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**Activists Call on Governor Wolf to Go Further on Oil Trains
Citing Letter to Pres. Obama as Important First Step
“Accidents Waiting to Happen” in Pennsylvania
Require Immediate Ban on Tank Cars**

Philadelphia, PA – Activists in the Philadelphia Region stated appreciation of Governor Wolf’s letter to President Obama calling for federal action on the dangerous and dirty oil trains that travel across Pennsylvania every day, including Philadelphia. http://www.governor.pa.gov/Pages/Pressroom_details.aspx?newsid=1575#.VPDcj-GR_cw However, they want more and called on the Governor to call for an immediate ban on the tank cars presently being used to carry domestic crude oil known as Bakken crude, a highly volatile and flammable fossil fuel that is being produced in huge quantities in North Dakota and carried primarily by train to refineries across the country.

Philadelphia City Council is considering a resolution calling for federal action to prohibit the substandard DOT111s and other presently used tank cars to carry Bakken crude and calling for the highest safety standards for crude by rail. Councilman Kenyatta Johnson has introduced a resolution that is expected to be voted on in March. It also calls for the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to publicly disclose train schedule and route information and share with the public the emergency response plans specific to oil train derailments at community workshops. Because these oil trains travel through the City’s neighborhoods and over water supplies, they are exposed to the threat of accidents and unsafe conditions.

"As Governor Wolf noted, the federal government’s plan to phase out older tank cars doesn’t address the inherent volatility of Bakken crude oil nor our nation’s crumbling infrastructure." said Matt Walker, Outreach Director with Clean Air Council. "Even without derailments, communities all along oil train routes are impacted by toxic air emissions from the trains. With a refinery that is the chief destination of these dangerous trains and 705,000 residents living in the evacuation zone of a derailment,

Philadelphia is at great risk. The safety of our residents and universities, schools, and hospitals has been at the mercy of the oil industry and a federal government that has failed to act despite continual derailments and explosions across North America," added Walker.

"Gov. Wolf should call for the immediate ban of all tank cars being used to carry domestic crude oil today - DOT111s and the newer cars which have proven to be no safer than the older ones. He should also release train schedule information like other states are doing so people can know what is traveling next to their homes and work places. He should also order PADEP to not issue any further permits that would allow or require oil train traffic to expand until the aging infrastructure is replaced and pollution from refining is stopped. The priority must be the safety and health of Pennsylvania residents, including those exposed day in and day out to air and water pollution near Philadelphia Energy Solutions in South Philadelphia. Governor Wolf's letter is a start but he and the government need to do more NOW considering the life and death consequences of letting these trains continue to roll," said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.

"I am pleased that Governor Wolf decided to acknowledge the unacceptable risks of oil trains en route to Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery. Many actions need to be taken to minimize the risk of transporting Bakken crude by rail, but transporting massive volumes of highly explosive oil will never be "safe". The transport and reliance on dirty fossil fuel is a risky business. Pennsylvania needs to develop a clean and sustainable green economy rather than continuing to invest in shale oil and gas development and infrastructure at the expense of public safety and the environment," said Mary Donahue, Program Organizer, Clean Water Action.

"I'm glad Governor Wolf is very concerned about the trains carrying explosive Bakken crude oil traveling daily through the heart of the City. As he said, 'The potential for disaster is too great to ignore.' He requests new federal safety rules. Theoretically, his request to President Obama sounds good. But, as he himself acknowledges, newly designed tank cars and slower speeds did not prevent the recent explosion in West Virginia, which would have been catastrophic in Philadelphia. We need these trains stopped until they can be proven safe. We wouldn't tell a child playing with fire, to use safer matches, hoping he wouldn't burn our house down. Explosive tanker cars are not worth the risk of killing hundreds or thousands of people who live here and destroying part of our City," said Dr. Sandra Folzer, Protecting Our Waters.

"We applaud Governor Wolf for his letter to the President. This sets an important example for Philadelphia City Council to pass a resolution setting out its concerns for our citizens. Endangering our citizens for the sake of shipping oil is a moral and ethical

issue,” Rabbi Mordechai Liebling, Philadelphia Chapter of Pennsylvania Interfaith Power and Light.

Governor Wolf’s letter mentions two near disasters in Philadelphia when CSX train cars derailed on January 20, 2014 and January 31, 2015 in the City. Those close calls have left many Philadelphia residents asking not IF a catastrophe like the West Virginia calamity will happen here but WHEN it will happen. Two to three trains each carrying at least 3 million gallons of domestic crude roll through Philadelphia neighborhoods every day to the Philadelphia Energy Solutions (PES) refinery, which is expanding its operations. Today PES is the largest single customer of Bakken crude in the nation and operates the largest oil train rail yard in the U.S. There are hundreds of thousands of people within the blast zone of the train tracks in Philadelphia.

<http://explosive-crude-by-rail.org/>

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