

Ms. Yvette Fields
Director, Office of Deepwater Ports and Offshore Activities
Maritime Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, W21-309 (MAR-530)
Washington, DC 20590

Curtis Borland
Acting Chief, Deepwater Ports Standards Division
U.S. Coast Guard
2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20593

December 8, 2014

Re: Docket Number USCG-2013-0363

Dear Ms. Fields and Mr. Borland:

In anticipation of the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Port Ambrose liquefied natural gas (LNG) deepwater port this month, the undersigned groups hereby request that MARAD and USCG provide for at least 90 days of public comment and schedule at least three (3) public hearings in each adjacent coastal state, i.e., New York and New Jersey.

We understand that the project applicant, Liberty LNG, is entitled to have its application handled in a timely way, but the public also has a right to fully consider the impacts of an LNG port that could pose a major security threat in a densely populated area, risks burdening the region's ecosystems and public health with air and water pollution, and will tend to discourage investment in renewable energy supplies and energy conservation. Considering that the applicant has had well over one year to review and address the over 200 data gaps identified during scoping, the public deserves sufficient time to review the new data and findings that will presumably be incorporated into the Draft EIS; 45 days is disrespectful of spirit of public involvement. Also, given the scale of the project and the broad scope of potential environmental impacts, there is significant public interest across Long Island, the Jersey Shore, and beyond. It is unreasonable to expect that citizens from such a large geographic region will be able to attend one of only two public hearings.

Furthermore, with the Draft EIS expected to be released before the end of the year, the winter holidays will inevitably fall within the public comment period, with the public hearings likely being scheduled shortly after the New Year. Late December into early January is one of the most popular times of year for Americans to take time off from work and travel to spend the holidays with family. This timing will make it difficult or impossible for many interested parties to attend the hearings or to prepare for meaningful public participation. This is disappointing, given that the last round of public hearings (of which there were only two) was scheduled for the

week following the Fourth of July weekend in 2013, also typically one of the most popular vacation weeks of the year. Good governance requires that the public has sufficient opportunity for meaningful input throughout the permitting process, which is not possible within 45 days and at one hearing per state.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Maritime Administration use its statutory authority to stop the Deepwater Port Act clock for an extended public comment period of at least 90 days and schedule a minimum of three (3) public hearings each in New York and New Jersey.

Sincerely,

Tim Dillingham, Executive Director
American Littoral Society

Joe Reynolds, Co-Chair
Bayshore Regional Watershed Council

Bruce Ferguson
Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy

David Pringle, NJ Campaign Director
Clean Water Action

Cindy Zipf, Executive Director
Clean Ocean Action

Claudia Borecky, Chair, Anti-LNG Committee
Coalition of Nassau Civic Associations

Doug O'Malley, Director
Environment New Jersey

Jim Walsh, NJ Director
Food & Water Watch

Seth Hirsh, Treasurer
Green Party of Nassau County

Daniel Mundy, President
Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers

Paul Haertel, President
Jersey Coast Anglers Association

Kerry Margaret Butch, Executive Director
League of Women Voters of New Jersey

Sally Robinson, President
League of Women Voters of New York State

Margo Pellegrino
Miami2Maine

Ida Sanoff, Executive Director
Natural Resources Protective Association

Jeff Tittel, Chapter Director
New Jersey Sierra Club

Jessica Roff, Downstate Regional Organizer
New Yorkers Against Fracking

Rhoda Schermer, President
North Jersey Public Policy Network

Jim Lovgren, Vice President
Point Pleasant Fisherman's Dock Co-Operative Inc.

Bill Schultz
Raritan RIVERKEEPER

Clare Donohue, Program Director
Sane Energy Project

Ann I. Aurelio, Vice Chair
Sierra Club Long Island Group

Jim Brown, Conservation Chair
South Shore Audubon Society

Richard Lee, Executive Director
Surfers' Environmental Alliance

Allison Candelmo, Co-Chair
Surfrider Foundation, Jersey Shore Chapter

Marvin Weiss, Vice Chair
Surfrider Foundation, Central Long Island Chapter

Nick Lynn, Chair
Surfrider Foundation, NYC Chapter

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