

February 20, 2020

Dear Governor Cooper:

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline presents a toxic mix of climate pollution and environmental racism. On behalf of our millions of members, we call on you to publicly oppose the ACP and to use all authority at your disposal to stop this project.

You have yourself testified passionately about the ravages of the climate crisis in North Carolina, citing among others, the devastation of two “500-year” floods in two years. You stated, “I’m committed to fighting climate change...Our state is taking strong action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and grow renewable energy sources.” We urge you to honor your words. The age of climate crisis requires that neither the ACP nor any other pipeline be built. With a capacity of 1.5 billion cubic feet per day, the ACP will carry enough fracked gas to generate over 67 million metric tons of climate pollution per year, the equivalent to 20 average U.S. coal plants.¹

The ACP will disproportionately harm low income, African American, and Indigenous communities, many of whom have been excluded from important decision-making processes.² It would have particularly adverse impacts on the Lumbee community in Robeson County, the largest community of Native Americans east of the Mississippi River. In fact, compared to their statewide numbers, Native Americans are over-represented by a factor of ten along the North Carolina section of the pipeline route.³ Living near pipelines and infrastructure like compressor stations has been documented to cause various health complications, including skin, gastrointestinal, respiratory, neurological, and psychological problems.⁴ Moreover, there is grave concern about maintaining the integrity of historic artifacts, given the failure to include the four impacted North Carolina state-recognized Tribes in the Programmatic Agreement for historic preservation activities associated with ACP construction and operation.

If built, the pipeline will cross the Appalachian Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway, hundreds of rivers and wetlands, and national forests, including the Monongahela and George Washington National Forests – iconic places visited and cherished by tens of millions of people each year. Pipeline construction and gas development will harm water quality, damage farmland and forest land – including old-growth forests, lead to habitat loss and wildlife fragmentation, and decrease the recreational value of natural areas.

Furthermore, the ACP makes no financial sense. Its price tag is now billions over the original estimate. The high cost of the project is exacerbated by the lack of new demand for methane gas in the destination markets. Ratepayers could be burdened with paying for unnecessary fossil fuel infrastructure for decades to come as renewable energy and storage technologies rapidly decline in price. In fact, in its opposition to the Mountain Valley Pipeline, Southgate, the NC Department of Environmental Quality stated: “The cost of renewable energy resources is rapidly declining and the economics now favor utility-scale solar and onshore wind plus storage over construction of natural gas infrastructure.” This same

¹ Oil Change International, The Atlantic Coast Pipeline: Greenhouse Gas Emission Briefing, February 2017. <http://priceofoil.org/2017/02/15/atlantic-coast-pipeline-greenhouse-gas-emissions-briefing/>

² Ryan Emanuel, Flawed environmental justice analysis, Science Magazine Vol 357, Issue 6348, July 21, 2017. <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/357/6348/260.1>

³ Emanuel, 2017, op. cit.

⁴ Physicians for Social Responsibility, Too Dirty, Too Dangerous Report, 2017. www.psr.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/too-dirty-too-dangerous.pdf

statement is also true for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

The ACP is a climate and human rights catastrophe in the making. The devastation the pipeline would wreak on diverse communities, cultures, and ecosystems is untenable. In the face of diminishing demand and the decreasing cost of renewable energy, it is financially unjustifiable. And in this age of climate emergency, the ACP is immoral. Governor Cooper, do not make this pipeline your legacy.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Affordable Energy
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
Alliance to Protect the People and Places We Live
Berks Gas Truth
Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League
Bold Alliance
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for International Environmental Law
Chatham Research Group
Christians For The Mountains
Clean Water for North Carolina
Coastal Carolina Riverwatch
Community Roots
Concerned Citizens of Tillery
Crude Accountability
Crystal Coast Waterkeeper
Dogwood Alliance
DownEast Coalition
Earth Ethics, Inc.
Earth Guardians
Earthworks
EcoEquity
Endangered Species Coalition
EnvironmentalLEE
Extinction Rebellion Western North Carolina
Farmworker Association of Florida
Food & Water Watch
FracTracker Alliance
Friends of the Earth US
Georgia Interfaith Power and Light
Green America
Greenpeace USA
Harrington Investments, Inc.
Hip Hop Caucus
Institute for Policy Studies, Climate Policy Program
LaPlaca and Associates LLC
NC Climate Justice Collective
NC Climate Solutions Coalition
NC Council of Churches

NC Environmental Justice Network
NC Interfaith Power & Light
NC WARN
Nuclear Information and Resource Service
Oil Change International
OVEC-Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
People's Justice Council
Pesticide Action Network
Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania
Progressive Democrats of America
Property Rights and Pipeline Center
Rachel Carson Council
River Guardian Foundation
South Carolina Interfaith Power and Light
Steps 2peace
Sunrise Movement
Sunrise Movement North Carolina
Sustaining Way
The Imani Group Inc
Triangle Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
White Oak-New Riverkeeper Alliance
Winyah Rivers Alliance
XRWNC
198 methods
350 Seattle
350 Triangle
350 Wilmington
350.org