

**Board of Chosen Freeholders**

County of Hunterdon
71 Main Street, Building #1
PO Box 2900
Flemington, NJ 08822-2900

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**DATE: February 20, 2019****Contact: John E. Lanza, Freeholder Deputy Director**John.lanza@co.hunterdon.nj.us

Hunterdon Freeholders Support Homeowners' Call For AG Investigation of Penn East Conflicts

Hunterdon County's Freeholder Board, at the February 19th meeting, joined in support of a request by over sixty local homeowners in the Penn East pipeline path for an investigation of 'significant and troubling' potential conflicts of interest between Governor Phil Murphy's Administration and a company that is part owner of the proposed pipeline.

Freeholder Board Deputy Director John E. Lanza said that in a letter to the New Jersey Attorney General that was copied to the Freeholders, "the homeowners affected by the pipeline are asking legitimate questions about significant and troubling potential conflicts of interest between New Jersey Resources (NJR), a part owner of the pipeline, and the Governor's Administration that has to approve two, difficult to obtain clean water permits."

The homeowners' letter points out that the NJR Chief Executive Officer is Chairman of the Murphy's Economic Development Authority and that same individual is Chairman of the Drumthwacket committee that is raising funds for the renovation of the Governor's Mansion.

The homeowners' letter points out that the pipeline project is critical to NJR, a 20% owner of the pipeline.

The letter also asserts that the company's financial reports show the pipeline will affect the company's future growth and near-term financial performance.

Additionally, the letter states that the CEO's executive compensation and stock options can be positively affected by the completion of the pipeline.

Lanza stated, "There is a lot of money on the table and the homeowners are asking legitimate questions. Answers for which should be sought by the Attorney General.

Not only are the homeowners directly affected by the decision of the Governor's DEP Commissioner on whether or not to issue permits for the pipeline, Hunterdon County holds easements on numerous affected farmland properties. Making the County a directly affected landowner as well."

The members of the Hunterdon County Freeholder Board approved a motion to support the homeowners' call for an investigation.