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## **Hundreds of citizens speak out against the Port Ambrose project at final public hearing**

*Calling on MARAD to Deny the Permit*

**Eatontown, NJ** – For seven years the battle against this dangerous offshore facility has waged on. With the fate of our coast at risk, elected officials and a coalition of advocacy, environmental, and civic groups called on federal officials to reject the proposed Port Ambrose Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) offshore facility. The group addressed safety, climate, the lack of need, and destruction of the marine environment for reasons to deny this project at a press conference before the final public hearing.

“This ill-advised project, less than 25 miles off the coast of Long Branch, would not only increase carbon emissions and our reliance on foreign fossil fuels, construction of the terminal would be extremely damaging to our coastal environment. The State of New Jersey should be promoting an energy policy that moves towards increased use of renewable energy sources that create jobs here at home, and away from importing polluting fossil fuels from other countries. I will continue to fight for the use of safe, clean and renewable energy resources, and against this proposed project, which focuses on industrial uses of the ocean, relies on foreign fossil fuels, and threatens our coast,” **said Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06).**

"The Port Ambrose LNG is a project that could have a devastating impact for our ocean, beaches, and coastal communities. This project has no benefit for the State of New Jersey. There are no jobs, no new energy resources, and no economic benefit. While LNG contends the facility will be limited to importing natural gas, there simply is not a need in our region. The two other East Coast offshore LNG facilities are currently attempting to export the natural gas overseas. There is no saying that this facility won't expand to exporting in the future," **Senator Jennifer Beck explained.** "The Port Ambrose LNG backers, who are undisclosed because it is owned by a bank account in the Cayman Islands, may choose to export our own energy resources. Why would our residents want to damage our ocean for zero benefit?"

“Port Ambrose has been haunting our coast for seven long years and it is now time to put an end to this harmful, dangerous, and unnecessary project. Hundreds of people have attended public hearings, tens of thousands have sent in public comments, and over 99% are in opposition. We are not buying what Liberty Natural Gas and their secret corporate backers in the Cayman Islands are selling. The consensus is clear, this project must end now,” **said Cindy Zipf, Executive Director of Clean Ocean Action.**

“Allowing the Port Ambrose LNG port to be built would be incredibly irresponsible for our ocean resources, the climate, and public safety. Perhaps the strongest argument to stop this

project, however, is its faulty Final Environmental Impact Statement, which relies on old data, misconstrues conclusions from state energy reports, and purposefully ignores the project's likelihood of preventing an offshore wind facility proposed for the same location. The many mistakes contained in the FEIS are reason enough for Governor Christie to veto Port Ambrose immediately," **said Andrea Leshak, staff attorney for NY/NJ Baykeeper and Hackensack Riverkeeper.**

"Port Ambrose's destruction and killing of more than 44 million fish eggs and 5 million fish during construction, including every operational year thereafter is detrimental to our fisheries and is wrong! Port Ambrose will decimate the area's fishery. Port Ambrose means less fish to be caught, which means less fishermen and their families on the beaches and shorelines, which equates to fewer dollars being spent to support the local businesses and economy. If Governor Christie really cares about Jersey, it's people, their livelihood and the visitors from out of state, the Governor will veto Port Ambrose at the first opportunity he gets," **Tim Burden, President, New Jersey Beach Buggy Association.**

This facility will create exclusion zones that will extend for two miles from each docking buoy, eliminating the ability of fishing vessels to access or anchor in the affected area. Commercial and recreational fishermen will be prohibited from these important fishing grounds. Anglers are excluded similarly from the present Earle naval fishing port and are chased away by inadvertently entering it. While it is needed for security of the naval vessels, it is a nuisance for anglers and one that we do not want to experience again by the proposed LNG port. We urge Governor Christie to protect the jobs and livelihoods of fishermen by vetoing this project," **said John Toth, representative from the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) and the Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA)**

"We are facing a decision about the future use of our ocean. We want it clean, not industrialized, and free of pollution and harm to ocean wildlife. Port Ambrose will give us none of those things," **said Tim Dillingham, Executive Director of the American Littoral Society.**

Under the Deepwater Port Act both Governor Christie and Governor Cuomo have the power to veto this dangerous offshore facility. Beginning after the public hearing on November 5<sup>th</sup>, the Governors will have 45 days to veto Port Ambrose. Governor Christie used his veto power back in 2011 to reject a similar offshore LNG project.

"We need Governor Christie to veto Port Ambrose, a shortsighted and unnecessary project that will lock us into future generations of fossil fuels. The project would not only perpetuate climate change--it would also create serious public safety concerns for the New York metropolitan area. The people today were telling it like it is on Port Ambrose and the Governor should listen," **said Jim Walsh, New Jersey Director, Food & Water Watch.**

"Governor Christie deserves credit for vetoing this needless, dirty, dangerous fossil fuel project at the Jersey Shore the first time. Now he needs to do it again. Nothing has changed. It's bad for the environment and the economy however you look at it: shipping, national security, fishing, consumers, tourism and climate," **said Amy Goldsmith, NJ State Director, Clean Water Action.**

“We need to concentrate on clean, renewable energy and not dangerous, unnecessary projects like Port Ambrose,” **said Nancy Hedinger, President of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.** “This facility is all risk with no reward. In addition to being a security risk in a major shipping area, this project threatens our ocean, economy, and our climate. We should be discussing offshore wind and other renewables and not be so quick to sacrifice our beloved shore to dirty fossil fuels.”

“WATERSPIRIT is opposed to Port Ambrose for many reasons. From a moral and religious perspective, Port Ambrose is a real and unnecessary threat to life, whether it be the life of families swimming in a contaminated ocean, the marine life that will be victims of the processes and pollution of Port Ambrose, or the destruction of the marine eco system so crucial to the health and vitality of this region.

“We oppose Port Ambrose because it is a distraction from climate change which, as Pope Francis has said, is “a principle challenge facing humanity in our day.” The focus should be on renewable energy and the elimination of fossil fuels like Port Ambrose's natural gas,” **said Suzanne Golas, csjp Director of WATERSPIRIT**

“The number of reasons to veto Port Ambrose is mind-boggling. This dangerous and unnecessary project threatens our health, our ocean, our climate. It poses an obvious terrorist threat, does not increase our nation's energy security, and creates only five permanent jobs. Most importantly, the people of New Jersey don't want it. Of the more than 24,000 citizen comments submitted during the first phase of this process, only 17 were supportive. Governor Christie cannot ignore our voices,” **said Rosemary Carey, 350NJ.**

"With due consideration for the potential of insufficient security for the transporting vessels during their entire voyage, hijacking and the effects of exclusion zoning interference, the New Jersey Council of Diving Clubs has resolved to oppose any LNG terminal in the NY bight. We also call on MARAD to reject the application and on Governor Christie to veto it," **said Glenn A. Arthur Chairman, New Jersey Council of Diving Clubs.**

“LNG is a project that has been back and forth for years, with no clear social benefits and very clear environmental impacts. This is our chance to continue the people’s movement towards divestment from fossil fuels into more sustainable energy options and to protect these coastal jobs for the present and preserve them for our grandchildren. This is Governor Christie’s chance to show the public that he is a man of his word and will put a nail in the LNG coffin by utilizing his executive veto power,” **said Bill Williams Co-Chair for the Jersey Shore Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation.**

“Port Ambrose is one more project that witnesses a failure to study the map of climate science, stepping on the gas at, coincidentally, the same time governments across the globe are coming together to develop an international agreement that will begin to tap the brakes. Every new project that commits the world to decades more of continued greenhouse gas emissions makes it that much more difficult to meet the target which will keep the atmosphere from irreversible warming. We urge MARAD, the Coast Guard and most, importantly, our Governor, who acknowledges the human contribution to global warming, to defend against the challenges whenever they arise in jurisdictions where we command authority,” **said Christine O’Rourke, Co-founder of QUENCH.**

Liberty LLC and project supporters claim the facility would only be used for importing gas, despite the fact that the United States is on track to be a net exporter of natural gas by 2017. Existing LNG import facilities around the country are operating well below capacity due to the lack of demand for imported gas. Many critics fear this facility would eventually be used to export gas, thereby increasing fracking in inland areas and raising the price of natural gas domestically. Regardless of whether this facility will be used strictly for imports, or allowed to export eventually, Port Ambrose is unnecessary and unneeded, and poses a threat to the economy, environment, and public safety.

“The Port Ambrose LNG facility would be a Trojan horse off the Jersey Shore,” **said Doug O’Malley, director of Environment New Jersey.** “Port Ambrose wants to sucker the public into believing the facility would never be used to export fracked gas. Just like a boardwalk barker, this is a classic game of bait and switch where Port Ambrose would immediately apply to export gas if it was ever constructed. The Jersey Shore is too vital to turn over our ocean and clean energy future to speculative foreign fossil fuel companies. The public is overwhelming opposed to Port Ambrose, and it’s time Gov. Christie fulfilled his commitment to veto this floating disaster in the making.”

“They call it Liberty Natural Gas, but with this project it’s the opposite it. It takes away our Liberty by threatening our safety and it takes away our energy independence by making us dependent on fossil fuels. We have 15 gas pipelines currently being proposed throughout New Jersey, it makes no sense for New Jersey to have an import facility. Patrick Henry famously said, ‘Give me liberty, or give me death,’ however with this proposal we may get both,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “If there is a storm or accident, this is a giant bomb off our coast. The Governor needs to veto this dangerous proposal because the Coast Guard may not be guarding our coast. This project is unneeded and unnecessary and the Coast Guard should do its job and cancel this project.”

"The Port Ambrose LNG Facility represents an unnecessary burden on our local waterways and environment. This project is unlikely to impact local energy prices while putting our invaluable resources at risk. We urge Governor Christie to maintain his vow to veto any LNG project off our coast and specifically the Port Ambrose LNG Facility outright," **said Kyle Gronostajski, Executive Director of Alliance for a Living Ocean.**

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