



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

## 60+ Electeds to NY Gov. Hochul: Stop the Iroquois Pipeline Expansion

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Proposal to expand fracked gas flow through Hudson Valley to New York City threatens public health, safety, and state climate goals

**Athens, NY** — Today, at a rally in Athens, legislators gathered with activists to [deliver a letter](#) coordinated by Food & Water Watch from 60+ local and state elected officials imploring Governor Hochul to stop the Iroquois Pipeline Company's proposal to increase the capacity of polluting compressor stations in Athens and in Dover and expand the amount of fracked gas transported to New York City.

The **letter** states, “This proposal poses an imminent threat to the health and well-being of our state and the communities we were elected to represent...[and if approved would] run fully astray of our state’s climate goals.” Pipeline developers are awaiting an overdue decision on state air pollution permits; 3,300 people commented against the permits in a public comment period that ended in February.

**Food & Water Watch Hudson Valley Senior Organizer Emily Skydel**, an organizer of the letter, said:

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*“New York needs less fracked gas, not more. The Iroquois Pipeline Company’s proposal to expand the amount of dirty, dangerous fracked gas flowing through the Hudson Valley takes New York in the wrong direction. Governor Hochul must direct her state agencies to deny permits for this reckless proposal that serves only to endanger Hudson Valley residents and take us backwards on climate.”*

**Senator Michelle Hinchey** said, “New York is a Climate Leader, and Climate Leaders don’t stray from the path to a clean energy future. The Iroquois Pipeline Company’s proposal to increase fossil fuel infrastructure across our Athens and Dover communities — two Environmental Justice Communities — contradicts the climate goals we have enshrined in State Law and must be denied. The decisions we make today will determine our health and environment, the quality of the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, and the very world we leave behind for those who come after us. Our path must remain focused on advancing a clean energy economy, and expanding fossil fuel infrastructure does not align with New York’s pursuit of true energy independence.”

“The proposed expansion of the Iroquois Pipeline poses significant environmental and health risks to our Hudson Valley region, and I stand with my partners in state and local

government in support of a greener, cleaner energy future for New York State,” said **Assemblymember Didi Barrett, Chair of the Assembly’s Energy Committee.** “I have been fighting these battles since before I was elected to the Assembly. I proudly fought to ban fracking in New York State, and led the charge to stop oil barge anchorage sites on the Hudson River. As a longtime advocate for our environment and our communities, I urge Governor Hochul to listen to the local opposition to this proposal.”

“When concerns emerged about the Iroquois project, I recognized the necessity to communicate these sentiments to the Governor’s office and the D.E.C. As the Assemblyman who covers Dover, my job is to amplify the concerns and opinions of our residents. I remain committed to representing and addressing the community’s collective voice,” said **Assemblymember Anil Beepham Jr. who submitted a separate letter to Gov. Hochul last month regarding the proposal.**

“Greedy fossil fuel companies like Iroquois Gas are profiting by polluting our communities, and putting us at risk. It’s Black, brown, and immigrant communities who live in the places where these facilities are being built who will face the consequences to their health and well-being from pollutants. We call on Governor Hochul to deny the Iroquois Pipeline expansion and protect our communities,” said **Claire Cousin, Supervisor, Columbia County Board of Supervisors.**

**Minority Leader Yvette Valdés Smith, Dutchess County Legislator,** said, “Everyday we are seeing the increasing level of urgency surrounding climate change. There is no room for error when it comes to our environmental policies, which is why we must stop the expansion of the Iroquois natural gas pipeline. Using this technology poses a serious and ongoing risk to the people and land, and deeply threatens our nation-leading climate goals. It would be a shameful step back. That’s why I am urging Governor Hochul to reject this project and continue championing the clean, green future that we have fought for at every level of

government. Our region and the entirety of New York State deserves that.”

Compressor stations have a documented history of emitting cancer-causing chemicals, including elevated levels of nitrogen oxide (NOx) and fine particulate matter, while notoriously leaky pipelines lead to explosions like the one in Wappingers Falls last month which leveled a building and injured more than a dozen people. A 2022 report found that gas pipeline leaks killed 122 people from 2010-2021. Expanded fracked gas pipeline capacity and use in New York City runs afoul to both the state Climate Act’s commitment to emissions reductions and New York City’s nation-leading ban on fossil fuels in new buildings, which goes into effect January 1, 2024.

The letter is sponsored by Food & Water Watch, New York Public Interest Research Group, Frack Busters NY, Concerned Citizens of Dover, New York Progressive Action Network, NYPAN Greene, Third Act Upstate New York and Rivers & Mountains GreenFaith.

**Charlie Quimby, member of Concerned Citizens of Dover** said, “Over thirty years ago the Iroquois Pipeline ripped through this state, and across my town of Dover. They divided farm land, cut through streams, rivers and fragile wetlands — they broke environmental laws, and disregarded proper, and safe construction methods. Their acts were so egregious, Iroquois executives and their subcontractors were brought up on felony charges. They faced a massive fine by the EPA, the second largest to the horrible Exxon Valdez oil spill. We call on Governor Hochul to urge the Dept. of Environmental Conservation to deny this disastrous project.”

**Michael Richardson, Third Act Upstate New York co-facilitator** said, “The State of New York – through which this pipeline transgresses – and the City of New York – to which this methane gas is delivered – have both enacted laws to phase out methane gas in new construction. It is imprudent for the fossil fuel industry to continue to invest in expanding infrastructure to

deliver more of this polluting gas. As elders in the community, we call on Governor Hochul to bring an end to the era of fossil fuel.”

**Cari Gardner, Athens resident, NYPAN Greene Director and New York Progressive Action Network Vice-Chair** said, “As a long time environmental activist, I am very aware of the risks to both health and safety this project poses. If Governor Hochul’s DEC approves the air permits and this project goes forward, it is in direct opposition to the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. We cannot allow this to happen!”

**Kayla Cleary, NYPIRG Intern and SUNY New Paltz student** said, “Low income communities and communities of color throughout the state have been disproportionately burdened by pipelines, power plants and compressor stations. This is why Governor Hochul recently signed the Cumulative Impacts Law (S.8830/A.2103D). The proposals we are discussing today are no exception. We need to ensure that cumulative impacts are taken into consideration in this process as these permits would authorize polluting activities in locations in and adjacent to disadvantaged communities.”