

STEPHEN F. LYNCH
8TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND REFORM

CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC WHIP

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2108

2109 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
202-225-8273
202-225-3984 FAX

ONE HARBOR STREET
SUITE 101
BOSTON, MA 02210
617-428-2000
617-428-2011 FAX

37 BELMONT STREET
SUITE 3
BROCKTON, MA 02301
508-586-5555
508-580-4692 FAX

1345 HANCOCK STREET
SUITE 41
QUINCY, MA 02169
617-657-6305
617-773-0995 FAX

LYNCH.HOUSE.GOV

January 26, 2022

The Honorable Richard Glick
Chairman
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Chairman Glick:

As representative of the 8th Congressional District of Massachusetts, I write you in strong opposition to the continued operation of the Weymouth Compressor Station, located in the Town of Weymouth, Massachusetts. In particular, considering your recent acknowledgment that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) “likely erred” in siting the Weymouth facility adjacent to heavily populated residential areas, I urge you to invoke the Commission’s administrative and statutory authority to rescind the January 25, 2017, order approving the issuance of a certificate of public convenience and necessity for this dangerous and ill-advised project.¹

On January 20, 2022, you stated, in part:

“I believe that the Commission likely erred in siting the Weymouth Compressor Station where it did. This facility is located in a heavily populated area that is home to two environmental justice communities. Those communities have borne a disproportionate burden from a legacy of industrial activity, including elevated rates of asthma, certain cancers, and other serious illnesses. Particularly in light of that history, Petitioners’ concerns about the impacts of the Weymouth Compressor station and the blowdowns it has experienced is legitimate, understandable, and frankly, inadequately assessed in the underlying orders.”²

¹ Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, *Chairman Glick Statement on Weymouth Compressor Station* (online at <https://www.ferc.gov/news-events/news/chairman-glick-statement-weymouth-compressor-station>); *Algonquin Gas Transmission, LLC*, 158 FERC ¶ 61,061 (2017).

² Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, *Chairman Glick Statement on Weymouth Compressor Station* (online at <https://www.ferc.gov/news-events/news/chairman-glick-statement-weymouth-compressor-station>).

I strongly agree with this assessment. Since the inception of the Weymouth Compressor proposal, I have repeatedly underscored to FERC and Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration officials the serious public safety and health threats stemming from the siting of a 7,700-horsepower compressor station adjacent to the Fore River Bridge, within a half-mile of nearly 1,000 households in the densely populated neighborhood of North Weymouth, and in close proximity to several schools, parks, and other high-traffic areas in the City of Quincy, the Town of Braintree, and the Town of Abington.

Moreover, the location and operation of this project have been the sources of longstanding concerns for South Shore residents, community safety groups, non-profit organizations, and local, state, and federal elected officials regarding the devastating health and environmental impacts associated with siting and operating a compressor station in environmental justice communities that have already endured high levels of toxic air pollution. While the Fore River Basin population has experienced a high prevalence of lung disease and pediatric asthma, the residents of Quincy, Braintree, and Weymouth are demonstrating increased hospital admission rates for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease associated with long-term exposure to irritating gases and particulate matter.³

The four emergency shutdowns and multiple blowdown events at Weymouth Compressor Station between 2020 and 2021 have only exacerbated these concerns.⁴

Clearly, public safety demands that FERC exercise its administrative authority to rescind its approval of the Weymouth Compressor Station. In particular, I urge you to invoke the Commission's statutory authority to "perform any and all acts, and to prescribe, issue, make, amend, and rescind such orders, rules, and regulations as it may find necessary or appropriate to carry out" the provisions of the *Natural Gas Act*.⁵ Additionally, the Commission's order issuing the certificate of public convenience and necessity for the Weymouth Compressor Station empowers FERC's Director of Energy Projects with the "delegated authority to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the protection of all environmental resources during construction and operation of the Project," including modifications of order conditions and stop-work authority.⁶

In reviewing the siting of interstate natural gas pipelines and infrastructure, it is the fundamental regulatory mission of FERC to ensure safe, efficient, reliable, and secure energy services for the American public.⁷ The rescission of the Commission's order approving the Weymouth

³ *In Weymouth, Echoes of Flint*, Boston Globe (May 23, 2019) (online at <https://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2019/05/23/weymouth-echoes-flint/1ksKThEGt03z7haMV7jTgJ/story.html>).

⁴ *Weymouth Compressor Shuts Down Again – for Fourth Time in Less Than a Year*, WBUR (May 21, 2021) (online at <https://www.wbur.org/news/2021/05/21/weymouth-compressor-shutdown-fourth-time-enbridge>).

⁵ 28 U.S.C. § 717(o).


⁶ Certificate Order, 158 FERC ¶ 61,061 at Appendix B, Environmental Conditions for Algonquin and Maritimes Atlantic Bridge Project.

⁷ Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, *FERC's Mission* (online at <https://www.ferc.gov/what-ferc#:~:text=FERC's%20Mission%3A%20Economically%20Efficient%2C%20Safe,market%20means%2C%20and%20collaborative%20efforts.>).

Compressor Station would only serve to advance this important work. In Congress, I have introduced H.R. 319, the *Pipeline and Compressor Safety Verification Act*, to do the same.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



STEPHEN F. LYNCH
Member of Congress (MA-08)