

**TOWN OF SECAUCUS
COUNTY OF HUDSON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**A RESOLUTION ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN OF SECAUCUS
OPPOSING THE CONSTRUCTION OF NJ TRANSIT FOSSIL FUEL POWER PLANT**

WHEREAS, NJ Transit has proposed to build a gas-fired power plant (“NJ TRANSITGRID Traction Power System”) in Kearny, New Jersey, in a region whose five counties, Bergen, Hudson, Passaic, Union, and Essex have 3.5 million residents, making it among the most densely populated in the country; and

WHEREAS, NJ Transit will use \$546 million of taxpayer money to construct this plant; and

WHEREAS, Northern New Jersey already suffers high levels of air pollution from eight fossil-fuel power plants which are among the largest sources of such pollution in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, NJ Transit’s environmental impact statement estimates this power plant would emit at least 577,000 tons of GHG (greenhouse gases) annually and emissions would be in direct opposition to the goals of the NJ Clean Energy Act, EO 28, EO 100, the 2019 Energy Master Plan and New Jersey’s EJ policies; and

WHEREAS, based on scientific studies NJ Transit’s environmental impact statement understates the lifecycle methane emissions from the plant, which would bring its total annual emissions to over 1 M tons of GHG (an increase of 1% in total NJ GHG emissions); and

WHEREAS, according to *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, gas infrastructure facilities can annually emit hundreds of tons of pollutants including particulate matter, toxic chemicals such as sulfur dioxide, mercury, and known carcinogens such as benzene and formaldehyde, and are known to increase the severity of asthma and other respiratory diseases; and

WHEREAS, the American Lung Association “State of the Air 2020” report gives Bergen and Hudson counties grades of “F” and Passaic and Essex counties grades of “D” for ground-level ozone air pollution and are out of compliance with EPA limits on ozone, but this proposed plant will be allowed to increase the concentration of ozone precursors (volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides) resulting in increased ground-level ozone in this region through the purchase of “ozone credits;” and

WHEREAS, the American Lung Association “State of the Air 2020” report shows Northern New Jersey already has significant populations with pediatric and adult asthma, COPD, and other conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, nervous disorders, and mental disorders which will be exacerbated by additional volumes of air pollution, and studies have shown ground-level ozone causes premature death; and

WHEREAS, the long-term negative impact of polluted air and the poor health conditions it creates or aggravates contributed to the high death toll from COVID-19 in New Jersey and will continue to put these populations at higher than average risk, especially in our minority communities; and

WHEREAS, the location of this gas-fired power plant in a flood-prone area already highly contaminated with toxic chemicals represents poor land-use planning and its construction increases the risk of existing contaminants migrating into the Hackensack River, and poses a direct threat to one of the state's most crucial ecological resources, the Meadowlands; and

WHEREAS, the rapidly declining cost of solar energy and storage have already caused the cancellation of projects using gas to generate electricity and is forecasted to become significantly cheaper than gas in the coming years, and other renewable energy sources and improvement in energy storage technology will likely leave NJ Transit with a stranded asset thus wasting \$546 million in taxpayer funds; and

WHEREAS, hybrid microgrids using a combination of primarily renewable energy and storage technologies with backup emergency fossil fuel or tidal power (to be used only when the commercial grid is down) have been demonstrated to be cost-effective approaches when compared to all fossil fuel designs for microgrids whose purpose is to provide power when commercial power is not available; and

WHEREAS, hybrids microgrids have potentially better resiliency (through multiple, synergistic sources of power) that may better serve the needs of NJ Transit, while eliminating virtually all air pollution emissions; and

WHEREAS, NJ Transit has never considered such a state-of-the art hybrid microgrid solution; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Secaucus do not oppose NJ Transit's efforts to improve the resiliency of public transportation and recognizes that the many jobs involved in this project, if not more, will still be created by using a hybrid microgrid solution instead of a gas-fired power plant: and

WHEREAS, trade union workers in our state deserve economic expansion and infrastructure projects that don't negatively impact our public health and environment, and which are forward-looking and will develop needed skills and expertise in renewable energy technologies; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Secaucus have a principal responsibility to protect the health and safety of the Town's residents and businesses as well as to ensure the prudent spending of tax dollars paid by its citizens; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Secaucus, County of Hudson, State of New Jersey, in the interest of protecting its residents and businesses opposes construction of this gas-burning NJ Transit power plant; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Michael Marra, Town Clerk shall forward this Resolution to Governor Phil Murphy, Congressman Bill Pascrell Jr., Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Catherine McCabe, NJ Transit Executive Direction Kevin Corbett, State Senator Robert Menendez, Assemblywoman Angelica Jimenez, Assemblyman Pedro Mejia, County Executive Tom DeGise, and Hackensack Meadowlands Municipal Committee.

CERTIFICATION

I, Michael Marra, MUNICIPAL CLERK OF THE TOWN OF SECAUCUS, CERTIFY THE ABOVE TO BE A TRUE AND EXACT COPY OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 27, 2020.

Michael Marra

 Michael Marra
 MUNICIPAL CLERK

Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
<i>JC</i>				
Second: <i>MD</i>				
Councilman Costantino	✓			
Councilman McKeever	✓			
Councilman Clancy	✓			
Councilman Dehnert	✓			
Councilman Gerbasio	✓			
Councilwoman Tringali	✓			
Mayor Gonnelli	✓			

I, Michael Marra, Town Clerk of the Town of Secaucus, County of Hudson, do hereby certify that the above is a true copy of a resolution approved by the Mayor and Town Council on 10-27-20.
Michael Marra

 Michael Marra, Town Clerk