

VOICES

Victory Over InFRACKstructure, Clean Energy, inStead

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Coalition to FERC: We Demand Hearings and More Time for the Public to Comment

Commission Ignored More than 10,000 who Called for Robust Public Participation Process

Washington, D.C. - Details of the public participation process for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's review of its pipeline certification process were published in the [Federal Register](#) today, officially marking the beginning of the process. As anticipated by VOICES, a national coalition of more than 200 organizations representing communities harmed by fracked-gas projects, the process does not allow the public ample time to comment, nor does it include any public hearings in frontline communities to learn directly from their experiences with the FERC project review process as well as implementation of FERC projects.

The VOICES coalition, in [a letter](#) signed by more than 10,650 people and 123 organizations, demanded a series of public hearings in affected communities across the country and a comment period of at least 90 days. The process FERC laid out today is limited to a 60 day comment period that ends on June 25th. According to the notice published in the Federal Register, comments should focus on: Determination and Need; Landowner Interest (including the use eminent domain); Environmental issues (including how FERC addresses climate change and the evolving science of GHG); and Efficiency and effectiveness of certificate processes.

The coalition has identified serious abuses of power that arise repeatedly when the commission reviews proposed pipeline projects. For nearly three years, the coalition has been calling on Congress to investigate these abuses. In December of 2016, the coalition organized a [People's Hearing on FERC Abuses of Law and Power](#) at the National Press Club, where 63 representatives from 15 states and the District of Columbia testified. Their testimony was captured in a [People's Dossier](#) that was delivered to members of Congress.

"Communities across our nation are being abused by FERC and the fracked gas infrastructure projects they are advancing to the public detriment. To those who have been holding out hope that Chairman McIntyre's review process was a signal of positive change, it is time to get your head out of the sand. Chairman McIntyre's FERC is just as dirty as those of the past. FERC is

nothing but a rubber stamp for dirty fossil fuels infrastructure. That is clearly not going to change, if anything, the rubber stamp will be swifter and heavier,” said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper and leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network.

Whereas Commissioner Glick welcomed a meeting from community organizations, representatives of the VOICES coalition learned last week that they’d been denied a meeting with FERC Chairman McIntyre. Chairman Wellinghoff in the past was also open to meeting with community representatives. “McIntyre’s quick rebuke is clear confirmation that nothing has changed at FERC, if anything, it is going to get worse as a result of this process review,” added van Rossum.

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