

Letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) (This is a letter sent in regard to another Pipeline Project. A very nice letter you may want to modify for your own use.)

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Dear Chairman LaFleur,

I am writing to express my concern about the lack of true opportunities for public comment and participation in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) utility project approval process, to urge you to reform FERC's structure and approval process, and to ask for the appointment of a special member of the Commission to represent the public interest.

Utility projects that are proposed and constructed in the name of the public good should be subjected to serious review with ample consideration of concerns and objections by the public. The current FERC process allows for little public input, and such input is not seriously taken into consideration when granting project approvals. Furthermore, the current structure of FERC is such that the Commission is funded by the utility industry through fees and annual charges: in such an environment, the approval process is inherently biased toward industry and thus does not truly serve the public good.

Private, for-profit utility companies and an industry-funded Commission should not be able to determine whether a project is for public use, nor should they be able to use eminent domain to seize private property for such projects. Only the public and a government-funded, unbiased organization should have the right to determine whether a project is in the best interests of the public and thus merits the exercise of eminent domain. In today's energy climate, in which the motives of energy companies and utilities are increasingly at odds with the wishes and best interests of the public, increased scrutiny, reform, and public determination are called for in the review and approval of utility projects.

Across the country, myriad projects for fracked natural gas pipelines and export projects have been submitted or will soon be submitted to FERC for approval. Many of these projects are not in the best interest of the public—they will not provide the public with a supply of clean, sustainable energy, and they will have a negative impact on private and public lands, on local economies, and on the global climate. Both locally and nationally, the public is clear in its desire for increased environmental stewardship of the land, water, and climate and for serious solutions to climate change. These citizens deserve a true voice in the FERC review and approval process. They should be able to determine whether a utility project is truly in the best interests of the public, and they should be able to advocate for the interests of their land, their environment, and their communities.

As a resident of a community that has been targeted by the utility industry for the construction of a large-scale utility infrastructure project, I urge you to reform the FERC structure and approval process to allow for true public input and thorough review of projects submitted for approval by the Commission. I urge you to create and appoint a special member of the Commission to represent the views and interests of the public. No utility project can truly be said to be in the public good if the public has no voice in determining the scope or approval of the project. Please

reform FERC's structure and public commenting process and ensure that utility projects are truly approved and constructed in the name of the public good.

Sincerely,

Your Name