

To: State Air Pollution Control Board

December 17, 2018

An Open Letter Regarding the Threat of Environmental Racism
and the Proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline

There is an undeniable pattern of dangerous, polluting industrial facilities being sited in poor communities of color across our nation. “Environmental racism” is a phrase used to describe this systematic positioning.

Right now, a consortium of companies led by Dominion Energy – the largest corporate donor in state political campaigns – is attempting to place the only Virginia compressor station for its unneeded, natural gas Atlantic Coast Pipeline in the low-income, mostly African-American community of Union Hill, in Buckingham County. Many area residents trace their ancestry to the people enslaved on or near the plantation land sold for this site.

Recently, Governor Ralph Northam’s administration announced that it had dismissed two members of the State Air Pollution Control Board, which is made up of independent citizen experts responsible for evaluating the proposed air pollution permit for this huge facility. This happened six days after a November board meeting where detailed evidence of this site’s environmental injustice had been presented. The two people dismissed had stated during the meeting that environmental justice and climate change impacts must be considered in board permit decisions. In addition, Dominion submitted new proposed permit changes during the meeting, including an offer of \$5.1 million to a Dominion-controlled “Union Hill community revitalization plan.” The proposed changes to the permit came 50 days after the public comment period on the permit application closed. The board voted to delay its decision on the permit until December 10 [now postponed to December 19 due to weather].

The governor has been justly criticized for interfering with this permit decision. Not only did he announce the dismissal of the two board members, he further interfered with the board’s independence by signaling that he did not expect the new members to vote at the December meeting. It is unethical to interfere in the citizen board’s decision-making process.

Citizen boards perform an extremely important function in our democracy, providing an additional check on the regulatory process. They serve as an essential last line of defense in ensuring that the public interest is prioritized over private corporate interests.

Therefore, we strongly urge the Air Pollution Control Board to allow the public an opportunity during the December 10 meeting [December 19]—prior to any vote—to respond to any new information that has been submitted after the close of the public comment period. This includes information expected to be presented by the Department of Environmental Quality about the demographics of Union Hill that would underrepresent the community’s African-American majority. Additionally, because the facts in the record show that the proposed compressor station would have a disproportionate adverse impact on Union Hill, we ask that the board deny the permit.

On August 16, the Governor's own Advisory Council on Environmental Justice called for a moratorium on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline until completion of serious investigations of credible environmental justice issues. Governor Northam, Attorney General Mark Herring, Secretary of Natural Resources Matt Strickler and Department of Environmental Quality Director David Paylor must honor the environmental justice matters in this air permit decision. It must be addressed now.

The legacy of placing toxic facilities in places where they disproportionately affect poor communities of color is unjust and unacceptable and needs acute examination. It is not right to look the other way while this continues.

Respectfully,

Pastor Paul Wilson, Union Hill Union Grove Baptist Church
Chad Oba, President, Friends of Buckingham, Impacted Landowner
Rev. Lakshmi Fjord, Ph.D. Anthropologist, Union Hill history and demography, Friends of Buckingham, Yogaville

CC:

Governor Ralph Northam
Attorney General Mark Herring
Secretary of Natural Resources Matt Strickler
Department of Environmental Quality Director David Paylor

In Solidarity:

Karenna Gore – Director of Center for Earth Ethics

Tim Guinee – Actor, Chair of Climate Reality Hudson Valley Chapter

Rev. Dr. William Barber, II – Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival

Dr. Robert Bullard – "Father of Environmental Justice," Author, Scholar, Lecturer

Ella Rose – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

Bill McKibben – Author, Senior Advisor and Co-founder of 350.org

The Rt. Rev. William E. Swing – President and Founder of United Religious Initiative, Seventh Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of California

Del. Elizabeth R. Guzman – Virginia House of Delegates of the 31st District

Ruby Laury – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, VA, Union Grove Baptist Church, Friends of Buckingham, Concern for the New Generation

Danny Glover – Actor, Director, Political activist

Alyssa Milano – Actor, Producer, Activist

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. – President of Waterkeeper Alliance

Del. Lee Carter -- Virginia House of Delegates of the 50th District

Dr. Kusumita P. Pedersen – Trustee and member of Climate Action Task Force, Parliament of the World's Religions

Tatiana Jones-Chambers – Impacted resident, Union Hill, Va

Rev. Susan Hendershot Guy – President of Interfaith Power & Light

Ed Asner – Actor, Former president of the Screen Actors Guild

Ramin Bahrani -- Emmy-nominated director, Writer, Producer

Dorothy Oliver – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

Danny Zuker – Executive producer of Modern Family

Sandra Steingraber, Ph.D. – Biologist, Author, Co-founder of New Yorkers Against Fracking

Norman Lear – Chairman of Act III

Lyn Lear – Producer, Activist

Jeffrey Eyth – Riverscape LLC River Outfitter and Livery, Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Laura Hillenbrand – Historian, Best-selling author of Seabiscuit and Unbroken

Debra Messing – Actor, Producer, Activist

Ken Berlin – President and CEO of Climate Reality Project

Irene Ellis Leech – Impacted landowner, Buckingham, Va

Mark Ruffalo – Husband, father, Oscar-nominated actor and director, Water Defense and the Solutions

Marie Gillespie – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

Dr. Helen Caldicott – Physician, Author, Activist

Nora Ann Jones – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

Paul Gallay – President of Riverkeeper

Richard Greenstone – Impacted homeowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Don Cheadle – Oscar-nominated actor, Producer, Director, Writer

Rev. Lennox Yearwood, Jr. – President of Hip Hop Caucus

Shelly Harper – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

Wendell Pierce – Obie Award-winning actor, Tony Award-winning producer

Virginia Woodson – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

Del. Mark Keam – Virginia House of Delegates of the 35th District

Del. Sam Rasoul – Virginia House of Delegates of the 11th District

Nischala Joy Devi – Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Debbie Levin – President and CEO of Environmental Media Association

Bruce Hogshead – Solitude Forest Farm, Buckingham, Va

Cynthia Erivo – Tony Award-winning actor, Singer

Elaine Chiosso – Executive Director of Haw River Assembly

William F. Limpert – Impacted landowner, Bath County, VA, Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance, Highlanders for Responsible Development, Sierra Club

Annie Parr – Friends of Buckingham Steering Committee, impacted landowner, Buckingham, Va

Tim Hickey – 2019 Democratic candidate for Virginia House of Delegates of the 59th District

Wenonah Hauter – Founder and Executive Director of Food and Water Watch

Mary Louise Parker – Golden Globe-winning actor

Leslie Cockburn – 2018 Democratic nominee for Congress Virginia's 5th District

Edith Harper – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

David Leopold – Immigration attorney, Former president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association

Lynn S. Limpert – Impacted landowner, Bath County, VA, member of the Sierra Club

Ed Begley, Jr. – Emmy-nominated actor, Activist

Carolyn N. Lyle – Sierra Club Equity Chair, Virginia Chapter

Theresa "Red" Terry – Impacted landowner, Bent Mountain, Va, Tree sitter, Member of Preserve Bent Mountain

Marie Hailey – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

Rev. Dr. Gerald L. Durley – Board Chair of Interfaith Power & Light

Tom Cormons – Executive Director of Appalachian Voices

Rev. Dhyani Blue Star Simonini – Integral Yoga Minister, Eastern Lenne Lenape Nation, Shenandoah Region Disaster Action Team, Impacted homeowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Mustafa Santiago Ali – Environmental justice advocate, Senior Vice President of the Hip Hop Caucus

Luther Harper – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va

Renato Mariotti – Former federal prosecutor, CNN legal analyst

Frank L. Terry – Impacted landowner, Bent Mountain, Va

Frank H. Terry, Jr. – Impacted landowner, Bent Mountain, Va

Edward Zwick – Oscar-winning producer, Director, Writer

Kathy Mosley – Concern for the New Generation, Impacted landowner Union Hill, Va

Jamie Sarai Margolin – Executive Director of Zero Hour

John Laury – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va, Union Grove Baptist Church, Friends of Buckingham, Concern for the New Generation

Manna Jo Greene – Environmental Action Director of Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

Luis Guzman - Award-winning actor

Ada Washington - Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va, Friends of Buckingham

Glen Besa – Retired Director of the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter

Tom Benevento – Virginia Governor’s Advisory Council on Environmental Justice

Mary Finley-Brook – Virginia Governor’s Advisory Council on Environmental Justice

Dr. Beverly Wright – Professor of Sociology, Founding Director of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

Lisa Lefferts, MSPH – Impacted landowner, Horizons Eco Village

William Huston – Huston Shaleshock Media, New York Residents Against Drilling, New York Friends of Clean Air and Water

Heidi Dhivya Berthoud, LMT, LYT, RDH – Secretary Friends of Buckingham, Baseline Testing Project Manager; Buckingham: We the People, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Warren Leight – Pulitzer Prize-finalist, Writer

Sheila M. Dowden – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Ernie Reed – Member of Board of Supervisors, Nelson County, Va

Swami Dayananda – LOTUS Center for All Faiths, Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Rev. Fletcher Harper – Executive Director of GreenFaith

Rev. Faith Harris – Chair of Virginia Interfaith Power & Light

Richard Walker – Impacted landowner, Union Hill, Va, CEO and Founder of Bridging the Gap in Virginia,

Beth Roach – Vice Chair of Virginia Governor’s Advisory Council on Environmental Justice, Mothers Out Front

Rev. Surya Lipscombe – Integral Yoga Minister, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Rev. Maureen Mala Cunningham, Ph.D. – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Montina Cole – GreenFaith Fellow

Samantha Ahdoot, MD, FAAP – Chair of Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action

Joyce Burton – Landowner liaison with Friends of Nelson

Mark Antoniewicz – Director of Communications with Hip Hop Caucus

Terence Muhammad – N.O.I., Community activist, Hip Hop Caucus

Kenda Hanuman – Buckingham: We the People, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Piper Perabo – Actor, Activist

Samuel Eberle – Leadership member and former trustee of Yogaville, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Brian Johns – Executive Director of Virginia Organizing

Gioia Timpanelli – Winner of National Book Award and two Emmy Awards

Richard Averitt – Impacted landowner, Nelson County, Va, Rockfish Valley Investments, LLC (DBA Spruce Creek Resort and Market), Friends of Nelson

Jill Averitt – Impacted landowner, Nelson County, Va, Rockfish Valley Investments, LLC (DBA Spruce Creek Resort and Market), Friends of Nelson

The Rev. Weston Mathews – Co-Director of Interfaith Alliance for Climate Justice

Siva Ernie Moore – Executive Director of Yogaville, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Eleanor Amidon – Organizer with Pipeline Education Group

Kristin Mink – Environmental activist

Rev. Shanti Sharon Norris – Co-Founder and past Executive Director of Smith Center for Healing and the Arts, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Lou Diamond Phillips – Actor

Satya Greenstone – Impacted homeowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Kiran Bali, MBE, JP – Global Chair of United Religions Initiative

Jeeva Abbate – Yogaville Environmental Solutions, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Melissa Troutman – Director of Public Herald

Bill Geoghegan – Marketing manager, Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Lorne Stockman – Senior Research Analyst with Oil Change International

Kirk Bowers, P.E. – Pipelines Program Coordinator with Sierra Club Virginia Chapter

Lewis Freeman – Executive Director of Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance

Anson Mount – Actor, Producer

Bharata Wingham – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

William Espinosa – Executive Committee member of Cville 100

Kendyl Crawford – Director of Virginia Interfaith Power & Light

Kay Ferguson – ARTivism Virginia

Mindy Zlotnick – Yogaville Environmental Solutions, Buckingham: We the People, Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

J. Coles Terry, III – Impacted landowner, Preserve Bent Mountain

J. Coles Terry, IV – Impacted landowner, Bent Mountain, Va

Peter Hedges – Oscar-nominated screenwriter of About A Boy, Director of Ben Is Back

Jane Evans – Motion picture executive director, Winner of the Audubon Society Rachel Carson Award

Barbara Gottlieb – Director of Environment & Health, Physicians for Social Responsibility

Larry M. Gross – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Mike Tidwell – Director of Chesapeake Climate Action Network

Kate Addleson – Director Sierra Club Virginia Chapter

Patricia Kerr Alexander – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Robert Dilday – Co-Director of Interfaith Alliance for Climate Justice

Barb Adams – Interfaith Climate Justice League

Mitra Somerville – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Lee Williams – Divest RVA

Sita Rose – Buckingham: We the People, Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Freeda Cathcart – Founder of Indivisible Virginia

John Cruickshank – Chair of Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club

Paula Grass Clements – Chair of Northern Virginia Chapter of the Climate Reality Project

Stacy Lovelace – Co-Founder of Virginia Pipeline Resisters

Marion Taylor – U.S. Green Building Council LEED AP, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Terry Kinney – Tony-nominated actor, Director

Jessica Sims – Co-Founder of Virginia Pipeline Resisters

Roberta Bondurant – Preserve Bent Mountain, Co-Chair of Protect Our Water Heritage Rights

Emily Satterwhite, Ph.D. – Appalachian studies scholar, Appalachians Against Pipelines

Cathy Strickler – Founder of Climate Action Alliance of the Valley

Chuck Berthoud – Retired geologist, Regional coordinator PA Breeding Bird Atlas, Contributor to W.Va. and Va. Breeding Bird Atlas

Minor Terry – Impacted landowner and tree sitter, Bent Mountain, Va

Harrison Wallace – Virginia Director of Chesapeake Climate Action Network, CCAN Action Fund

Jamshid Bakhtiari – Virginia Field Coordinator with Chesapeake Climate Action Network, CCAN Action Fund

Ruth Turner – Magnolia Productions, Wild Virginia

Sakina Claytor – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Thomas Burkett – Virginia River Healers

Bonnie Law – Protect Our Water, Heritage, Rights Steering Committee

Swami Gurucharanananda Mataji – Integral Yoga Senior Teacher, Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Lynda Majors – Preserve Montgomery County, Chair of Protect Our Water, Heritage, Rights

Caroline Bray – Virginia Student Environmental Coalition

Maya Stewart-Silver – Friends of Nelson

Ali Mohamed Selim – Spirit Award-winning director

Freeman Allan – Vets for Peace, Cancel Compressor Coalition, VCSamerica.org

B.D. Wong – Tony Award-winning actor

Radha Metro-Midkiff – Owner of Tirtha Salon and Spa and Apothecary by Radha, Impacted landowner, Buckingham, Va

Karen Anderson – Sierra Club, Piedmont Chapter

Emmallyea Swonyoung – Impacted homeowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Natalie Pien – 350 Loudoun, Activist, Organizer; Conservation Co-Chair with Sierra Club Great Falls Group, Green Team Chair with Unitarian Universalist Church of Loudoun

Laurie Halligan – Cumberland County Landfill Awareness, Powhatan, VA

Marie Flowers – Friends of Buckingham Steering Committee, Secretary of Tri County Life Learners, St. Theresa Outreach Committee, Treasurer of Curdsville Community Center, Virginia Citizens for a Safe Society, Buckingham Garden Club

Larry Barker – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Deborah Kushner – Friends of Nelson

Jennifer Trippeer – Reclaim Augusta

David Copper – Reclaim Augusta

Miranda Massie – Director of The Climate Museum

Bhaskar Deva – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Rev. Barbara Bharati Gardino – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Rev. Lauren Van Ham – Seminary Dean with the Chaplaincy Institute, Environmental Network, United Religions Initiative

Rev. Malinda Harnish Clatterbuck – Co-Founder of Lancaster Against Pipelines

Maureen Houlihan – Impacted landowner, Buckingham, Va

Emily Little, RN – Volunteer with Generation 180

Elizabeth K. Williams, MD – American Academy of Pediatrics Fellow (retired), Board Member of Wild Virginia

Kimberly Williams – Mothers Out Front Team, Norfolk, Va

Ayya Dhammadhira – Buddhist nun, Founder of Web of Connection

Chas DiCapua – Buddhist priest

Collin Rees – Campaigner with Oil Change International

James Igoe – Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Virginia

Barbara R. Arnwine – Transformative Justice Coalition

Rhonda Dennis - Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Secky Fascione –Director of Organizing with Mothers Out Front

Harriet Shugarman – Founder of Climate Mama

John Clemons – Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

David Sligh – Conservation Director with Wild Virginia

Rhea Parvathi Moore – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Daniel Huyer – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Mary Stewart – Landowner, Nelson County, Va, Friends of Nelson, Friends of Buckingham, Friends of Horizons

Pam Gibson – Friends of Augusta, Reclaim Augusta

Kevin Halligan – Cumberland County Landfill Awareness, Powhatan, Va

Christal L. Schools – Chair of Cumberland County Landfill Awareness

Sharon Ponton – Stop the Pipelines Campaign Coordinator, Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

Geralyn Tavernier – Cumberland County Landfill Awareness, Enough is Enough

Ronald Tavernier – Cumberland County Landfill Awareness, Enough Is Enough, Preserve Virginia

Rev. Shakti Ruth Mary Hall – Integral Yoga teacher and minister, Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Swami Sugunananda – Ashram Spiritual Events Coordinator, Impacted homeowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Rev. Prem Anjali – Editor, Integral Yoga Magazine; Director, Integral Yoga Media, Impacted homeowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Victoria Ronnau – President of Enough is Enough, Preserve Virginia

Rev. Patricia Gulino Lansky – Co-Minister with Unity of Charlottesville

Rev. Don Lansky – Co-Minister with Unity of Charlottesville

Billy Davies – Community Outreach Coordinator with Virginia Chapter Sierra Club

Helen Kimble – President of Friends of Nelson

Philippe Petit – High wire artist, Subject of documentary Man on Wire

Scott Ziemer – Renewable Energy Chair with Piedmont Group Sierra Club

Andrea Miller – Executive Director of People Demanding Action

Rev. Kumari de Sachy – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Rick Loiselle - Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Amma Kidd – Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Dr. Mark Clatterbuck – Co-Founder of Lancaster Against Pipelines

Yanni Maniates – Director of Global Projects, UNITY EARTH

Abby Fox – Fairfax NAACP

Craig Stevens – Patriots From The Oil & Gas Shales, Marcellus Patriots For Land Rights

Garry Harris – Center for Sustainable Communities

April Pierson-Keating – Mountain Lakes Preservation Alliance, Clean Water Through Clean Energy

Susan Swaine – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

William Swaine – Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Jenny Hopkins – Land Steward with Big Arms Farm

Jamie Knorr – Co-Founder of Village School, Charlottesville, Va

Randi Mayem Singer – Screenwriter

Queen Zakia Shabazz – Coordinator of Virginia Environmental Justice Collaborative, United Parents Against Lead & Other Environmental Hazards

Suzanne Keller – Retired epidemiologist, Virginia Department of Health

Thomas Hadwin – Electric and gas utilities executive (retired)

James McKinley-Oakes LCSW – Trauma therapist, Charlottesville, Va

Seth Oldham – Charlottesville, Va

Alice Robison – Water advocate, Bozeman, Montan

Cynthia S. Forga – Impacted resident, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Morgana Sythove – Secretary URI Netherlands, Chair Foundation PFI/ Pagan Federation International

Ayya Santacitta Bhikkhuni – Co-Abbess, Aloka Vihara Forest Monastery, Placerville, CA

Ray Kemble – Impacted landowner, Penn., International environmental justice warrior

Chelah Horsdal – Actor

Laney Sullivan – Lobo Marino

Igor Zdanof -- Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va

Whitney Whiting – Photographer, Founder of Pipeline Podcast

Karen Karuna Kreps – Net Ingenuity, Integral Yoga Teacher

Sean Michael Haggerty

Michele Mattioli – Charlottesville, Va

Parameswari Adie -- Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, buckingham, Va

Andrew Tyler – Cumberland, Va

Rosemary Gould – Charlottesville, Va

Lauren Nyland – Lyndhurst, Va

Alia Yarrow – Friends of Buckingham, Friends of Nelson, Crozet, Va

Hayden Shaw – Friends of Buckingham, Friends of Nelson, Crozet, Va

Greyson and Ariana Williams – Charlottesville, Va

Grey McLean – Charlottesville, Va

Andrea Benavitch Wasiewski – Friends of Augusta

Betty Harper – Impacted landowner Union Hill, Buckingham, Va

Barry Hart – Professor of trauma, identity and conflict studies

Sophie Schectman – Virginia Student Environmental Coalition

Clara Carlson – Virginia Student Environmental Coalition

Réjean Dion - Impacted landowner, Yogaville Village Center, Buckingham, Va, Friends of Buckingham

Heather McGhee - Distinguished Senior Fellow, Demos

