

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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MAYOR



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Mayor Healy Calls on President Obama to Stop the Proposed Spectra Energy Natural Gas Pipeline Mayor Sends Letter to White House Citing Obama's Recent Decision to Halt the Keystone XL Pipeline in the Midwest

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy has sent a letter to **President Barack Obama** and Obama Administration officials urging the President to stop the proposed Spectra Energy natural gas pipeline intended for Jersey City.

Plans for the pipeline, which are currently being reviewed by the **Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)**, call for the high-pressure pipeline to run through 6.5 miles of the state's second largest city by schools, ball fields, housing, hospitals and critical transportation infrastructure.

“We applaud your decision to delay consideration of the **Keystone XL pipeline**, and your commitment to further study of the project,” **Mayor Healy** writes in the letter. “For good reason, the Keystone XL proposal attracted your attention and required your response. But, we are writing you about another proposed pipeline – one far more insidious than even a 17-hundred-mile oil conduit that would cross the Midwest.”

The decision on the Keystone XL Pipeline – which is proposed to transport millions of barrels of tar sands oil through six states from Canada to U.S. Gulf Coast refineries – was delayed by President Obama, giving the State Department of Nebraska the opportunity to study alternative routes. The Keystone XL Pipeline is currently routed through the Ogallala Aquifer and faces strong opposition by environmentalists, farmers, and aboriginal leaders.

In his letter to President Obama, Mayor Healy cites the extreme, wide-ranging danger the so-called “New Jersey-New York Expansion Project” presents, and asks that President Obama “shut this pipeline down now – long before it gets into the ground.”

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The New Jersey-New York Expansion Project, which was conceived as a means of bringing natural gas to New York City, would cut a deadly swath through the nation's most densely-populated and financially-significant area. Its path – and the explosive material it is slated to transmit – would imperil millions of people, billions of dollars in economic infrastructure and invaluable natural habitats, Mayor Healy said.

“The proposed pipeline would transport an unprecedented, potentially disastrous quantity of gas through the heart of Jersey City – traversing everything from low-income neighborhoods to high-rise communities to the nationally-critical financial district known as “Wall Street West,” said **Mayor Healy**. “On behalf of Jersey City, its quarter million residents, its ever-burgeoning development, its thriving, multi-billion dollar economic sectors, and its precious and diverse ecosystems, we ask you to put a stop to the New Jersey-New York Expansion Project’s pipeline plans.”

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699./////



CITY OF JERSEY CITY

JERRAMIAH T. HEALY, MAYOR

November 28, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

We applaud your decision to delay consideration of the Keystone XL pipeline, and your commitment to further study of the project. For good reason, the Keystone XL proposal attracted your attention and required your response.

But, we are writing you about another proposed pipeline – one more insidious than even a 17-hundred-mile oil conduit that could cross the Midwest. And, given the extreme, wide-ranging danger the so-called “New Jersey-New York Expansion Project” presents, we pray you shut this pipeline down now – long before it gets into the ground.

The New Jersey-New York Expansion Project would cut a dangerous swath through the nation’s most densely-populated and financially-significant area. Its path – and the explosive material it is slated to transmit – would imperil millions of people, billions of dollars in economic infrastructure and invaluable natural habitats.

Spectra Energy, a multi-billion dollar pipeline corporation, is attempting to ram through this high-pressure natural gas conduit. The company’s proposed pipeline would transport an unprecedented, potentially disastrous quantity of gas through the heart of Jersey City – traversing everything from low-income neighborhoods to high-rise communities to the nationally-critical financial district known as “Wall Street West.” Wherever this pipeline were to rupture, it would carve a quarter-mile crater in the earth, thus jeopardizing both the safety of virtually every one of the City’s residents, and the security of the nation’s economic markets.

As such, we have staunchly opposed the project from its conception: For instance, Jersey City just filed a detailed, 30-page response meticulously criticizing the FERC draft Environmental Impact Statement for the NJ/NY Expansion Project. Our comments addressed issues related to safety, loss of economic

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development potential, risk to existing infrastructure, lack of required environmental justice review, and the arbitrariness and capriciousness of statements made by FERC staff throughout the agency's document.

But, as well-founded as they are, our concerns have been ignored.

Indeed, though Spectra shrugged off Jersey City's fears as remote, we need only look a mere year in the past to find evidence to substantiate our alarm. In September of 2010, a natural gas pipeline ruptured and exploded in San Bruno, CA, killing 8 people, leaving 6 missing, and injuring 60 more. As tragic as the San Bruno accident was, the population density – hence, the number of people in harm's way – is several times – in some spots, even *several hundred times* – greater in Jersey City. None of this takes into account that the pipeline passes in shallow ground under hundreds of thousands of cars travelling on major highway interchanges, and jeopardizes hundreds of thousands of people travelling on major mass transit systems each day.

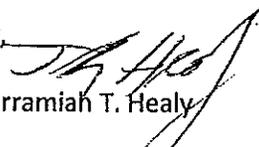
Several federal agencies technically manage the siting and safety of natural gas pipelines. However, the City believes the rules under which they operate are woefully inadequate, leaving them structurally incompetent to provide oversight to an unprecedented proposal like Spectra Energy's in Jersey City. Moreover, throughout the process, the City has explicitly made known to the pipeline company and the various agencies its myriad, factually-based concerns; but these entities have not truly heard - let alone answered - the City.

Of course, Jersey City is not alone in its belief that the agencies tasked with federal oversight of pipeline projects are ill-equipped to carry out their incredibly important responsibilities. In September of 2011, both houses of Congress proposed legislation to tighten pipeline safety regulations and standards. These bills have passed out of both House and Senate Committees, and they have garnered much public attention.

Jersey City has always supported you and your policy goals and initiatives. In light of the controversies surrounding other possible energy pipelines, we want to bring our plight to your attention, and respectfully request your intervention.

On behalf of Jersey City, its 250-thousand citizens, its ever-burgeoning development, its thriving, multi-billion dollar economic sectors, and its precious and diverse ecosystems, we ask you to put a stop to the New Jersey-New York Expansion Project's pipeline plans.

Sincerely,


Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy

Cc: Lisa Jackson, United States Environmental Protection Agency

William Daley – Chief of Staff