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Letter: State should not grant approval for pipelines

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The New York Public Service Commission recently held local hearings for the Clean Energy Standard. The state has a huge test of its conviction to these standards with upcoming decisions to be made on multiple pipelines designed to move oil and natural gas, including National Fuel's Northern Access project.

The project proposes to build a new pipeline from Pennsylvania hydrofracking fields to connect to existing pipeline in southern Erie County, allowing natural gas to be shipped for export to Canada. Residents in Pendleton and Wheatfield are up in arms over proposals for construction of compressor and condenser stations in their towns crucial to the operation of the pipeline. These residents will bear the risks and get no benefits from the project.

The right of way for the Pennsylvania portion of the project has been obtained through eminent domain, clear-cutting a sugar maple grove and putting a family out of the maple syrup business.

National Fuel is now waiting for a decision from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for a decision on the New York portion. My question is: why?

Why would Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who banned fracking, or any of his appointees approve any of the pipelines under consideration, since they are designed to move fracked oil and gas through the state? Why allow the construction of new infrastructure for energy sources the Clean Energy Standard is looking to replace? Answers to these questions will show how committed the state is to reducing its carbon footprint and moving to the next generation of energy sources.

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