

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION
Division of Information Resources

June 10, 2020

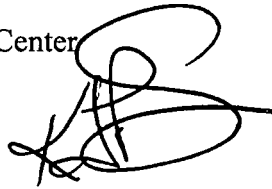
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S.C. CLERK'S OFFICE
DOCUMENT CONTROL CENTER

MEMORANDUM

TO: Document Control Center
Clerk's Office

FROM: Ken Schrad

RE: PUR-2019-00207



I have attached a letter dated May 12, 2020 from Virginia Congressman A. Donald McEachin. The letter was sent by email to my attention on Wednesday, June 10, 2020.

The June 10 email was a follow-up to an email submission that was thought to have been made on May 12, 2020. I have no record of receiving an email nor responding to such on or around that date.

It is presumed the May 12 email went to a misspelled email address or to a generic email address not set up for case comment submissions.

I ask that you pass this correspondence to the case file referenced below.

PUR-2019-00207

Virginia Natural Gas - For approval and certification of natural gas facilities: the Header Improvement Project and for approval of Rate Schedules and Terms and Conditions for Pipeline Transportation Service

Attachment –

- Letter dated May 12, 2020 from Congressman A. Donald McEachin

May 12, 2020

Judge Mark C. Christie
Chairman, State Corporation Commission
P.O. Box 1197
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Judge Judith Williams Jagdmann
State Corporation Commission
P.O. Box 1197
Richmond, Virginia 23218

2005078

RE: Application of Virginia Natural Gas, Inc. for natural gas facilities: the Header Improvement Project and for approval of Rate Schedules and Terms and Conditions for Pipeline Transportation Service, PUR-2019-00207

Dear Chairman Christie and Judge Jagdmann,

I am writing regarding Virginia Natural Gas' Header Improvement Project, PUR-2019-00207. Residents of the Fourth Congressional District of Virginia have raised serious concerns surrounding the project.

The Header Improvement Project (HIP), which includes three new natural gas pipelines and three new or expanded gas compressor stations, spanning from Northern Virginia to the shore in Hampton Roads, has significant environmental, health, and economic implications. While additional energy capacity from this project could foster economic development within local communities, it also risks endangering the health and well-being of residents, particularly members of frontline communities, who disproportionately suffer from the health effects of toxic pollution.

The environmental and health risks associated with the HIP is an area of significant concern. Pipeline construction will impact hundreds of acres of wetlands and dozens of waterbodies, threatening critical drinking water sources across the Commonwealth. Safe, clean drinking water is a necessity and approving the HIP could put major water sources at risk, including those within communities already experiencing water scarcity. Equally concerning are the three compressor stations, which could severely impact the health of residents. Built along the pipeline routes, the compressor stations emit harmful air pollution, including nitrogen oxides (NO_x), carbon monoxide (CO), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and particulate matter (PM). Particulate matter, for example, can cause reduced lung function, asthma, and heart attacks.¹ While the disparate health impacts from these compressor stations could affect everyone, they are likely to most disproportionately harm communities on the frontline where other projects, like the Chickahominy Power Station, are being pursued. The cumulative impacts of these projects must be considered – the health and safety of residents of the Commonwealth cannot be compromised.

It is also important to note that robust feedback from impacted residents is critical before a project proceeds. Despite its importance, however, many residents have expressed concerns with the HIP permitting process, including that impacted landowners were notified in February and the public comment period ended in April.² The COVID-19 public health crisis and resulting commonwealth-wide stay-at-home order has further complicated the public's ability to be fully engaged. While I understand that you have decided to webcast today's public hearing to help address these concerns, not all impacted residents have reliable broadband access, prohibiting them from meaningfully participating. Given these unprecedented times, it is important that all interested parties are provided a fair hearing of their concerns.

The State Corporation Commission has the critical task of striking the right balance between approving necessary energy development while also safeguarding the environment. At a time when scientists tell us we must transition to a clean, renewable energy to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, the decision to approve these pipelines cannot be made without considering the extent to which they would displace the development of renewable energy. Residents of the Commonwealth deserve to live in an environment that is healthy, clean, and safe, and they are entitled to have their voices recognized when considering projects that could have significant health, environmental, and economic impacts on their lives. I ask that you give the concerns of these residents your full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,



Congressman A. Donald McEachin

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/health-and-environmental-effects-particulate-matter-pm>

² <https://www.virginiamercury.com/2020/04/24/state-corporation-commission-should-pause-process-on-natural-gas-project/>