

ACTIVISTS DELIVER STRONG MESSAGE TO CONGRESS AND FERC: NO MORE FRACKED GAS PIPELINES

“STOP TRUMP’S DIRTY ENERGY AGENDA, THE CHANGE STARTS HERE” Protest: Activists Demonstrate at FERC’s First Public Meeting Since January, Deliver Letter from 139 National and Local Groups to Congress Urging Opposition to Dirty Energy Bill.

Washington, D.C.—September 20, 2017—Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Commissioners were greeted this morning by anti-pipeline protesters calling attention to FERC’s rubber-stamping of natural gas pipelines. The rally was endorsed by over 100 organizations nationwide: http://bit.ly/Endorsers_Sept20_2017. Waving signs saying “Stop the Fracking Pipelines” and “#FERCAbuses Communities and Environment” the protesters heard from speakers including the Reverend Lennox Yearwood and activists fighting pipelines nationwide.

The protest then moved on Capitol Hill, with a sign-on letter supported by 139 organizations (<http://bit.ly/OrgSignOns>) urging legislators to put in place a moratorium on FERC approved pipelines and infrastructure until it holds hearings and institutes legislative reforms. They also urged Senators and Representatives to oppose S.1460 (The Energy and Natural Resources Act) and other dirty energy bills, and support a transition to renewable energy instead (including H.R. 3671 (Rep. Gabbard’s ‘OFF ACT’) or the Senate ‘100 by 50’ Act). The FERC rally and Hill visits were supported by activists nationwide that sent over 30,000 messages (<http://bit.ly/FERCLettersSep20>) to Congress to oppose the expansion of fracked gas pipelines and infrastructure.

“We need to get serious about becoming fossil-free as soon as possible,” said Reverend Lennox Yearwood. **“FERC is not doing that; instead they are rubber-stamping fracked gas pipelines and export terminals. Renewable energy is good for the planet, it’s affordable, and there’s tremendous job growth in that sector of our economy. FERC is part of the problem and must be changed.”**

“Because of FERC’s pro-industry stance on every aspect of pipeline review, approval and development, people across the nation are having their property rights taken, their forests cut down, their sense of safety and the value of their homes, businesses and agriculture taken from them,” said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper and leader of the regional Delaware Riverkeeper Network. **“And we have yet to find a member of Congress willing to stand up and call for congressional hearings to investigate what is really happening with FERC and pipelines. And so we have come to Washington, D.C. to make clear to FERC and to Congress, that FERC abuses communities and the environment and we will not sit silent until we are heard and reforms are put in place.”**

“Tens of thousands of people are telling their Representatives and Senators that Congress needs to rein in FERC’s abuses,” said Todd Larsen, Executive Co-Director at Green America. **“People are fighting back against pipelines in their communities, and Americans nationwide are calling on Congress to reject dirty energy legislation and rapidly move the U.S. to clean energy solutions that create jobs, healthy communities, and address climate change.”**

“I literally would not be here today without the support and lifeline provided by Beyond Extreme Energy,” said Maggie Henry, whose organic farm in western Pennsylvania was destroyed by fracking and whose home

was damaged by frackquakes. **"I draw so much strength and energy from them, it's like refueling with a big solar charge."**

The protests and Hill visits come at a pivotal time. FERC's quorum was recently restored, allowing the agency to once again approve pipelines, and that quorum contains two recently confirmed Trump nominees – Neil Chatterjee and Robert Powelson – who are in favor of expanding natural gas infrastructure. The Senate is considering legislation (S.1460), already passed in the House, which would expand FERC's authority and expedite the approval of fracked gas pipelines nationwide.

While the Trump Administration and Congress are pushing for more pipelines, activists have recently scored several victories fighting pipelines, including regulatory or judicial victories against the Atlantic Coast, Constitution, Valley Lateral, and Southeast Markets pipelines. These victories were quickly challenged by the pipeline industry in the courts and with FERC. Activists are calling for a moratorium on any new pipeline approvals until Congressional hearings into FERC's abuses take place.

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