

16-253-GA-BTX

Ohio Power Siting Board
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

3505 Arborcrest Court
Cincinnati, OH 45236
May 29, 2016

RE: Case no.: 16-253-GA-BTX
To Whom It May Concern:

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PUCO

We are writing to strongly encourage the Ohio Power Siting Board, Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), and Duke Energy Corporation to amend the proposed routes of the Central Corridor Gas Pipeline Extension Project (Case No. 16-253-GA-BTX) and reroute elsewhere. We are retired, long time residents of Amberley Village, one of many densely populated local communities that would be adversely impacted by the proposed project. We would be directly impacted by and *oppose the proposed pink route*. We oppose the current pipeline routes for a number of reasons but the following three reasons are paramount and listed below.

Imposed Public Safety Risks and Objectionable Project Need with Current Routes. Since explosions of comparable natural gas transmission lines have occurred in San Bruno, CA and Pittsburgh, PA, resulting in the loss of human life and limb, destruction of property values, and extensive environmental damage, the unilateral imposition of these public safety risks on densely populated local communities appears to us to be unwarranted. To our knowledge, Duke Energy Corporation has never installed a pipeline extension of this size in a comparably densely populated residential area. It is particularly alarming because the very concept of locating a large natural gas transmission line in a heavily populated corridor runs counter to the specific expert advice provided in the wake of the San Bruno disaster. During a meeting with residents along the proposed pink route, a Duke Energy representative said the company prefers not to install on public property because the company would incur financial costs if ordered to move or alter its construction. However, imposing death or injury risks on private residents, families and community institutions solely to control financial costs is unconscionable. We believe that the public interest of protecting the right to life of so many residents is prepotent and should trump the special interest of corporate profitability. Therefore, we oppose the project and its current routes.

Probable Severe Negative Environmental Impact with Unreliable Accountability. Installing the pipeline extension along the pink route would have more than a minimum adverse environmental impact. Amberley Village and nearby established, densely populated communities have mature greenspaces, old growth trees, diverse wildlife, riparian features necessary to the natural mitigation of storm water, and well-established water runoff channels that have intrinsic value but also enhance the communities' quality of life and the property values of residences. Their destruction in the pink route would have more severe environmental impacts than an alternative rural route in a less established area. The University of Cincinnati Blue Ash has extensively studied the surrounding environment of part of the pink route and in its long-term campus plans has noted the need to preserve the area that Duke Energy intends to build on. What adds to our environmental damage accountability concern is the fact that Duke Energy has been fined over a hundred million dollars in North Carolina for severe environmental damage and on January 18, 2012 PUCO ordered Duke Energy Ohio to pay a fine of \$500,000 due to lack of compliance with natural gas pipeline safety standards. Duke Energy's lack of safety compliance resulted in a 2010 apartment explosion in Lebanon that injured seven people and caused an estimated \$1 million in property damage. Despite Duke Energy's rhetoric about environmental stewardship and natural gas pipeline safety concerns, the reality is quite different. Our concern about unreliable corporate accountability is intensified by the public record of Duke Energy's environmental and pipeline safety irresponsibility.

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Severe Household and Community Short Term and Long Term Economic Costs. A study by the Colorado School of Public health found that natural gas development hurts residential and commercial property values during construction. While some properties can recover once they are returned to their original condition, the mature forest in the Amberley Village community makes a full restoration impossible. According to the Forensic Appraisal Group, the permanent long term decline in property values could range from 50% of easement value to 30% of entire property value. Since we would be in the "incineration zone" of the natural gas pipeline extension in the pink route, it will likely decimate the largest single investment we have as a retired couple – our home. These economic costs are likely to be compounded because of home insurance rate increases and the refusal of some financial institutions to refinance homes along large natural gas pipelines. The pipeline hazard will likely dampen community economic development, incentivize relocation, and result in a loss of tax revenues.

As more information about this proposed project becomes available and as Duke Energy Corporation becomes more transparent about alternate routes, we will remain concerned, affected citizens and will respond accordingly. We urge the Board and Duke Energy Corporation to transparently consider alternate routes that would better minimize the aforementioned risks, impacts and costs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph A. Petrick

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Kimberly M. Petrick

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