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NEW YORKERS CALL ON GOVERNOR CUOMO TO PUT THE BRAKES ON MASSIVE FRACKED-GAS POWER PLANT IN DOVER

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Poughkeepsie, NY— Today New Yorkers from the Hudson Valley and across the Northeast descended upon a meeting of the Bechtel Corporation to voice their opposition to a 1,100 Megawatt gas-fired power plant, the Cricket Valley Energy Center (CVE), now under construction in Dover, NY. The action coincides with a week of statewide activities aimed at exposing New York's growing dependence on fracked gas. Residents, mothers, elected officials, students, scientists, and grassroots groups called on Governor Cuomo to halt construction and revisit the state's 2012 decision to approve the project.

"Hiding behind an antiquated permit is not leadership," said Johanna Fallert for the Dutchess County Progressive Action Alliance. "The world has changed in the last five years. Since 2012, New York has banned high-volume fracking, the state adopted an Energy Plan calling for the rapid transition to renewables, and Governor Cuomo pledged to champion goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. Building this massive fossil fuel power plant ignores all of that and takes New York backwards."

If fired up, Cricket Valley would pump 3.5 million metric tons of additional carbon dioxide into the air annually. Taking into account systemic leakage of methane from fracking well to power plant, those greenhouse gas impacts would more than double.

"Hurricane Sandy, bizarre weather, and record-breaking temperatures have made it abundantly clear that we are living in an era of climate change," said Eric Wood, Hudson Valley Regional Coordinator for New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG). "The only way for New York to meet its widely touted greenhouse gas reduction goals is by ceasing the buildout of gas infrastructure, ending its ruinous addiction to fossil fuels, and transitioning rapidly to renewable energy."

Cricket Valley opponents point out that the state Department of Environmental Protection recently provisionally rejected a pipeline permit to bring fracked gas to a 650MW power plant being built by Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) in Wawayanda, NY on the grounds the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) did not take greenhouse gas impact of the project into account. However, Cricket Valley would produce 70% more emissions than CPV.

"Governor Cuomo needs to advance a consistent energy policy," declared Dutchess County Legislator Joel Tyner. "Five members of the Dutchess County Legislature are opposed to this plant. There are better ways to create

energy and jobs without polluting Dutchess County or exacerbating the climate crisis. Gas is not a bridge. We must transition to renewables now."

In addition to climate impacts, every year Cricket Valley would produce hundreds of tons of carcinogenic chemicals and other pollutants hazardous to human health including carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and particulate matter. The Hudson Valley is already in a designated "non-attainment" area for VOCs and NOx. That means nearby residents—including children—would be exposed to even higher unacceptable levels than before.

This polluting power plant is being erected merely three thousand feet from Dover High/Middle School, attended by 770 students, and only two miles from Wingdale Elementary, where another 600 children go to school. "As a family physician at our clinic located less than 15 miles from Dover, I'm alarmed and concerned about the potential health effects that the proposed Cricket Valley power plant will have on my patients, colleagues, and friends who live in Dover and the surrounding areas," said Abraham Young, M.D. "The known harms that those toxins cause in our bodies, including lungs and reproductive systems, are too great to ignore. The health of children and families are at stake."

"The impacts of this project are not limited to the Hudson Valley--they are felt in Pennsylvania where the fracking occurs, and across New York," said Lisa Marshall of Mothers Out Front. "In the Southern Tier, where I live, a compressor station has just been built to push more gas destined for Cricket Valley through the Dominion and Iroquois pipelines. Over the objection of communities along Dominion's entire corridor, facilities that spew toxic emissions into the air are being built or enlarged to deliver fuel to this power plant."

But New Yorkers are not alone in their opposition. Located just three miles from the state line, prevailing winds would carry emissions from the plant directly into neighboring Connecticut.

"The electricity from this monstrosity will go to New York City, while we get the pollution," said Linda Yannone representing the group Stop Cricket Valley in CT. "It is ironic that New York is now threatening to sue the EPA over emissions from upwind states, while building a power plant on our border that appears to have been designed to dump New York's pollution downwind on us."

Other impacts cited by opponents include loss of property values, noise and light pollution, and harm to sensitive environmental areas, including the Great Swamp and Swamp River which straddle the project's western border. If the project goes into service in 2020 as planned, it would pump 86,400 gallons per day from the underground aquifer, threatening sensitive wetlands and local water supplies.

"From every angle, this is the wrong project for New York and the planet," said Keith Schue, an electrical engineer and energy policy advisor. We call on Governor Cuomo to see CVE for what it is--a project stuck in the past, one that belies New York's claims of environmental leadership, undermines renewable goals, and shackles New York to fracked gas from Pennsylvania for decades to come."

Directing her thoughts to the Governor, Rachel Marco-Havens, advisor to the Center for Earth Ethics and United Nations Representative for the Wittenberg Center, concluded by saying: "Our lands, air, water and people suffer from broken promises, creating a bleak trajectory for our children's future. The choices made in New York affect not only our communities and those where fossil fuels are extracted, but the globe. Governor Cuomo, we urge you to 'walk your talk', halt this project and reveal the conscience that we pray exists within you."

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