



BOROUGH OF HIGHLANDS
COUNTY OF MONMOUTH

RESOLUTION 25-149

DECLARING OPPOSITION TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WILLIAMS TRANSCO NORTHEAST SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT (NESE) PIPELINE

WHEREAS, on May 15, 2019, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation denied Transco's application for a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification citing "significant water quality impacts from the resuspension of sediments and other contaminants, including mercury and copper"; and

WHEREAS, on June 5, 2019, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection denied a second set of permits for failing to meet surface water quality requirements, disturbing wetlands, endangering species and without a compelling public need; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2020, the Synapse Economic Energy Report found there is no demonstrable supply-and-demand-gap that could justify NESE or any other large-scale gas infrastructure projects; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2020, the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis report found that there is no public need for the NESE pipeline and that the National Grid utility's contract for the pipeline would have required ratepayers in Long Island, Brooklyn, Staten Island and most of Queens to pay \$193 million a year for 15 years; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2020, National Grid identified in its "Long-term Capacity Report" an alternative for natural gas services, including a clean energy, no-infrastructure alternative, that did not require construction of a new pipeline; and

WHEREAS, on April 20, 2020, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation denied another of Transco's application for a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification "with prejudice"; and

WHEREAS, on May 15, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection denied Williams the Wetland and 401 Water Quality permits for 23 miles of submarine pipeline off the Raritan Bay cutting under Sayreville and Old Bridge and requiring a new compressor station in Franklin; and

WHEREAS, in May of 2024, the Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company LLC (Transco), a subsidiary of Williams, notified the Federal Energy Regulatory Authority it would not seek an extension to build the NESE project abandoning it altogether by letting the expiration of a previously granted extension by FERC on May 3, 2024 occur; and

WHEREAS, on May 29, 2025, Williams Transco petitioned FERC for “Expedited Reissuance of Certification Authority Northeast Supply Enhancement Project”; and

WHEREAS, Williams Transco has made no changes to the project and failed to update cost estimates; and

WHEREAS, Williams Transco is proposing to construct a 32,000 hp compressor station to accelerate flow through its existing pipeline, constructed in the 1950s; and

WHEREAS, the construction and operation of the proposed compressor station will release toxins to the air, ground water and nearby streams, as well as noise above and beyond accepted regulatory levels, all of which will impact the quality of life of local residents, children attending schools, businesses, places of worship, farmers and their farms which produce crops for local and regional consumption, and area and migratory wildlife for many years; and

WHEREAS, the NESE pipeline will adversely impact industries to the New Jersey Bayshore communities, disturb commercial and recreational fishing and shellfishing activities and potentially damage the tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, the NESE pipeline will have severe negative impacts to the Raritan and Lower New York Bays, such as disruption of roughly 14,165 acres of the seabed of the Raritan Bay, the discharge of 690,000 gallons of drilling fluid and chemicals into the bay, the re-suspending over 1,090,000 tons of toxic muck contaminated by PCBs, dioxin, lead, mercury and arsenic and the destruction of over 1,000 acres of benthic habitat that houses marine fish, shellfish and larva; 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 coastal communities, resulting in well documented public opposition; and

WHEREAS, the NESE pipeline will endanger marine and wildlife through decreased water quality from re-suspended toxins, the sieving of over 3.5 million gallons of seawater destroying any living thing that is caught in the process, and the creation of loud sounds and powerful vibrations that

accompany pipeline development which will impact migration patterns, communication systems and other important biological processes; and

WHEREAS, the ocean disposal of the contaminated material would harm the marine environment by leaving the contaminated sediment exposed and subject to bioaccumulation in the food chain and would utilize the limited remaining capacity at the Historic Area Remediation Site which must be preserved for needed maintenance dredging for navigational projects; and

WHEREAS, the NESE pipeline will have significant upstream environmental impacts that will directly harm the Raritan Bay, such as negatively affecting 41 acres of wetlands, including approximately 20 acres of forested wetland; and

WHEREAS, the financial stability of Williams was questioned, leading to suggestions that the company might not be able to sustain maintenance and safety of the compressor station, having previously cut staff and abandoned the project previously; and

WHEREAS, the compressor would be subject to regular 'blowdowns' releasing methane and methyl mercaptan into the surrounding atmosphere, as well as constant high temperature exhaust containing carbon monoxide and formaldehyde (oxides of nitrogen were stated to be controlled by injecting urea, but products were not specified); and

WHEREAS, the compressor station would be near active mining in the Trap Rock Quarry, which carries out explosive blasting to break loose rock, and Williams was not able to present evidence that the compressors would be stable to shocks created by the blasting; and

WHEREAS, the project would not in any way serve the State of New Jersey or its residents, and will only supply climate-altering-methane-gas to Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island New York where state and local policies are actively supporting residents switching from oil heat to gas; and

WHEREAS, natural gas as fuel that is burned creates carbon dioxide, and methane leaks and releases have 84 times the effect of an equal concentration of carbon dioxide over a 20-year period, and

WHEREAS, New York State and New York City are actively working to decrease gas demand by instituting policies that encourage building electrification, and

WHEREAS, limitation of global temperature increases due to the greenhouse effect depends on replacement of CO2-emitting energy sources by other sources as quickly as possible.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on this date, July 16, 2025, the Borough of Highlands hereby opposes the construction and installation of a 23.4 mile methane natural gas pipeline through Raritan Bay from Old Bridge, New Jersey, to Rockaway, New York. Construction of the pipeline will negatively impact the health of the Bayshore, coastal ecosystems, marine life, benthic habitats, and coastal communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Borough of Highlands urges the company Williams to eliminate any further consideration for a pipeline.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Borough of Highlands urges the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to deny any permit application for the project and any other pipeline, and urges its representatives of the New Jersey Legislature, United States Congress and United States Senate, as well as the Governor of New Jersey to oppose this pipeline application.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be certified and forwarded to New Jersey Governor Philip D. Murphy, Matthew Resnick of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Land Use Regulation, Senator Declan J. O'Scanlon, Jr., Assemblywoman Victoria A. Flynn, and Assemblyman Gerry Scharfenberger.

Motion to Approve R 25-149:

| | INTRODUCED | SECOND | AYE | NAY | RECUSE | ABSENT |
|-----------|------------|--------|-----|-----|--------|--------|
| CERVANTES | | | | | | |
| CHELAK | | | | | | |
| MELNYK | | | | | | |
| OLSZEWSKI | | | | | | |
| BROULLON | | | | | | |

This is a Certified True copy of the Original Resolution on file in the Municipal Clerk's Office.

DATE OF VOTE: July 16, 2025

Nancy Tran, Municipal Clerk
Borough of Highlands