

January 12th, 2021

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building Albany, NY 12224

CC: Members of the Siting Board
Public Service Commission
90 Church St, New York, NY 10007

Stop a dangerous fracked gas power plant on the Hudson River

Dear Governor Cuomo and Members of the Siting Board:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to reject the proposed new Danskammer fracked-gas power plant in Newburgh, NY.

A new Danskammer power plant would mean more local air pollution in the Hudson Valley and contribute to ill health and premature death. It would undermine New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). It would burn up to 40 times more greenhouse gases at a time when New York State needs to reduce greenhouse gases 85% by the year 2050 as required by the CLCPA. Air pollution was ruled the cause of death in a landmark case at the end of 2020, and many more deaths may follow. Dealing with the climate crisis is essential-New York must not approve any new fossil fuel infrastructure. Instead, New York needs to fully commit to research and investments in achievable renewable energy solutions, including battery storage, solar arrays, geothermal and other technologies.

Danskammer LLC still has not adequately answered questions from the Siting Board on how their proposal complies with the CLCPA. In the most recent supplement, Danskammer attempts to push forward their application by claiming that they will ultimately run on 100% renewably-sourced hydrogen or "renewable natural gas" (RNG) by 2040. The supplement is a misleading and veiled greenwashing attempt, given that there currently does not exist a single 100% hydrogen facility power plant in the United States and that RNG relies on methane sources like sewage and animal manure from factory farms, only exacerbating the climate crisis.

In the 47-page supplement, there is no explanation of how Danskammer will change its infrastructure to transport and use 100% hydrogen nor is there any timeline to map out how that transition will occur. Danskammer simply states they will create a pilot study to "develop the technical scope for hydrogen research and development" and that only if granted approval of the Article 10 Certification of the project.

At a bare minimum, the Siting Board must deem Danskammer's application incomplete. Ultimately, the idea that New York can build new fracked gas infrastructure in order to move to 100% renewable energy is both foolhardy and antithetical to eliminating greenhouse gases and prioritizing environmental justice.

It is clear that construction of the plant would violate the emissions standards embedded in the CLCPA and that Danskammer has not adequately answered the agency's questioning to warrant the application "complete." Danskammer LLC is fundamentally seeking approval to build a fracked gas power plant - the promise that they will transition into a renewable facility lacks any real substance and is reliant on hypothetical state subsidies for a technology that does not currently exist.

The company's proposal must be taken at face value. A new Danskammer plant would immediately and unequivocally add over 25 times more health-damaging particulate matter and volatile organic compounds (VOC) to the air in our region. Expected chemical emissions will increase the risk of cancer and respiratory illness. Emissions from the plant will add to existing environmental contaminants in the city of Newburgh which has already experienced the health impacts of PFOS contamination. Burning more natural gas in the Hudson Valley will potentially compound the long term effects of COVID. We must protect public health, and not trivialize it.

New York doesn't need false promises from the fossil fuel industry. Transitioning to 100% renewable energy requires bold and immediate action. We need real climate solutions in order to achieve the goals laid out in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

We strongly urge you to reject Danskammer LLC's application and further, to order a revised plan for the gradual decommissioning of its existing fossil fuel infrastructure in support of the mandated targets of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

Sincerely,

350.org

350NJ-Rockland

Catskill Mountainkeeper

Committee to Preserve the Finger Lakes

Dutchess County Progressive Action Alliance

Earthkeeper Health Resources

Food and Water Watch

Fossil Free Tompkins

Friends of bluestone wild forest citizens group

Grassroots Environmental Education

Green Beacon Coalition

Holy Name of Mary Care for Creation Ministry
Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc.
Mid Hudson Valley Democratic Socialists of America
Mothers Out Front Dutchess County
New Paltz Climate Action Coalition
New York Communities for Change
New York Interfaith Power and Light
New York Youth Climate Leaders
Nobody Leaves Mid Hudson
NYCD16 Indivisible
New York Public Interest Research Group
Orange Residents Against Pilgrim Pipelines
Outdoor Promise
People's Climate Movement-Capital District
Sane Energy Project
Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion
Sunrise Movement - Westchester Hub
Newburgh Clean Water Project
Ulster Activists