

CP 15-558



NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**OFFICE OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

2016 MAY -2 P 2:49

**FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION**
April 18, 2016

178 CENTER STREET, SUITE 2B
CLINTON, NEW JERSEY 08809
TELEPHONE: (908) 238-0251
FAX: (908) 238-0256

ELECTRONIC MAIL: AsmPeterson@njleg.org

ERIK PETERSON
ASSEMBLYMAN, DISTRICT 23
HUNTERDON, SOMERSET AND
WARREN COUNTIES

The Honorable Bob Martin
Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
401 East State Street
Post Office Box 402
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0402

Dear Commissioner Martin:

I appreciate your significant efforts on the proposed PennEast pipeline in ensuring that the proper studies and impact are evaluated. As you complete your analysis, I recommend two areas are given substantial consideration: co-location where possible and, as it relates to eminent domain, the most limited of use and fair compensation for acquired lands.

PennEast has threatened the possibility of eminent domain. This arises despite the existence of alternate routes within established public utility rights-of-way, including similar pipeline easements. Regardless of the percentage of the pipeline plan that currently uses existing easements, we do not support a proposal that threatens the condemnation of land where alternatives have not been fully investigated and ordered, as prescribed by the US National Environmental Policy Act.

The PennEast pipeline will permanently scar an exceptionally pristine and rich agricultural heritage that defines and sustains residents. In accordance with the Constitution's Fifth Amendment, the seizure of land through eminent domain should be limited to only the most critical cases. In addition, I support an eminent domain compensation approach, and am considering such legislation, which would provide residents a valuation by achieving a higher degree of fairness for the individual forced to sell an easement to their land and making the natural gas companies contribute fairly based on what the land is worth to their project and future profits.

Furthermore, I understand that studies are available that question the need for additional natural gas capacity. My expectation is that the analysis of these studies will be included in your process as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Erik Peterson

Cc: The Honorable Norman C. Bay, FERC Chairman ✓

Document Content(s)

14237015.tif.....1-1