

RESOLUTION NO. 158-2025
**Resolution Opposing Williams Transco's Northeast Supply
Enhancement Project (NESE)**

Councilmember Bieber offered the following resolution and moved its adoption; seconded by Councilmember Keeler:

WHEREAS, Williams is proposing the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project (NESE) to build a 23.4 mile methane natural gas pipeline through Raritan Bay and Lower New York Bay, from Old Bridge, New Jersey to Rockaway, New York; and construct a new Compressor Station for the Connection to the Transco Pipeline by Williams on the Proposed Route 27 Location owned by Trap Rock in Franklin Township, Somerset"; and

WHEREAS, on May 15, 2019, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation denied Transco's application for a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification citing "significant water quality impacts from the resuspension of sediments and other contaminants, including mercury and copper"; and

WHEREAS, on June 5, 2019, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection denied a second set of permits for failing to meet surface water quality requirements, disturbing wetlands, endangering species and without a compelling public need; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2020, the Synapse Economic Energy Report¹ found there is no demonstrable supply-and-demand-gap that could justify NESE or any other large-scale gas infrastructure projects; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2020, the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis report² found that there is no public need for the NESE pipeline and that the National Grid utility's contract for the pipeline would have required ratepayers in Long Island, Brooklyn, Staten Island and most of Queens to pay \$193 million a year for 15 years; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2020, National Grid identified in its "Long-term Capacity Report" an alternative for natural gas services, including a clean energy, no-infrastructure alternative, that did not require construction of a new pipeline; and

WHEREAS, on April 20, 2020, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation denied another of Transco's application for a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification "with prejudice"; and

WHEREAS, on May 15, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection denied Williams the Wetland and 401 Water Quality permits for 23 miles of submarine pipeline off the Raritan Bay cutting under Sayreville and Old Bridge and requiring a new compressor station in Franklin; and

WHEREAS, in May of 2024, the Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company LLC (Transco), a subsidiary of Williams, notified the Federal Energy Regulatory Authority it would not seek an extension to build the NESE project abandoning it altogether by letting the expiration of a previously granted extension by FERC on May 3, 2024 occur; and

WHEREAS, on May 29, 2025, Williams Transco petitioned FERC for "Expedited Reissuance of Certification Authority Northeast Supply Enhancement Project"; and

WHEREAS, Williams Transco has made no changes to the project and failed to update cost estimates; and

WHEREAS, Williams Transco is proposing to construct a 32,000 hp compressor station to accelerate flow through its existing pipeline, constructed in the 1950s, from Pennsylvania through many towns in New Jersey including Old Bridge, Sayreville, and Franklin Township in Middlesex and Somerset counties, to reach its destination in Queens, New York; and

WHEREAS, Williams Transco will be by clearing 15 acres of forest and needing to construct a new right-of-way access to the site, as well as the proposed compressor station is comprising six buildings on a six-acre site; and

WHEREAS, the construction and operation of the proposed compressor station will release toxins to the air, ground water and nearby streams, as well as noise above and beyond accepted regulatory levels, all of which will impact the quality of life of local residents, children attending schools, businesses, places of worship, farmers and their farms which produce crops for local and regional consumption, and area and migratory wildlife for many years; and

WHEREAS, the compressor would be subject to regular 'blowdowns' releasing methane and methyl mercaptan into the surrounding atmosphere, as well as constant high temperature exhaust containing carbon monoxide and formaldehyde (oxides of nitrogen were stated to be controlled by injecting urea, but products were not specified); and

WHEREAS, the compressor station may be staffed by two employees or fewer, during business hours only, otherwise depending on automated monitoring; Williams Transco has faced numerous safety violations, including fines and civil penalties from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). These violations often involve failures to follow safety procedures, adequately maintain pipelines, and properly inspect for corrosion. Incidents like explosions, fires, and releases of methane have resulted in injuries, property damage, and environmental contamination; and

WHEREAS, Williams compressor stations have had a number of fires and explosions in recent years (Susquehanna Co. PA [Lathrop compressor], March 29, 2012 and July 10, 2014; Bradford Co., PA, March 14, 2012; Tyler Co., WV, April 14, 2013, Brooklyn, PA, May 14, 2013, Branchburg, NJ, May 30, 2013; Windsor, NY, January 2014), leading residents to expect such an event at the proposed compressor station, from which fire could spread through the forest to residences along and across Route 27; and

WHEREAS, firefighting in this area is the responsibility of volunteer fire companies, and water pressure in the nearest water line is too weak to support firefighting; and

WHEREAS, the compressor station would be near active mining in the Trap Rock Quarry, which carries out explosive blasting to break loose rock, and Williams was not able to present evidence that the compressors would be stable to shocks created by the blasting; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the proposed project is to transport 400 million cubic feet of methane natural gas, extracted through the environmentally destructive process of hydraulic fracturing, from the Marcellus Shale to New York markedly contributing to climate change, as well as expose the residents of the state to climate emergency situations such as extreme weather events, droughts, fires, flooding; and,

WHEREAS, the project will in no way serve the interests of the State of New Jersey, or its residents, and will only supply methane natural gas to Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island New York; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed pipeline part of the NESE project will have severe negative impacts to the Raritan and Lower New York Bays, such as disturbing roughly 14,165 acres of the seabed of the Raritan Bay, discharging 690,000 gallons of drilling fluid and chemicals into the bay, re-suspending over 1,090,000 tons of toxic muck contaminated by PCBs, dioxin, lead, mercury, and arsenic, and destroying over 1,000 acres of benthic habitat that houses marine fish, shellfish, and larva; and,

WHEREAS, the project poses serious concerns related to environmental harm to marine and coastal ecosystems, as well as negative impacts to the safety, health and wellbeing of Bayshore coastal communities, resulting in well-documented public opposition; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed pipeline will endanger marine life and fisheries through decreased water quality from re-suspended toxins, sieving of over 3.5 million gallons of seawater destroying any living thing that is caught in the process, and creating loud sounds and powerful vibrations that accompany pipeline development which will impact migration patterns, communication systems and other important biological processes; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed pipeline will have significant upstream environmental impacts that will directly harm the Raritan Bay, such as negatively affecting 41 acres of wetlands, including approximately 20 acres of forested wetland; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed pipeline will adversely impact industries important to the New Jersey Bayshore communities, disturb commercial and recreational fishing and shell fishing activities, and potentially damage the tourism industry; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed construction of the compressor station and pipeline will increase dependency on fossil fuels, reverse the state's renewable energy agenda, and contribute to climate change through increased emissions of methane and carbon dioxide; and,

WHEREAS, the companies Williams and associate Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company (Transco) demonstrate a history of mismanaged facilities that resulted in explosions and fires, and do not show results of pipeline tests to governing bodies in any municipalities through which the existing pipeline runs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on this date, August 19, 2025, the Borough of Sea Bright hereby opposes the construction and installation of a 23.4 mile

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Borough of Sea Bright urges the company Williams to eliminate any further consideration for a pipeline.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Borough of Sea Bright urges the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to deny any permit application for the project and any other pipeline, and urges its representatives of the New Jersey Legislature, United States Congress and United States Senate, as well as the Governor of New Jersey to oppose this pipeline application.

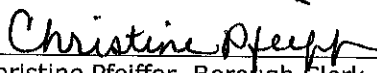
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be certified and forwarded to New Jersey Governor Philip D. Murphy, Matthew Resnick of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Land Use Regulation, Senator Declan J. O'Scanlon, Assemblywoman Victoria A. Flynn, and Assemblyman Gerry Scharfenberger.

Roll Call: Bieber, Catalano, Gorman, Keeler, Lamia, Leckstein
 Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes

August 19, 2025

CERTIFICATION

I, Christine Pfeiffer, Borough Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a Resolution adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of Sea Bright, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, at a Council Meeting held on August 19, 2025.


Christine Pfeiffer, Borough Clerk