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Governor Murphy Stands for Clean Water

Conditional Veto of Hazardous Waste Bill will require science and the rule of law through permitting, prevent Chemours/DuPont from opening up unabated

Trenton, NJ – Governor Phil Murphy has conditionally vetoed the Dirty DuPont bill (Senate Bill 879) that would have allowed the Chemours, formerly DuPont, Chambers Works Facility in Deepwater, NJ from starting up again as a hazardous waste processor without meeting required safety and environmental standards. An outright veto was sought by environmental organizations to fully protect public health and the environment under the 1981 Hazardous Waste Facilities Siting Act. The conditional veto forces the facility to obtain new permits under current environmental laws, avoiding an unabated expansion of hazardous waste discharge to the Delaware River, and will require public health and environmental protections to be satisfied.

The Chambers Works plant had stopped operating as a commercial facility in 2011, when it was the fourth largest hazardous waste discharger in the nation and the biggest in New Jersey. Concern that the facility would quickly resume accepting off-site hazardous waste such as wastewater produced by fracking, military waste such as nerve agent, and radioactive materials drove huge public opposition to the bill and a call for a veto by the Governor.

“Governor Murphy stood up to the Legislature and stood for clean water by CVing the DuPont dirty water bill. This bill would have created an open spigot of toxic waste going into the Delaware. By CVing the bill, the plants will need to come in for new permits rather than be grandfathered in with old permits. We would have liked a full veto, but this compromise is the best outcome we could get. This is a good thing for New Jersey and clean water,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “Now that the Governor has stood up to the DuPont bill, we need him to stand up for a full ban of fracking and fracking waste in the Delaware Basin. We must make sure we’re not allowing military waste such as the VX nerve gas into our waterways, like the major battle we faced at the plant ten years ago. Governor Murphy must continue to fight to protect the Delaware Basin.”

“This decision gives communities the opportunity to bring forth the science that demonstrates the DuPont proposal is not defensible. It shows that the governor is willing to listen to communities and consider our input in decision making. But it also shows how essential it is to secure a Delaware River Basin Commission regulation that rejects frack waste water and water withdrawals, along with rejecting fracking,” **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.**

"The Legislature rubberstamped this Dupont facility loophole legislation. The Chambers Works facility is the poster child of processing off-site toxic pollution. The facility demands the most stringent environmental reviews, and certainly shouldn't be exempt from any environmental permitting requirements. This was absolutely the right call by Governor Murphy to protect the Delaware River and stand up for environmental protections," **said Doug O'Malley, director of Environment New Jersey.**

"We are extremely pleased that Gov. Murphy has decided to conditionally veto this bill. DuPont has a long history of polluting NJ and cannot be allowed, as outlined in this bill, carte blanche to operate their facility in South Jersey. While we would have preferred an outright veto of the bill, we're glad Gov Murphy is making a step in the right direction." **Alyssa Bradley, Energy Organizer, Clean Water Action.**

“Governor Murphy has prevented what would have been a public health disaster that sailed mindlessly through the Legislature by imposing conditions that can prevent toxic and polluting wastes from being dumped by Chemours/DuPont into the Delaware. This is the right step in the right direction by our Governor,” said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.