

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Over 25,000 comments flood the DEC in opposition to the Williams Pipeline after company reapplies for previously denied New York permits

Against backdrop of ambitious New York climate act that leaves no room for pipeline, public opposition to project shows no signs of weakening, forcing National Grid to take desperate measures.

New York — In the mere weeks since the Williams Company reapplied for the third time for a state permit needed for a controversial fracked gas pipeline in New York Harbor, New Yorkers have submitted over 25,000 comments to state regulators opposing the project. The comments come in addition to the tens of thousands of oppositional comments—written by over 45,000 individuals—submitted in response to Williams’ previous application, which was rejected by the Department of Environmental Conservation in May. This latest public comment period closed July 13.

The **Stop the Williams Pipeline Coalition** issued the following statement:

“New Yorkers have made themselves clear: there’s no room for the Williams fracked gas pipeline in a world facing a climate crisis. With over 25,000 comments submitted against the Williams NESE pipeline in just six short weeks, it is abundantly clear what the people need: for Governor Cuomo and the DEC to stop the Williams fracked gas pipeline once and for all and implement renewable alternatives now.”

The robust public opposition to Williams’ latest application comes amid [increasingly desperate attempts on the part of the utility National Grid](#), which would be the sole buyer of the pipeline’s gas, [to convince state officials and ratepayers alike that the pipeline is needed](#). Widespread black-outs this weekend underscored the necessity for a swift and just transition to renewable, reliable energy.

In May, in a move that possibly violated Public Utility Law, National Grid began refusing customers new gas service, claiming that, without the Williams pipeline, it doesn’t have enough gas. Yet National Grid, a private corporation whose business model relies heavily on gas, and whose market share could be hurt by the transition to renewables, has provided no hard evidence for these claims, citing only outdated growth projections that [this report](#) and [National Grid's own filings with the PSC decisively refute](#). Activists also note that the Williams pipeline, if approved, wouldn’t be in service for at least another year, lending further proof that the gas shut offs have little to do with the pipeline, and further evidence that National Grid is using its ratepayers as pawns in a political game.

25 organizations—including Sane Energy Project, Alliance for a Green Economy, 350Brooklyn, 350.org, NYC Democratic Socialists of America, New York Communities for Change, Surfrider NYC, and Food &

Water Watch—have [issued a formal request](#) for the Public Service Commission (PSC) to issue a cease and desist or reprimand to National Grid because of its recent actions.

Public opposition to the pipeline continues to mount among elected officials. In March, over 60 elected officials—including City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, State Senator Julia Salazar, Comptroller Scott Stringer, and Public Advocate Jumaane Williams—[signed a letter calling on Governor Cuomo](#) to stop the pipeline. In April, the New York City Council passed a near-unanimous resolution condemning the project. In May, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio opposed the project as the opposition moved decisively to the national level, with U.S. representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Jerrold Nadler, Hakeem Jeffries, and 8 other congress members [publicly denouncing the project](#).

In the weeks since, the appetite for new fossil fuel infrastructure in New York State has only waned. On June 20, the New York legislature passed the most ambitious state climate legislation in the country, the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which mandates that the state produce net zero emissions by 2050. Advocates, scientists and health professionals contend that the Williams NESE pipeline, which would produce the equivalent emissions of burning 50,000 tons of coal from its construction alone, would make it impossible to meet those goals.

New Yorkers are preparing to escalate the fight against the pipeline should the project be approved. Hundreds of New Yorkers across the state, for example, recently trained in nonviolent direct action as part of the “[Sit, Stand, Sing](#)” tour, which aimed to empower local communities and organizations to fight for climate justice and stand up to fracked gas infrastructure.

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

MEDIA AVAILABILITY: Members of the Stop the Williams Pipeline Coalition, and author of [False Demand report](#), available for interview upon request.

The Stop the Williams Pipeline coalition is organized by 350Brooklyn, 350.org, Food and Water Watch, New York Communities for Change, Rockaway Beach Civic Association, Sane Energy Project, and Surfrider NYC Chapter

For more, explore [this media pack](#) and visit www.StopTheWilliamsPipeline.org