

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 22, 2015**

**CONTACTS: Danielle Filson, [danielle.filson@berlinrosen.com](mailto:danielle.filson@berlinrosen.com), 646-335-0443**

**NEW YORKERS LAUNCH “KEYSTONE THE CONSTITUTION”  
CALL-IN CAMPAIGN AND WEBSITE  
AS OPPOSITION MOUNTS  
TO STOP THE CONSTITUTION PIPELINE**

**Over 40 organizations ask Gov. Cuomo & Acting DEC Commissioner Seggos  
to follow President Obamas lead and reject the Constitution Pipeline**

**New Yorkers also send 10,000 postcards to Gov. Cuomo during holiday season portraying  
landowners who are fighting for their land and livelihoods**

Over 40 organizations have joined together to launch a new “Keystone the Constitution” call-in campaign and website to increase pressure on Governor Cuomo to stop the proposed Constitution Pipeline. Each organization is asking its members to call Governor Cuomo and urge him to reject the Constitution Pipeline just as President Obama did in rejecting the Keystone XL Pipeline. If built, the 124-mile-long large-diameter pipeline would transport fracked gas from Pennsylvania through the Northwest Catskills in New York State. From there, plans show that most of the gas would be piped to Canada for export to overseas markets.

The new “Keystone the Constitution” website - [www.keystonetheconstitution.com](http://www.keystonetheconstitution.com) - and campaign unites many groups across New York State and beyond in order to increase pressure on Governor Cuomo to deny the 401 Water Quality Certificate.

The Clean Water Act combines state and federal powers into one law and authorizes states to approve or reject federal projects based on state water quality standards. In 2010, Governor Cuomos DEC denied a water quality certificate for Indian Point because it would have violated the Clean Water Act.

”Governor Cuomo has been a great leader on environmental issues, from banning fracking to vetoing Port Ambrose to advancing renewable energy and highlighting New Yorks success at the UN Climate Conference, and now we are asking him to reject the ill-conceived Constitution Pipeline,” said Anne Marie Garti, an environmental attorney and one of the founding members of Stop the Pipeline. “Just like President Obama rejected the Keystone XL Pipeline, New Yorkers across the state are asking Governor Cuomo to ‘Keystone the Constitution!’”

The “Keystone the Constitution” website highlights the fact that the companies behind the proposed pipeline are some of the worst in the industry and that this gas is meant to be exported, not used domestically. For example, Cabot Oil & Gas has over 600 violations in Pennsylvania alone and was responsible for the infamous water contamination in Dimock, PA. The industry lies when it says that gas is needed in New York City and Boston, because the pipes between Albany and these cities are already full of gas. In fact, this pipeline is meant to move gas from Pennsylvania to Canada and overseas. The Massachusetts Attorney General just issued a report confirming that New England does not need additional gas. The report concludes that the region can meet its energy requirements in other ways.

The out-of-state project proponents, which include Williams and Cabot Oil & Gas, received conditional approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission last December, but they cannot proceed without DEC's approval. The Constitution Pipeline would blast and trench through pristine forests, fields, wetlands, and streams of the Southern Tier and northern Catskills, including clear-cutting 700,000 trees, bulldozing up and down thirty-five miles of steep slopes, and trenching across more than 275 streams in one of the New Yorks most flood-prone regions.

Members of the new coalition against the Constitution Pipeline have also initiated their own campaigns against the pipeline, including the mailing of 10,000 color postcards to Governor Cuomo that feature members of Stop the Pipeline and other area landowners. The 10,000 postcards are physical postcards that residents have sent to the governor, not online signatures. They mark an incredible outpouring of opposition and commitment to stop the pipeline. Produced by coalition member, People, Not Pipelines, with the assistance of Stop the Pipeline, some of the postcards portray individuals and families whose land has been seized by the pipeline company using eminent domain. Others focus on the damage the project would wreak on the upstate fishing and tourism industries. The most recent is a holiday postcard reminding the governor that “Sometimes the best gift is what we already have...” It asks him to preserve “New York’s clean water and unspoiled natural beauty – by rejecting the pipeline. Examples of the postcards include Mother Michaela, Father Michael and Reader Photie at St. Innocent’s Retreat Center near Franklin, NY; Chris and Tim Camann with their dogs, Amelia and Munchkin, in Sidney, NY; and Diana and Phil Hulbert and their granddaughters Rebecca, Michaela and Dakota, by their home in East Meredith, NY.

The cards remind Governor Cuomo that the pipeline company cannot do as it plans without harming the states water quality. In addition to degrading water quality, the pipeline would exacerbate flooding in New York. Dan and LJ Brignoli are featured on one of the cards and live in Davenport, NY. They have seen their road destroyed by raging floodwaters three times in the past decade. If built, the pipeline would take out hundreds of trees just uphill from their house. Without tree roots to hold the soil in place, the next big flood could be catastrophic.

The Brignolis and others along the proposed route don’t understand how their land can be taken by eminent domain – and their lives and property put at risk – for a pipeline that will transport the majority of its gas outside of the US.

“Eminent domain is defined as the power of government to take private property for a bona fide public need,” says Mr. Brignoli. “But in the case of the Constitution Pipeline, eminent domain is being used for corporate *greed* instead of public *need*.”

Anne and Bob Stack agree. Featured on another card, they planned for years to build a home on their land in the northern Catskills. The high-pressure transmission line would render their land dangerous, unbuildable and nearly worthless.

”The nightmarish possibility of large gas pipelines coursing directly through our beautiful homesite has devastated our plans of the past 12 years,” says Ms. Stack. “We continue to battle the gas corporations with great stress and anxiety, trying to prevent them from destroying our land and shattering our dreams.”

The photos and stories from the postcards are being shared on social media, as well.

Colleen McKinney, whose property in Sidney, NY, is next to the proposed pipeline route, helped start the postcard project and has been sharing the images on a Facebook page called People, Not Pipelines. Individuals and activist groups such as Stop the Pipeline and Sane Energy are sharing the images, too.

”The postcards have connected real-life people and their stories to what, for many of us, is a dry, complicated, or distant issue – the rampant buildout of fracked-gas export pipelines,” says McKinney. “In fact, these pipelines are being proposed all over the place, and hundreds of thousands of people are seeing what they’ve worked for all their lives threatened – all so gas corporations can increase their profits.”

”When people see what the companies behind these export projects are doing in other states and trying to do here in New York – taking land by eminent domain, running massive pipelines directly next to homes, rendering peoples land dangerous and virtually worthless – they want to do something. And they are. They’re calling and writing Governor Cuomo and urging him to stop this senseless project.”

# # #

For more information on the Constitution Pipeline, and 401 water quality certificate, go to:  
[www.StopThePipeline.org](http://www.StopThePipeline.org)