

Resolution No.
STATEMENT OF OPPOSITION TO OFFSHORE LNG PORT
FACILITIES IN THE NJ/NY CLEAN OCEAN ZONE

WHEREAS, the New Jersey/New York Clean Ocean Zone (COZ) is defined as the waters from Montauk Point, NY, to Cape May, NJ, offshore to the outer edge of the Continental Shelf (out to 100 miles), and consists of over 19,000 square miles of Atlantic Ocean; and

WHEREAS, the physical, hydrodynamic, and biological characteristics of the COZ are unique in the world as more than 300 species of fish, nearly 350 species of birds, 7 species of sea turtles, and many marine mammals such as 25 species of whales and dolphins, and several species of seals and porpoises frequent this region. Nine endangered species, four of which are whales, can be found in these ocean waters. The COZ also serves as an essential migratory pathway for many of these species; and

WHEREAS, the ecological richness and economic viability of this region depends on a clean marine environment; and

WHEREAS, the COZ is the target location for industrial liquefied natural gas (LNG) port facilities; and

WHEREAS, New York and Connecticut rejected a similar LNG proposal in Long Island Sound and instead, offered two additional sites off the Jersey shore and south shore of Long Island for LNG facilities. Indeed, a proposed LNG facility similar to that rejected in Long Island Sound, was also vetoed in California due to significant impacts to marine life and air quality; and

WHEREAS, LNG is a bad choice for the ocean. LNG facilities will: devastate important fish habitat, and impact endangered, threatened, and protected species; damage seafloor habitat; destroy vast quantities of marine life by refilling huge emptied tankers with billions of seawater to replace LNG cargos; and be exposed to stronger and more frequent hurricanes, nor'easters, and wind and wave risks; and

WHEREAS, LNG is unsafe and risky business. The proposed facilities will straddle shipping lanes in the NY/NJ Harbor region – the busiest port on the east coast, and third in the US. This will dramatically affect shipping traffic patterns when tankers approach the facility; ship traffic and navigation will be altered in the busy region. LNG tankers leaving and entering shipping lanes amidst port traffic raise the risk of accidents with all vessels (i.e., cargo, oil tankers); and

WHEREAS, LNG is a polluting, climate-changing foreign fossil fuel. The additional lifecycle stages of liquefaction, transportation, and gasification emits harmful greenhouse gases (GHG). LNG produces 20%-40% more greenhouse gases (GHG) than domestic natural gas; and

WHEREAS, we do not need LNG ports in this region. Currently, 97% of the natural gas used in the United States is from North America, with most of that from the US, and recent new discoveries of huge new natural gas fields in the US and Canada supplement an already growing domestic supply. LNG is expensive now, and will only become more so. The whole world competes for LNG, making it globally priced and locked into price wars. Also existing LNG ports are significantly under-utilized and can more than meet our region's energy needs; and

WHEREAS, LNG is not domestic and over two-thirds of the world's natural gas reserves are in Russia and the Middle East. Proposed sources for NY and NJ include countries like Russia and offshore drilling in Trinidad. Further, environmental laws and controls are often less stringent in these regions. These LNG schemes will increase the burning of polluting, GHG-emitting fossil fuels, and increase our use and dependence on unstable foreign energy sources; and

WHEREAS, the ever-increasing amounts of GHG from burning fossil fuels is changing the chemistry of the sea by increasing its acidity, and thereby diminishing the ocean's ability to serve the free and vital role as the Earth's largest and most effective absorber of major GHG emissions, as well as making the sea itself harmful to marine life; and

WHEREAS, LNG projects will permanently exclude the public from the ocean. Vast areas of ocean will be off limits to the public, including boaters and fishing vessels; and

WHEREAS, the Atlantic Sea Island Group's "Safe Harbor Energy" project (a massive manmade island in the open ocean for an LNG facility), ExxonMobil's "Blue Ocean Energy" project (a floating experimental terminal for LNG), and Excalibur Energy's "Liberty Natural Gas Project" (four buoy LNG importation facilities) have been proposed and identified for the region; and

WHEREAS, solutions are available. We need to support energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy technologies and projects, which are readily available. For example, eight to twelve medium sized power plants worth of energy could be saved if NJ citizens were energy efficient. By focusing efforts on efficiency, conservation measures, and renewable technologies, the region can create a win-win situation: decreasing GHG, and long-term job creation with green technologies.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that on this date, September 29, 2009, the Borough of Keyport hereby opposes the building of industrial fossil fuel facilities, such as those for importing Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) off the NJNY coast.

Authorized by: _____

Signature

Title

Address _____