



## Board of Chosen Freeholders

County of Hunterdon  
71 Main Street, Building #1  
PO Box 2900  
Flemington, NJ 08822-2900

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: John E. Lanza, Freeholder Deputy Director

[John.lanza@co.hunterdon.nj.us](mailto:John.lanza@co.hunterdon.nj.us)

### **Hunterdon Freeholders Oppose Permits For PennEast Pipeline**

Hunterdon County's Freeholder Board, at the September 3rd meeting, unanimously opposed PennEast's latest pipeline permit application to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) with a resolution stating the NJDEP has sufficient information to determine that the pipeline cannot be constructed in a manner that meets the stringent environmental standards required under state law and regulations.

Freeholder Board Deputy Director John E. Lanza, in introducing the resolution stated, "Now that PennEast has re-submitted its permit applications to NJDEP, after being turned down over a year and a half ago, it is important for the Board to provide comment to NJDEP as to why approval of the permits is not in the public interest."

The PennEast Pipeline Company, on August 8, 2019, submitted new applications to the NJDEP for a Freshwater Wetlands Permit, a Water Quality Certificate under Section 401 of the federal Water Pollution Control Act, and various Flood Hazard Permits. The NJDEP originally rejected the permit applications in January 2018.

The resolution notes that according to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, research has found that open-cut, isolated, and horizontal directional drilling (HDD) stream-crossing methods for pipeline construction, which is planned for the PennEast project and would be allowed under the permits being sought, have damaged channel formation, water quality, and aquatic life, and habitats.

Lanza reiterated the concern expressed in the resolution that, "the planned pipeline route disturbs a fifty-three acre well service area in Holland Township and over 2,000 acres of Hunterdon County farmland and conservation easements for which the taxpayers have paid millions of dollars to preserve, thereby destroying the easements."

When the Hunterdon Board approved a resolution opposing the pipeline project in 2015, current Board members Shaun Van Doren and Sue Soloway were not Freeholders. At the September 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, Van Doren and Soloway both supported the resolution in opposition to the pipeline being granted permits and thanked Freeholder Lanza for giving them a chance to voice their opposition.

Freeholder Matt Holt and Board Director Suzanne Lagay, who had voted in opposition to the pipeline in 2015, reiterated their strong opposition during discussion on the matter.

A copy of the resolution is being forwarded to Governor Phil Murphy, NJDEP Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe, and as an official comment to NJDEP Division of Land Use Regulation.