

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst Resolution to Oppose the Installation of a Fracked Gas Pipeline in Massachusetts

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Universalists Society of Amherst (the “Society”), a Unitarian Universalist Congregation, has covenanted to affirm and promote seven principles, including “justice, equity, and compassion in human relations,” and “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part”;

WHEREAS, a proposed high pressure pipeline carrying natural gas obtained through hydraulic fracturing (“fracked gas”), currently called the Northeast Energy Direct project, of Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, L.L.C., would run through many communities in Western Massachusetts;

WHEREAS, in addition to the inherent risks of high pressure gas pipelines (possible ruptures, fires and explosions, and possible impacts to sensitive areas along the pipeline route), fracked gas may carry additional risks of pollution by hydraulic fracturing chemicals as well as the added environmental burdens for communities that are the site of the fracking;

WHEREAS, there is a growing concern regarding the impact of methane, the main component from gas leaks at drilling sites and along pipelines, in addition to the impact of the carbon dioxide produced when the gas is burned;

WHEREAS, instead of increasing our dependency on fossil fuels like natural gas, we are better served by embracing and strengthening the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ commitment to combating global climate change through increased energy efficiency and renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst has an interest in protecting public health, public land, and the environment in the Pioneer Valley, the Commonwealth, New England, and our shared world;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Unitarian Universalists Society of Amherst, that the Society:

1. Opposes the construction of the proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline and any such new or expanded pipelines carrying fracked gas in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts;
2. Opposes any tariffs that may be imposed on Massachusetts ratepayers to fund the Tennessee Gas Pipeline or other such new or expanded fracked gas pipelines;
3. Stands in solidarity with communities opposing the Tennessee Gas Pipeline and other such pipelines;
4. Asks that our state and federal representatives and the governor oppose the Tennessee Gas Pipeline and any other such new or expanded pipelines carrying fracked gas in the Commonwealth and oppose any tariffs or taxes that may be imposed on the ratepayers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the clerk of the Board of Trustees shall, within 30 days of the vote of the congregation, forward a copy of this resolution and the vote thereon to Gov. Charlie Baker, President of the Senate Stanley Rosenberg, State Representative Ellen Story, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Sen. Edward Markey, Congressman James McGovern, and the chair and commissioners of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.