



For Immediate Release

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Groups rally and question pipeline company on health and environmental risks of proposed compressor station

ROCK HILL, NY— The Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Sullivan County Residents Against Millennium (SCRAM), and Sullivan Area Citizens for Responsible Energy Development (SACRED), joins local opposition groups and concerned community members this evening to rally against Millennium Pipeline Company's *Eastern System Upgrade*, which includes two new compressors in Highland and Hancock, NY and 7.3 miles of new pipeline in order to increase their pipeline capacity.

"Millennium has embarked on a disinformation campaign that needs to be challenged. The community is ensuring a presence that can challenge misinformation as well as share important facts and science with residents who attend" said **Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper** and leader of the regional watershed organization the Delaware Riverkeeper Network. "Compressor stations inflict environmental, health, and safety hazards for surrounding communities through their daily operations. Pipeline compressors emit toxic and carcinogenic air emissions, disturb and pollute delicate ecosystems, subject nearby residents to 24/7 noise that can have significant health impacts, depress local economies and property values, are a significant contributor to climate change, and can cause deadly explosions and fires—among other impacts. Vulnerable populations—including children and pregnant women—face the greatest health risks from their toxic emissions. Millennium's proposed Highland compressor would be located just four miles from the town's school and is nearby camps for kids, including Camp Simcha, whose mission is to serve children with cancer and other blood disorders."

"They destroy our precious farmlands and wetlands, pollute our air, and force families to flee. Millennium and FERC refer to us as "host communities" but we are not hosts we are hostages," said **Pramilla Malick from the group Protect Orange County**.

The Millennium Pipeline Company has recently submitted a pre-filing application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for the upgrade. As part of FERC's requirements for engaging affected stakeholders in the process, the company is hosting an Open House on the proposed project from 6 to 8 pm this evening at the Sullivan/Ramada Hotel in Rock Hill, NY.

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According to the groups present, in addition to concern over Millennium’s misrepresentation of information with important public health and environmental consequences, there is also concern around the company’s handling of this mandatory public event. The groups are concerned that the company’s decision to hold the forum over 30 minutes from the actual site of the proposed compressor will limit participation by those who will be most impacted.

In addition, they challenged Millennium’s use of a private venue to host the public meeting, where protests are banned and opposing groups will not be given even minimal space for displaying and disseminating their own information, , skirting the unclear federal rules on public engagement. This ensures that Millennium’s minimum public engagement requirements are met while also allowing it to limit the extent of the public’s engagement and expression around the event.

“If the Town Boards of Highland, Bethel, Tusten, and Lumberland — the towns that would be most directly impacted — could hold public meetings that allowed their residents the opportunity to express their concerns and led each of those boards to adopt resolutions in opposition to the proposed compressor, the least Millennium could do is offer residents the same respect,” noted **Wendy Robinson, co-founder of SACRED**. She added, “Holding a meeting at such a great distance from the vast majority of residents in those towns, on a weeknight, and with inadequate notice will preclude attendance by many community members and seems deliberately designed to prevent, rather than encourage, the necessary exchange of information.”

One local resident submitted a formal complaint to FERC on the company’s short notice of the informational open houses. Shawn Cahill, questioning the pipeline company’s intentions and self-projected image of being “good neighbors” within the community, asks: “If Millennium Pipeline’s goal is to involve the community, answer questions, share information about this project, then why only give the communities affected 1-3 days’ notice? They should realize that such short notice is going to exclude many people from attending.”

This is not preventing concerned citizens from exercising their rights to gather across the street to express concern over the proposed project’s impacts on public health and the environment—nor from attending the event to question Millennium on its harmful propaganda. The Delaware Riverkeeper Network, SCRAM, SACRED and concerned citizens of all ages are rallying together to show Millennium the vulnerable populations who they stand to put at the highest risk, and the future generation who will bear the brunt of their long-term environmental and health impacts.

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