

**For Immediate Release:**

November 17, 2021

**Contacts:**

Tracy Carluccio, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, 215.692.2329, [tracy@delawareriverkeeper.org](mailto:tracy@delawareriverkeeper.org)

Karen Feridun, Berks Gas Truth, 610-678-7726, [berksgastruth@gmail.com](mailto:berksgastruth@gmail.com)

**Philadelphia Residents and Organizations Deliver 3,674 Petitions to Biden Administration opposing LNG by rail transport through City  
*#StopFrackedGasBombTrains is rallying cry***

*Philadelphia, PA* – Residents, workers, and organizations delivered 3,674 signed [petitions today to President Biden's Administration](#) calling for cancellation of a [Special Permit](#) that would allow the transport of liquid fracked gas, known as liquefied natural gas or LNG, in rail cars through neighborhoods in Philadelphia. The trains are permitted by the US Department of Transportation (DOT) to travel on an approximate 200-mile route from Wyalusing in northcentral Pennsylvania to Gibbstown NJ, on the Delaware River. The rail cars would fill enormous tanker ships at the proposed Gibbstown LNG Export Terminal for sale overseas by New Fortress Energy.

The package of petitions and resolutions were brought by representatives of community organizations and neighborhoods to the Federal Transit Administration on Market Street where DOT has an office. Flash drives were delivered by Fed Ex last night to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, President Biden and the White House Council on Environmental Quality, the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg. Resolutions adopted by nine New Jersey municipalities located along the LNG train route and nine NJ faith-based organizations were delivered by representatives as well. In addition, a video featuring residents of the most impacted neighborhoods in Philadelphia and Allentown was delivered to President Biden and the federal agencies.

Holding signs and speaking in front of the Federal Transit Administration office (a branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT); the Special Permit was issued by the DOT's Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration) in Center City, representatives of the Stop the Bomb Trains Philly Campaign symbolically delivered the petitions and other documents to the Biden Administration. The Trump Administration granted a Special Permit for up to two 100-car trains carrying this hazardous, flammable, and potentially explosive cargo to travel through hundreds of PA and NJ communities each day. The trains would go through Philadelphia, Allentown, and Camden, NJ, endangering at least 2 million people. The federal government had a longstanding ban in place that prohibited transporting of LNG by rail car to protect public safety until a 2020 rule adoption by PHMSA under the Trump Administration. This Special Permit, an exception to the ban and a separate permit from the federal rule, would be the first rail car transport of LNG of this scale and distance in the nation, the first and only in NJ or PA, and the only transport of LNG in these rail cars designed 50 years ago. The recently proposed federal rulemaking to rescind the Trump LNG rule would not affect the Special Permit for this project, leaving it as a stand-alone approval.

The rail tank cars are substandard and have never been used or fully tested for the transport of LNG. A release of the contents from a derailment or other incident in Philadelphia would impact the entire city, with the most intense and inescapable harm in communities populated by people of color and low income. Dozens of hospitals, schools, and day care facilities are located along the tracks over a distance of approximately 10 miles in Philadelphia. Other dense communities along the route would face this same terrifying fate. People are saying: We do not want to be a sacrifice zone!

People who live along the train route have been going door to door, standing at grocery stores and bus stops, collecting signatures on the petition. Electronic versions have been shared in the region by several supporting organizations and by the Stop the Bomb Trains Philly Campaign. The Gibbstown LNG export dock has not been built, and the permit hasn't yet been used since it was issued in December 2019. The permit is due to expire at the end of November. Community members have united at this opportune moment to call on President Biden to protect public safety. The petition says:

“We, the undersigned, call upon President Biden and our federal elected representatives to prevent the transport of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) by rail through Philadelphia for export overseas. The Special Permit (Special Permit DOT-SP 20534) to Energy Transport Solutions for rail transport from Wyalusing PA to Gibbstown NJ should be rescinded. The separately issued federal rule that lifted the long-standing ban on LNG transport in rail tank cars across the nation must also be rescinded. Our communities must be protected from the threat to their safety posed by LNG transportation by rail.”

**The breaking news about the Special Permit**, gleaned this week from a Freedom of Information Act request by Delaware Riverkeeper Network to PHMSA for files related to the Special Permit, is that Energy Transport Solutions (a subsidiary of New Fortress Energy, the owner of the Gibbstown/Wyalusing LNG export project) did not apply to PHMSA for the renewal of the Special Permit, which will result in the permit expiring after November 30. The Stop the Bomb Trains Philly Campaign will follow up with the Biden Administration to discover the fate of the Special Permit and make certain the permit is forever ended and their communities are protected from this intolerable and unjust threat.

**QUOTES from individuals and/or groups engaged in the Philly campaign:**

“It has been revealed that during the administration of President Eisenhower a famous scientist Edward Teller in a petroleum conference in 1959 warned industry executives of global warming. Since then the fossil fuel industry has thumbed their noses and have done practically nothing but put profits over the health of the planet. We need to stop subsidizing them and allow them to disappear and institute clean energy projects moving forward. We can do this by having the input of citizens and creating cooperatives among working people who will have the best interests because they will put people over profits. Stop nurturing the idea that there is an energy crisis as the U.S. and its allies put blockades on nations that they don't like. Today, let's protect the public safety in the poorest and underrepresented neighborhoods by stopping this Special Permit for the trains,” **said Fermin Morales, Organizer with Philly Boricuas.**

“I am here today in representation of Our Philadelphia Community - the day cares, the schools, the hospitals - asking the Biden Administration to not renew this special permit of LNG bomb trains riding

through our cities. We cannot function as a city knowing that there are real life bombs literally passing by our backyards, we don't want this now or ever near any city in the US or in PUERTO RICO," **said Myriam Ramirez, Community Organizer with Make the Road Pennsylvania.**

"In order to save humanity, we cannot develop any more fossil fuel infrastructure and must quickly change to renewable energy. Running trains carrying highly explosive LNG, in residential neighborhoods, defies our humanity by putting people's lives in danger," **350 Philadelphia.**

"The Special Permit that permits New Fortress Energy to transport liquid fracked gas (liquefied natural gas or LNG) from Bradford County PA to Gibbstown New Jersey for export overseas exposes millions of people to the danger of this flammable and potentially explosive cargo. This is an intolerable injustice being forced on our communities and is especially egregious in densely populated communities such as Philadelphia and Allentown where most of the neighborhoods and businesses are people of color and low income. We are asking President Biden with these thousands of petitions to recognize that this unjust permit must be permanently stopped - this potential catastrophe burdens everyone along the train route and only benefits greedy special interests. Stop the fracked gas bomb trains through Philly and protect the people instead," **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

"Say "No" to permitting trains of railcar tankers filled with liquid natural gas to cross through Philadelphia on their journey to Gibbstown, NJ and foreign ports. I am a Philadelphia artist, an environmentalist, and a climate activist; here is our opportunity to stop the proposed transport of liquid natural gas by rail and stop more CO2 emissions into our very fragile atmosphere," **said Karen Stabenow, Philadelphia resident.**

"Mennonite farms near my home hug the train tracks that connect Allentown to Reading before turning south to Philadelphia, the tracks that LNG bomb trains would travel each day. Whether they are rural struggling family farms or urban communities that have traditionally been disproportionately affected by industrial polluters, the places along the route are the ones we call home. President Biden can and must act decisively by stopping the Special Permit that would put the places that mean the most to us in jeopardy," **said Karen Feridun, Founder of Berks Gas Truth.**

"The LNG by rail Special Permit should be allowed to fade away. LNG should never be transported by rail through highly populated areas. The raging fire that will result from a LNG train accident on old tracks could easily occur in a highly populated area. This fire cannot be extinguished by the usual means, so many people will be burned to death, when such an accident occurs. It is much better to prevent injury by eliminating the fuel for the LNG fire, then by attempting to rescue people after such an ignition occurs," **said Barbara W Bandom, MD (retired), Concerned Health Professionals of Pennsylvania.**

"When I mentioned the LNG project in Gibbstown to 3 friends that live in Paulsboro and Westville NJ, who I have known for over 40 years, they wanted to know how the government could justify a few high paying jobs at the risk of the health and safety of their families. That is when I decided to get involved. I have contacted many Municipalities, Houses of Worship, Civic, and Environmental Groups and have

received 18 resolutions against this awful project. New Fortress Energy gets the all profits, and residents along the route get all of the safety risks," **said 2018 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee, David Steinberg, New Jersey resident.**

"The residents of New Jersey are being subjected to a very dangerous project being planned by New Fortress Energy that includes transport of LNG through Pennsylvania and New Jersey on Bomb Trains and trucks to be exported to foreign countries. New Jersey will receive no benefit from this project whatsoever. We are only guinea pigs for their dangerous proposal. We need President Biden to know by way of the resolutions that we've been collecting from many towns in New Jersey that anyone who's heard about this proposal is totally against it. We hope that the President listens to us and stops the Special Permit for this project," **said James Stewart, National Park NJ.**

**Map of LNG transport routes here <https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/taxonomy/term/1174>**

###