

DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE GUILFORD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Guilford County aims to become a leader among the North Carolina counties and other entities working for sustainability and clean energy in order to create a healthy environment for all people and to support the sustainability efforts of GCS; and

WHEREAS, the Guilford County Board of Commissioners adopted and supported a Guilford County Strategic Energy Plan in 2010 that aimed to improve the efficient use and conservation of energy and water resources in all of its buildings; and

WHEREAS, Guilford County's Environmental Health Department has a mission "[t]o reduce sources of environmental stress and promote a quality environment¹,"

WHEREAS, Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC ("Transco"), a subsidiary of The Williams Companies, Inc., is planning to build a massive methane gas pipeline project called the Southeast Supply Enhancement Project ("SSEP"), which would expand Transco's pipeline network by 1,596,900 dekatherms per day of additional gas and would require approximately 54.9 miles of additional 42 inch-diameter pipe in Virginia and North Carolina in two separate 'loops.'

WHEREAS, the project would also expand several compressor stations, including two compressor stations in North Carolina, with gas-fired units that would release harmful air pollution into nearby communities with construction beginning in fall of 2026.

WHEREAS, if the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) authorizes the project, Transco will have eminent domain authority,
Whereas, the SSEP is expected to negatively impact local air and water quality, residents' health, and property values,

WHEREAS, the SSEP proposed route crosses Reedy Fork Creek, which is a protected Water Supply watershed (WS-III, Nutrient Sensitive Water) and the headwaters of the City of Greensboro's three water supply reservoirs: Lake Higgins, Lake Brandt, and Lake Townsend²,

WHEREAS, the large-diameter pipe would also make more than 100 individual waterbody crossings across 16 watersheds³. Compounding these concerns, the watchdog group Pipeline Safety Trust found that "Transco is worse than other gas transmission operators in fatalities, cost per incident, and releases per incident,"

WHEREAS, since the pre-filing docket was initiated on February 1, 2024 with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC" or "the Commission"), public opposition to the SSEP has been robust. Within that pre-filing docket, PF24-2, over 7,000 members of the public expressed opposition to the

¹ <https://www.guilfordcountync.gov/our-county/human-services/health-department/environmental-health>

² <https://www.nconemap.gov/datasets/nconemap::public-water-supply-water-sources/explore?filters=eyJzb3VyY2VfdHlwZSI6WyJTdXJmYWNIIFdhbGVyI19&location=36.005758%2C-80.037338%2C10.52>

³ https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/filelist?accession_number=20241029-5076&optimized=false

project⁴. In its application submitted October 29, 2024 in FERC docket CP25-10, Transco maintained that the project “will not have a significant impact on human health or the environment⁵,” suggesting that the Commission need not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) for the project as part of its National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) review. Again over 7,000 members of the public expressed opposition to the project and asked for a full EIS, rather than an Environmental Assessment, a less intensive study. More than a dozen North Carolina legislators also asked FERC to prepare an EIS, noting that “[i]f approved, this project would cause tens of millions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions every year for decades, even as the costs of renewable energy continue to drop.⁶” Other notable submissions in the docket included a letter from over 90 organizations⁷ asking FERC to prepare a full Environmental Impact Statement,

WHEREAS, the initial intervention period included over 50 requests to intervene, including from the Haw River Assembly, North Carolina Black Alliance, Sierra Club, 7 Directions of Service, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, Southern Environmental Law Center, and Appalachian Voices,

WHEREAS, the SSEP is indicative of the overbuilding of fossil fuel infrastructure across the Southeast that would put an overwhelming burden on nearby communities and push critical greenhouse gas reduction targets firmly out of reach. Gas pipelines mean methane leaks, sedimentation from construction, and ongoing health and safety concerns. They put communities at increased risk from pollution and explosion dangers. Moreover, gas transmission pipelines in Virginia and North Carolina are not required to add an odorant, meaning a leaking transmission line would not give off any smell to warn of a problem. The SSEP would expand system capacity by nearly 1.6 million dekatherms per day, making it one of the largest gas expansion projects proposed on the East Coast in a decade,

WHEREAS, GuilfordCounty already has more than 109 miles of pipeline already in operation, with almost half of that owned by Williams Transco Company, and SSEP would add another 6 miles of 42” wide pipeline through Oak Ridge and the Western part of the County,

Therefore, Be it resolved, the Guilford County Board of Commissioners opposes Transco’s proposed Southeast Supply Enhancement Project, including the use of eminent domain to take private property and construction of the pipeline through Guilford County, North Carolina.

Therefore, Be it further resolved, the Guilford County Board of Commissioners officially requests FERC conduct an Environmental Impact Statement, given the significant and cumulative impacts proposed by the project.

⁴ https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/filelist?accession_number=20241001-5113&optimized=false

⁵ https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/filelist?accession_number=20241029-5076&optimized=false

⁶ https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/filelist?accession_number=20241213-5177&optimized=false

⁷ https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/filelist?accession_num=20241217-5121