

DG 17-198

**From:** Laura Magzis [<mailto:Hippiedoc2@comcast.net>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 12, 2018 11:24 AM  
**To:** PUC:  
**Subject:** Granite Bridge Comment

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Utilities Commission,

Dear Public Utilities Commissioners,

By LAURA MAGZIS

For the Monitor

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

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PENACOOK NH

Heartfelt thanks to the Monitor for Sunday's editorial about the danger to life and civilization posed by the use of fossil fuels. I agree with the writer about the disastrous Trump administration plan to drill for oil off the coast of New Hampshire and other Eastern states. And it is certainly appropriate to call on Gov. Chris Sununu to take a stronger stand against this plan.

Yet, there are multiple threats caused not just by the federal government but also fossil fuel companies and public inertia.

Liberty Utilities has proposed a new "natural gas" pipeline for New Hampshire that will expand and solidify our commitment to fossil fuels. The Granite Bridge project would involve a pipeline that would bring natural gas from the Seacoast to Manchester along the Route 101 corridor. It would involve building a huge storage tank in Epping, would pass under the Lamprey River twice and would end near the Manchester water source. It would evidently come close to day care projects and nursing homes.

The project derives its name from the misleading notion that natural gas is less harmful than other fossil fuels and will provide us with energy while we ramp up production of sustainable energy. In fact, natural gas is largely methane, a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, though

shorter lived. If the Public Utilities Commission and the Site Evaluation Committee endorse the project, we will be committed to using more fossil fuels over the next decades, just during the time when it is crucial for us to cut back on fossil fuels, if we want to avoid the worst consequences of climate change.

Observers have estimated that Granite Bridge will double the number of Liberty Utilities' gas customers. Most likely, it will distract New Hampshire from developing sustainable energy sources instead of providing support while we do so.

The worst consequence of this development is its contribution to climate change. However, there are other risks. New Hampshire's consumer advocate has pointed out that Liberty Utilities has never done a similar project of this size. Moreover, the company has been fined in the past for failure to inspect its pipelines. These pipelines frequently leak their methane into the air. And human error in the northern Massachusetts delivery of gas to homes in Lowell, Andover and North Andover last September killed one person and forced the evacuation of thousands of people from their homes. Furthermore, the plan calls for ratepayers to finance this infrastructure, which leaves us in danger of stranded costs if regulation of natural gas raises prices. Ask taxpayers in Bow about how changes in regulation of coal-fired energy plants have impacted their town's finances.

The public spoke out against the huge towers proposed by the Northern Pass project, and the project did not go forward. Northern Pass was going to be an aesthetic nightmare. Granite Bridge will also be a nightmare, but a less-visible one that will not involve buying private property, because it will proceed along a public right-of-way. But it will be destructive nevertheless, both to the planet and possibly to those living close to it.

I urge readers to call or email their state legislators, send comments to the

relevant agencies and write letters to their local newspapers.

(Laura Magzis lives in Penacook.)

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