



## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

VIN GOPAL  
Senator, 11<sup>th</sup> District  
Majority Conference Leader

August 1, 2019

Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe  
State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
401 East State Street, 7th floor  
P.O. Box 402  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402

Dear Commissioner McCabe,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Williams Northeast Supply Enhancement Project (NESE). This project would create public health risks, environmental threats, and negative economic costs for New Jersey without creating any additional benefit for New Jersey ratepayers.

The construction of a fracked gas pipeline is a highly intrusive process that, according to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) Environmental Impact Statement, threatens to displace unsafe levels of numerous toxic substances under the seafloor along the proposed route. The potential displacement of these substances within three miles of many shoreline communities and precious habitats represents an unacceptable risk to human and animal health. Furthermore, the loud sounds and powerful vibrations associated with seabed drilling and construction will impact important biological processes needed by fish and marine mammals to communicate, forage for food, and migrate. Moreover, the chemicals proposed for use by the Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company are correlated with contamination of shellfish, which are not only an important population within the ecosystem, but a large source of economic value.

Based on the scope and magnitude of the harm associated with this project, I request that the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) conduct a public hearing regarding NESE within the coastal Bayshore region. Bayshore communities will be directly impacted by NESE's construction and operation and should be afforded an opportunity to voice their opinions about the proposal given the significance of those waterbodies to their livelihoods. These communities will be directly impacted by the construction and operation of this project



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both on land and sea. Local businesses, residents that use the area for recreation, recreational and commercial fisheries, and bay-side homeowners will be particularly at risk.

Additionally, I am requesting that the Department extend the public comment period by 30 days to allow for more robust public engagement on this serious and significant proposal. Many residents have expressed concerns that due to the busy summer season and limited municipal office business hours, they have been unable to adequately review information related to the project and provide their feedback.

In the absence of an additional hearing and extended public comment period, I urge the Department to deny the pending permits. Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vin Gopal", written over a faint, circular embossed seal.

Vin Gopal  
State Senator  
11th Legislative District