

**CITY OF NORTHAMPTON**  
**MASSACHUSETTS**

*In the City Council, June 4th, 2015*

Upon the Recommendation of Council President William H. Dwight, Councilor Ryan R. O'Donnell, Council Vice-President Jesse M. Adams, and Councilor Alisa F. Klein

**Resolution Calling for Transparency and Public Representation  
Regarding Natural Gas Infrastructure**

WHEREAS, Columbia Gas of Massachusetts has imposed a moratorium on providing new natural gas service to residential and commercial customers in the City of Northampton, just as Berkshire Gas has in other communities throughout Hampshire and Franklin Counties; and

WHEREAS, The moratorium in Northampton carries serious economic consequences for the City, and impedes important development including the two proposed affordable housing projects on Pleasant Street; and

WHEREAS, Berkshire Gas has cited lack of capacity in the natural gas pipeline spur known as the Northampton Lateral as the reason for its moratorium, and indicated that only the construction of the Northeast Expansion of the Tennessee Gas Pipeline (now known as the Northeast Energy Direct project) can provide the extra capacity required to restore service; and

WHEREAS, Residents of Western Massachusetts have rightly raised questions about the timing of the moratoria possibly being directly related to widespread public opposition to the Tennessee Gas Pipeline expansion; and

WHEREAS, Clarity and transparency would benefit the impacted communities, both local and regional, by restoring public confidence and trust; and

WHEREAS, In addition to those supporting the Northeast Energy Direct project, residents who oppose the project should be represented in proceedings conducted by the Department of Public Utilities as it reviews potential agreements between local natural gas utilities and the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company; and

WHEREAS, The Pipe Line Awareness Network for the Northeast, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation representing the interests of residents opposed to the overbuilding of gas pipeline capacity in the region;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Northampton, Massachusetts:

1. Calls on Columbia Gas and Berkshire Gas to embrace complete transparency and make public all engineering and financial information substantiating the claim that the Northampton Lateral is at capacity, and to explain why the need for the moratorium was not known farther in advance; and
2. Asks the companies to explore alternative solutions including upgrading existing infrastructure, as well as put forth their plans in the case that the Northeast Energy Direct project does not materialize; and
3. Affirms its support for the intervention of the Pipe Line Awareness Network for the Northeast, Inc. in proceedings before the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities that relate to the Northeast Energy Direct project.
4. Asks the Department of Public Utilities to consider the project in the broader context of the Commonwealth's energy future, which should encourage conservation, greater energy efficiency and renewable sources.