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Environmentalists demand PADEP deny PennEast Pipeline permits

Harrisburg, PA - Environmentalists are demanding Governor Wolf and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) deny the PennEast Pipeline project, submitting a letter on Wednesday urging the department to deny remaining permits and revoke the Clean Water Act 401 certification it prematurely issued for the project. The letter received over 475 signatures, including nearly 40 organizations signing in support.

PADEP has announced it will hold a hearing on January 13, 2021 about the project. According to the letter submitted, after nearly seven years of public outcry and documentation on the record, PADEP has all of the evidence it needs to deny the project needed permitting and to revoke the 401 Certification. The letter reads:

“With a body of evidence as massive and substantive as that already collected on the public record by FERC, DRBC and PADEP itself, there is nothing any testifier can do other than reiterate what has already been said. As such, it is not a good use of your time or the taxpayers’ dollars to go through the exercise of a hearing when the only conclusion you can draw from an honest review of the public record is that you must deny the permits and you must revoke the Clean Water Act 401 Certification prematurely granted on an earlier version of the PennEast proposal. PADEP should fulfill its legal obligation to the people of Pennsylvania and deny 102 and 105 permits for the PennEast Pipeline, and revoke the previously granted 401 Certification, RIGHT NOW, TODAY!”

According to the hearing notice, testifiers will only be given three minutes to speak, and all testimony will be cut off after three hours of hearing time regardless of whether or not all who wish to have testified.

“Governor Wolf and PADEP have a constitutional duty to protect the rights of the people of Pennsylvania to pure water, clean air, and healthy environments and must act as trustee of the natural resources of the state for both present and future generations. We and the public have spent years documenting the harms of the PennEast Pipeline project, the misinformation campaign PennEast has perpetrated on the state in order to mislead regulators, and the many ways that PennEast fails to meet the requirements necessary for state approval and yet PADEP has continued to leave the file open and to invest resources in helping PennEast keep their project alive. The time has come to deny the permits and revoke the 401 certification for this dangerous and unnecessary project,” said **Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper and leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network**. “Not only is it a misuse

of public resources to keep this project alive and under review, but to limit the public to only 3 minutes of comment time, to plan to cut off the hearing after 3 hours regardless of whether there are testifiers wanting to be heard, and to hold this hearing so soon after the holiday season during a pandemic, demonstrates a blatant disregard for the people and resources this pipeline will harm, and is a betrayal of the public trust. PADEP and Governor Wolf should be ashamed," van Rossum added.

"A few years ago, BTU Analytics [published a graph](#) that used comments submitted to FERC to gauge public sentiment on specific pipeline projects. The number of PennEast comments was almost literally off the charts. The communities fighting the PennEast pipeline haven't just been vocal about their opposition; they have engaged experts who have submitted detailed information to every agency involved about the dangers the pipeline poses. The Department of Environmental Protection has every shred of evidence it needs right now to deny the 102 and 105 permits and revoke the 401 permit. The agency is using a public hearing as a shield to hide behind when it approves the permits anyway. It is a cynical and unconscionable use of the public and their tax dollars to pretend it's anything else," said **Karen Feridun, Founder of Berks Gas Truth.**

"PennEast is a threat to our environment and our water supply. That is why Pennsylvania needs to do their job. They need to stop this pipeline and protect our clean water. It will impact the Delaware River that provides drinking water for 15 million people. PADEP needs to act now. They need to withdraw the 401 Water Quality Certificate and ensure an open and transparent process for the public. They also need to scrutinize and deny the other water permits for the pipeline," said **Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** "Pennsylvania needs to stand up for clean water and against the pipeline. This is not just about clean water, it's about preventing more climate impacts. PennEast pipeline will increase our greenhouse gases, worsen climate impacts, and endanger public health and the environment. It must be stopped now."

You can read the letter here: <http://bit.ly/PADEPDenyPennEast>

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