

Comments on NJ Energy Master Plan Project

Earlier this year Governor Murphy signed Executive Order 28 to update the State's Energy Master plan to reach 100% renewable energy by 2050. He has also stated a goal of fighting climate change. Although these have yet to be incorporated into any BPU or DEP regulatory processes it is extremely important that certain steps be taken **NOW (not in June of 2019, but now, as in immediately)**, if either of these goals is going to be met. Specifically, there are plans to build several new gas-fired electric power plants, the largest of which is the Liberty Generating plant in North Bergen.

These plants will emit tons of CO₂ and methane every year. The Liberty Generating plant alone is expected to emit over 2 million tons of CO₂ and leak 1,000 tons of methane each year. **This is in complete conflict with the governor's objectives.** These plants will produce electricity from fossil fuels for the next 30 to 40 years. Please stop and think about this. If a gas power plant goes online in 2020, it could be operating in 2060. This means the governor and the BPU have already failed to meet their goals. You will have failed before even starting. How can we hope to achieve his goals when we are first digging ourselves into a deeper hole in terms of generating more GHG's and more fossil fuel infrastructure. To put it very plainly, THIS IS INSANITY! When one is in a hole and wants to get out, the first rule is to stop digging!

How will anyone take the governor or this new energy master plan seriously if we let these power plants be built?

While stopping these plants now is the best solution, the BPU must include a provision in the new plan that **requires all fossil fuel energy plants to cease operations before 2050** (hopefully, long before). This will cause new plants to reconsider their financial projections and may cause some to abandon their current plans. You cannot grandfather existing plants.

Our experience with the Pilgrim Pipeline (PP) has uncovered the need to change the law regarding Eminent Domain (ED) for private hazardous liquid pipelines whose siting is not regulated by federal law. This involves either an outright ban on providing ED to such pipelines or a very specific and well-defined set of rules for determining public benefit as a deciding factor for granting ED, that are appropriate for such pipelines as opposed to public utilities. (Proposed statute language available on request).

Our experience with PP and other pipelines has also uncovered the need for the DEP to set limits for environmental damage and allowable remediation on a **total project basis** and look at the comprehensive and cumulative effect of linear projects across their entire length, not just look at individual stream crossings or individual steep slope situations.

In concert with such improved oversight and regulation of linear projects, the DEP must reverse its approach on HDD (horizontal directional drilling) that HDD automatically has no significant impact on the environment. This is a bald faced lie for everyone to see. This makes a mockery of the DEP's putative role of protecting the environment.

In order to meet the goal of 100% renewable energy, the BPU and DEP must require substantive validated proposals for alternative renewable energy solutions to any proposed fossil fuel developments or enhancements to existing fossil fuel infrastructures and deny permits when reasonable renewable energy options exist.

The DEP must take Air Deposition into account when considering permits for new fossil fuel power plants as well as other sources of air pollution. Air Deposition is the effect of airborne emissions that come back to earth with precipitation and degrade and pollute surface water and ground water.

The BPU and DEP must create and execute a plan to meet the objectives of the NJ Global Warming Response act to limit the level of statewide greenhouse gas emissions to the 1990 level or below, of those emissions by the year 2020, and to reduce those emissions to 80% below the 2006 level by the year 2050. One of the tactics they should employ is to use New Jersey's authority to regulate GHG's under title V of the clean air act. Building new fossil fuel power plants will make this very difficult goal even more challenging.

The DEP must develop and execute a plan to reduce ground level ozone, particularly in Hudson and Bergen Counties, which currently have grades of 'F' for ozone from the American Lung Association. Instead, through its current practice of permitting polluters to purchase ozone credits, **the DEP is allowing ozone levels to increase.** Stop digging this hole deeper!

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