

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-60

RESOLUTION URGING THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TO EXTEND THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE WILLIAMS NESE PIPELINE IN THE BAYSHORE

WHEREAS, Williams is proposing to build a 23.5 mile methane natural gas pipeline, called the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project (Williams/NESE) through Raritan Bay and Lower New York Bay, from Old Bridge to Rockaway, New York; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the proposed project is to transport 400 million cubic feet of methane natural gas per day, extracted from the Marcellus Shale to New York markedly contributing to climate change; and

WHEREAS, the project will in no way serve the interests of the State of New Jersey, its residents, or our shared natural environment, and will only supply methane natural gas to Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island, New York; and

WHEREAS, the Williams/NESE pipeline will conduct activities within the Raritan Bay and surrounding communities of Monmouth and Middlesex County, such as disturbing roughly, 14,165 acres of the seabed of the Raritan Bay, discharging 690,000 gallons of drilling fluid and chemicals into the bay, re-suspending over 1,090,000 tons of sediments contaminated by PCBs, dioxin, lead, mercury, and arsenic and will remove over 1,000 acres of benthic; and

WHEREAS, the Williams/NESE pipeline could endanger marine life and fisheries important to the economic interest of the Bayshore communities through decrease water quality from re-suspended toxins, sieving of over 3.5 million gallons of seawater destroying any living thing caught in the process, loud sounds and powerful vibrations that accompany pipeline development which will impact migration patterns, communication systems and scatter fish; and

WHEREAS, the project poses serious concerns related to environmental harm to marine and coastal ecosystems, as well as negative impacts to the safety, health and wellbeing of Bayshore and coastal communities of Monmouth and Middlesex County; and

WHEREAS, the Williams/NESE pipeline could affect industries important to the Bayshore disturb commercial and recreational fishing and shell fishing activities, and potentially damage the tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, recent polling of numerous communities, fisherman, clammers, leaders and elected officials in the Bayshore region by Clean Ocean Action about this project revealed that few if any were aware of the project and its impact; and

WHEREAS, despite being directly affected from the proposed Williams/NESE pipeline, there has been no public hearing within the Bayshore; and

WHEREAS, the only hearing on permits related to the impacts to the bay was not held in the vicinity of the bay.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Aberdeen, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey that on this date, April 4, 2019, the Township Council hereby calls on the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection extend the public comment period 45 days and within the extension conduct a public hearing on the Williams NESE pipeline in the Bayshore region.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that good governance depends on transparency and due process and thus, the Bayshore must have an opportunity to be heard.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be certified and forwarded to the New Jersey Governor Philip D. Murphy; New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Catherine McCabe; Senator Declan J. O'Scanlon, Jr.; Assemblywoman Serena DeMaso and Assemblywoman Amy H. Handlin.