

For Immediate Release
March 12, 2015

Contacts:

Tracy Carluccio, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, 215-369-1188 x 104
tracy@delawareriverkeeper.org

Brooks Mountcastle, Clean Water Action, 215-545-0250 x 203,
bmountcastle@cleanwater.org

**Philadelphia City Council Adopts Resolution on Dangerous Oil Trains
*Calls for substandard tank cars to be prohibited, highest safety standards for new tank cars, public disclosure of train traffic and emergency response community forums***

Philadelphia, PA – Today Philadelphia City Council unanimously adopted a resolution calling for action by the federal government, rail companies and Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management to address threats posed by the train transport of Bakken crude oil through Philadelphia.

The resolution calls for substandard DOT111s and other presently used tank cars that carry Bakken crude to be stopped and urges the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) to issue specifications for tank cars that meet the highest safety standards for crude by rail. Councilman Kenyatta Johnson introduced the resolution that was fully supported by the Council today.

The resolution also calls for the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to publicly disclose train schedule and route information and for the Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management to share with the public the emergency response plans specific to oil train derailments at community workshops. Testimony at City Council today was made that hundreds of thousands of people are within the evacuation zone of the train route in Philadelphia and that people don't know anything about the threat and need to know what to do should there be an accident. The resolution calls for OEM to work pro-actively to update the City's emergency response plans.

“City Council has taken a stand to protect Philadelphians from these dirty and dangerous oil trains. We look to the companies that are profiting from this enormous

and rapidly expanding oil transport to take their cue from City Council and voluntarily stop using DOT111s and CPC1232s for the sake of the people who live and work here. PES and CSX must recognize the profits they make are not worth endangering public safety, our water supplies, and the City's economic well-being. A derailment catastrophe can be avoided here but not while these explosive oil trains roll through Philadelphia," said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.

"We hope OEM starts to take crude by rail more seriously by engaging the public and showing transparency and for the federal government to pass strong tank car regulations when the Department of Transportation releases its final rule in May. Public safety and the environment have been sacrificed by industry and the federal government for economics and the expediency of delivering crude by rail, for too long," said Brooks Mountcastle, Eastern PA Director for Clean Water Action.

Testimony by several residents and organizations pointed out that two to three oil trains of 100 cars or more, each carrying about three million gallons of highly volatile and flammable domestic crude oil, course through the City every day in tank cars deemed unsafe by federal agencies. The tank cars that are used - DOT111s and CPC 1232s - are prone to puncture, explode, and catch fire when derailed, even at very low speeds (DOT 111s puncture at speeds in excess of 8 mph).

Speakers pointed out that most of the oil trains go to the Philadelphia Energy Solutions (PES) refinery in South Philadelphia, which is expanding its operations, meaning more oil train traffic. Today PES is the largest single customer of Bakken crude in the nation, operates the largest oil train rail yard in the U.S., and is the largest oil refinery on the Eastern Seaboard.

Several speakers referenced the four fiery oil train derailments that occurred in just the last month in the U.S. and Canada, heightening fears along the oil train routes. Oil train derailments have sharply risen since Bakken crude oil began to be fracked in North Dakota in the last two years. It was reported that a USDOT report predicts that trains hauling crude oil or ethanol will derail an average of ten times per year over the

next two decades, killing hundreds of people and racking up damages exceeding \$4 billion nationwide.

Speakers reminded City Council members that Philadelphia had two near disasters when CSX train cars derailed on January 20, 2014 and January 31, 2015 in the City. Some stated it was just a matter of time before a disaster occurs here unless something is done. There are hundreds of thousands of people within the blast zone of the train tracks in Philadelphia. <http://explosive-crude-by-rail.org/>

Councilman Johnson was thanked repeatedly by speakers for his leadership and City Council members were recognized for standing up for public safety. Speakers said they see this as a crucial first step in addressing the enormous risks and pollution that crude by rail brings to the City and the look forward to working with the City to put public safety and the environment first.

###