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Congressman  
C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Maryland 2nd Congressional District

## Press Release

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# Maryland Delegation Calls on FERC to Delay LNG Decision Until Obama Administration Takes Office

*Concerns over Safety and the Environment*

(Washington, DC) – Members of the Maryland Delegation are calling on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to delay a decision on the proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility at Sparrows Point until the Obama Administration takes office next week. In a letter sent to FERC today, **Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger (D-MD)**, **Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)**, **Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, **Congressman Elijah Cummings (D-MD)** and **Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD)** expressed their concerns about the safety and security of the proposed facility as well as the threat to endangered Chesapeake Bay species. FERC is expected to make a decision on the proposal on January 15, 2009. The Obama Administration takes office on January 20, 2009.

In 2008, the Coast Guard found that the Chesapeake Bay is not currently suitable for an LNG facility because sufficient resources are not available to implement the necessary safety and security measures to protect the facility and nearby residents. AES, the company proposing the project, has not created a Transit Management Plan as requested to determine how to adequately mitigate the risks of an accident or possible terrorist attack at the facility. In addition, the Department of the Interior recently determined construction of the plant could threaten the environmentally sensitive area of the Chesapeake Bay.

“From the very beginning, I have said this liquefied natural gas plant is absolutely inappropriate for this densely populated, urban area because of strong concerns over safety and security. AES has done nothing to ease those concerns. This, coupled with the threat to endangered Chesapeake Bay species, means FERC should delay its decision. The Obama Administration must be allowed to study and review the risks of building an LNG facility so close to a residential neighborhood in a critical area of the Chesapeake Bay,” said **Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger (D-MD)**, Chairman of the Port Security Caucus and a Member of the Intelligence Committee.

“For more than two years, I have repeatedly raised my safety and security concerns about this LNG facility and pipeline. While I am still waiting for these concerns to be adequately addressed, FERC has proceeded at breakneck speed to rubber stamp this project. It’s time for them to hit the breaks. FERC should hold off their decision until all the critical security and safety concerns have been addressed,” said **Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)**.



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“I am strongly opposed to locating a LNG facility at Sparrows Point,” said **Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. “I am deeply concerned about security and environmental risks to the Port of Baltimore and Chesapeake Bay, and I urge FERC to delay its decision so that the new Obama Administration will have an opportunity to study and review the risks of locating a LNG facility in a densely populated, urban area.”

“There are serious environmental and safety concerns involved in the operation of an LNG facility, and all evidence seems to be showing that AES is not adequately prepared to address these issues at Sparrow’s Point,” said **Congressman Elijah Cummings (D-MD)**, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation. “By rubber stamping this ill-advised project, FERC is jeopardizing the safety and security of Maryland residents.”

“The debate about whether or not to place a LNG facility at Sparrows Point has always hinged foremost on the issue of safety,” said **Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD)**. “But the Interior Department’s recent letter about the project’s impact on endangered species in the Chesapeake Bay raises new ecological and environmental concerns that need to be addressed as well. FERC should give these issues the appropriate attention.”

LNG is a hazardous fuel that can explode when ignited. The proposed site is less than two miles from the residential neighborhoods of Dundalk, Turner’s Station, and Edgemere in Baltimore County. The tankers carrying LNG to the facility would travel under the Chesapeake Bay Bridge to reach the facility. In addition, an LNG facility could harm a multi-million dollar revitalization effort on the Eastside of Baltimore County and restrictions on recreational boat traffic could hurt the quality of life of area residents.

The letter from Members of the Maryland Delegation to FERC is attached.

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