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Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility Calls for Governor Baker to Extend Air Quality Appeal for Proposed Weymouth Compressor Station

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Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility (GB PSR) has raised serious concerns about the health and safety risks of a natural gas compressor station that Algonquin Gas Transmission, LLC (a subsidiary of Spectra-Enbridge Energy) has proposed in Weymouth, Massachusetts. We have described the [deep flaws](#) in the health impact assessment of the compressor station commissioned by the Commonwealth, and we noted that hazardous air pollutants already exceed the DEP allowable ambient limit in the Fore River Basin. We also issued a detailed [report](#) outlining the impossibility of mounting an adequate disaster response and the lack of an emergency preparedness plan for the proposed compressor station.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is now considering an appeal to the air quality permit for the proposed compressor station. On May 16, 2019, the DEP released an extensive and previously undisclosed air quality testing report by Alpha Analytics on seven air sampling canisters that were collected in the Fore River Basin in July 2018. This air quality testing report, dated May 13, 2019, was “amended to report additional compounds at the request of the client (DEP).” Shockingly, there are **more than 9,000 insertions and deletions in this amended report**, compared with the report previously issued on July 24, 2018.

Among the new findings in this amended report are the **presence of previously unreported additional carcinogenic and hazardous compounds** in air from the Fore River Basin. These hazardous compounds are present at levels that exceed the DEP allowable ambient limit by wide margins.

GB PSR maintains that these new and previously undisclosed results **negate the air quality model used to justify the DEP’s air quality permit**. Furthermore, these results **were not considered in the health impact assessment** performed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.

The last-minute handling of these data and the discovery of these discrepancies also raise a serious concern regarding **improper action on the part of the DEP**. This concern is further supported by the DEP's collaboration with Spectra- Enbridge Energy on the development of parameters for the air quality model that forms the basis for the air quality permit. This clearly poses an unacceptable conflict of interest.

We demand that Governor Charlie Baker place a hold on issuing the air quality permit to Spectra-Enbridge Energy and extend the appeal hearing process to allow proper scrutiny of these previously undisclosed findings. Moreover, we demand that the DEP's potentially improper collaboration with Spectra-Enbridge Energy be fully examined by the Attorney General's office.

Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) is a non-profit advocacy organization with more than 1,000 members. Our chapter includes experts in public health, cancer epidemiology, occupational medicine, environmental health, emergency medicine, and disaster preparedness.