbia County Board of Supervisors
Michael Chameidas, Supervisor (3rd Ward Hudson), Columbia County Board of Supervisors
Michael Dvorchak, Supervisor-elect (Hillsdale), Columbia County Board of Supervisors

Thomas DePietro, Common Council President, City of Hudson
Rick Werwaiss, Town Board Member, Town of Chatham
Destiny Hallenback, Town Board Member, Town of Chatham
Douglas Craig, Town Board Member, Town of Taghkanic
Steve Powers, Town Board Member-elect, Town of New Lebanon
Debra Gitterman, Trustee, Village of Philmont
Brenda Adams, Supervisor, Town of Canaan

Jen Metzger, County Executive, Ulster County
Kathy Nolan, County Legislator, Ulster County
Manna Jo Greene, County Legislator, Ulster County
Phil Erner, County Legislator, Ulster County
Lisa Kaul, County Legislator-elect, Dutchess County
Andrea Shaut, Common Council President, City of Kingston
Jacob Testa, Town Board Member, Town of Red Hook
Alexandria Wojick, Deputy Mayor, Village of New Paltz
Stana Weisburd, Trustee, Village of New Paltz

Alex Avilés, City Council Member, New York City
Sandy Nurse, City Council Member, New York City
Tiffany Caban, City Council Member, New York City

Kevindaryán Luján, County Legislator, Orange County
Anthony Grice, Councilman, City of Newburgh

Susan Hughes-Smith, County Legislator, Monroe County
Carolyn Delvecchio Hoffman, County Legislator, Monroe County
Mercedes Vasquez Simmons, County Legislator, Monroe County
Mary Lupien, City Council Member, Rochester