

Coalition Against Pilgrim Pipelines-New York (CAPPNY)

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Overwhelming Objections to Thruway Authority Lead or Co-Lead Agency Role in Pilgrim Pipelines Review; Public Opposition Broadens

New Paltz, NY: Opposition to the proposed controversial Pilgrim Pipelines in New York State continues to grow. If the state environmental review, which leading environmental groups have said should not take place at all because Pilgrim Pipelines is unfeasible, is to move forward, Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos must resolve the dispute created by municipalities which have now stated their opposition to the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA) having Lead or Co-Lead Agency status 45 times.

On March 21st, the Town of New Paltz sent a formal "dispute resolution" request to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos. The letter establishes New Paltz's jurisdiction over certain Pilgrim Pipelines' permits, and requests that Seggos designate DEC as sole lead agency. Municipalities (counties, towns, cities, and villages) along the proposed pipelines' direct route previously submitted 44 other letters and resolutions opposing NYSTA's proposed lead or co-lead agency status.

Town of New Paltz Supervisor Neil Bettez said, "I am opposed to the project, and unwilling to bear the environmental risks and costs to our first responders associated with pipelines, which would pass through our community, providing no benefit."

Leading environmental groups sent a letter to NYSTA and the DEC on March 25th, arguing that the DEC should suspend the environmental review of the two controversial proposed petroleum pipelines. The letter argues that because cities and villages have the authority to deny permits for the pipelines to be built within their boundaries, and five cities and villages have already passed Resolutions Opposing Pilgrim Pipelines, the pipelines are not viable. Therefore, taxpayer money should not be wasted in a needless environmental review. The letter and supporting press statement can be found here: https://stoppilgrimpipeline.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/press_release_033020161.pdf

By the Numbers: "No" to Thruway Authority

At least 15 involved municipalities (three counties, one city, nine towns, and two villages) along the direct route have gone on record **opposing the proposed co-lead agency** role for the Thruway Authority. Initially, in December 2015, **29 municipalities** also passed resolutions and sent letters opposing any Thruway Authority lead agency role. That brought the total to 44 actions opposing Thruway Authority involvement in the lead agency role; **New Paltz's March 21st letter brought that grand total to 45.**

The Village and Town of Woodbury passed Resolutions Opposing Pilgrim Pipelines on March 17th, bringing the total in New York State to **24 municipalities which have passed Resolutions Opposing Pilgrim Pipelines** outright. Added to New Jersey's 39, both states have a combined grand total of 63 Resolutions Opposing Pilgrim Pipelines. All are posted here: <http://stoppilgrimpipeline.com/resolutions/>

The 15 municipalities which have explicitly opposed the co-lead agency proposal are: Counties of **Albany, Greene, and Ulster**; **City of Kingston**, which also offered to act as lead agency; Ulster County towns of **New Paltz, Plattekill, Rosendale, and Saugerties**; Greene County towns of **Athens and Catskill**; Orange County towns of **Cornwall, Newburgh, and Tuxedo**; Villages of **Harriman and**

Tuxedo Park. These 15 Letters and Resolutions are here:

https://stoppilgrimpipeline.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/lead_agency_letters_and_resolutions_feb24.pdf.

The 29 municipalities that previously opposed NYSTA as lead agency, asking that DEC be designated sole lead agency, include the 15 listed above plus **Rockland County**; the Cities of **Albany and Newburgh**; the Albany County Towns of **Bethlehem and Coeymans**; the Greene County Towns of **Coxsackie and New Baltimore**; the Ulster County towns of **Esopus, Lloyd, Marlborough, and Ulster**; the Orange County town of **New Windsor**; the Rockland County Town of **Ramapo**, and the Village of **Hillburn**. All took action within 30 days of NYSTA's November 2015 proposal to assume lead agency. Those documents are here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bw5nDE9mUfKgRjhjdTRYbi1YRFU/view>

The overwhelming majority of municipalities which opposed NYSTA as Lead Agency also stated, when asked, that they also oppose NYSTA as Co-Lead Agency and felt their opposition should stand without having to write essentially the same letter over and over again during subsequent comment periods.

Only "involved municipalities" have been allowed to comment on the Lead Agency dispute. These involved agencies are thirty-one cities, towns, and villages, plus six counties (Albany, Rensselaer, Greene, Ulster, Orange, and Rockland) along the direct proposed route of the Pilgrim Pipelines. New York City, although not on the direct path, is also a potentially involved agency. The proposed Pilgrim pipelines would cross the Catskill and Delaware Aqueducts, threatening New York City's drinking water.

"The incredible outpouring by municipalities objecting to the Thruway Authority's involvement in any lead or co-lead agency role, as well as their opposition to the Pilgrim Pipelines period, speaks volumes," commented Iris Marie Bloom of the Coalition Against Pilgrim Pipelines-New York (CAPPNY). "These municipalities are saying that their drinking water, air quality, climate, public health, and safety are too important to entrust to the Thruway Authority, with its narrow focus and financial conflict of interest. These municipalities have spoken with one powerful voice: DEC must be the sole lead agency."

"Based on the crowds at three recent public meetings in Orange and Ulster counties, clearly public opposition to these proposed dangerous fracked oil pipelines grows stronger every day," Bloom added.

Broadening Opposition to Proposed Controversial Pilgrim Pipelines

In Ulster County, at the Rondout Creek Watershed Forum on March 29th, the Environmental Conservation Commissions of **Rosendale, Marbletown, Rochester, and Wawarsing** re-affirmed their commitment to stopping the Pilgrim Pipelines. A potentially "devastating oil spill from which our town could never recover," said Rosendale Supervisor Jeanne Walsh, "is not an acceptable risk." Each of these towns in the Rondout Creek Watershed previously passed the Resolution Opposing Pilgrim Pipelines.

On March 22nd, more than 65 people attended a Public Forum in the **Town of Cornwall**, expressing tremendous concern over Pilgrim land agents' "intimidating" behavior, as reported by Sandra Kissam, of Orange RAPP (Orange Residents Against Pilgrim Pipelines). Another 75 people attended a Forum on Pilgrim Pipelines on March 23rd, in the **City of Newburgh**. The City of Newburgh passed the Resolution Opposing Pilgrim Pipelines last February.

Available for Interview:

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