RESOLUTION 2013-R-
OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF PRINCETON
TO OPPOSE THE TRANSCONTINENTAL GAS PIPELINE LEIDY SOUTHEAST EXPANSION PROJECT SKILLMAN LOOP

WHEREAS, Williams Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company ("Transco") is proposing to expand its natural gas pipeline infrastructure in Princeton by adding a second natural gas pipeline of 42 inch diameter adjacent to its existing 36 inch diameter pipeline; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Skillman Loop consists of 6.36 miles of pipeline in Princeton in Mercer County and Montgomery Township in Somerset County; and

WHEREAS, Transco is proposing to expand the width of the right of way to accommodate the new pipeline by acquiring new land and also by using additional land as temporary construction and staging areas; and

WHEREAS, The Princeton Council is deeply concerned that the installation of the additional pipeline through the Princeton Ridge as part of the Skillman Loop as proposed will result in extensive, permanent damage to the delicate environment, complex ecology and threatened and endangered species of wildlife of the Princeton Ridge; and

WHEREAS, these impacts will include the permanent deforestation of many acres of natural woodlands (at least 1,500 large trees), the dislocation of numerous endangered species including the Wood Turtle, Eastern Box Turtle, Cooper's Hawk and the Barred Owl; and

WHEREAS, the Ridge and the Sourland beyond are major migratory stopping areas; studies undertaken by the Audubon Society of Washington's Crossing, ongoing here and in Costa Rica, of birds that winter in Latin America and then fly North through Central New Jersey, demonstrating how critical this habitat is for the rest and feeding of these birds and for their survival, as protected under numerous Federal laws and treaties including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act; and

WHEREAS, the damage created by construction of the proposed pipeline will permanently reduce the stormwater absorption capacity of the Ridge and damage the diurnal pools and subwatersheds and disconnect contiguous habitats, which will have a major detrimental impact on the already very delicate ecology of the Ridge and its streams, particularly Beden's Brook and its contributory streams, including Pike's Run, Rock Brook and Cherry Run, and including the smaller streams that feed into them; and

WHEREAS, the Princeton Council is deeply concerned about the likelihood of severe flooding caused by the (a) deforestation, which reduces atmospheric carbon absorption and reduces storm water absorption, combined with the (b) increased severity of storm events related to climate change produced by an increase of green house gases; and

WHEREAS, the Ridge and areas of Princeton below the Princeton Ridge already have major stormwater control problems that adversely impact both the natural ecology and built environment, as well as the water quality of other streams such as Harry's Brook, causing substantial and permanent losses to both the environment and to the structures and people that reside in that environment.

WHEREAS, in addition to this immediate and permanent damage to the Ridge and surrounding areas, the long term effects of soil compaction and soil contamination caused by the construction will also result in the continued loss of trees and habitat for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, the Princeton Council is very concerned about the impact of truck and heavy equipment traffic associated with pipeline construction on both the environment and public health, including damage off road to the ecosystem, damage to the roadway bed and its shoulders, damage to water, storm water, sanitary sewer, natural gas, electrical, and communication lines, air pollution, noise pollution, tree removals, soil compaction, damage to groundcover and shrubbery, and damage to residential structures and congestion, as well as road bed damage and air-water-and-noise pollution along State Highway 206 and other roadways.

WHEREAS, The Princeton Council is deeply concerned that Transco has not considered the unique geological and environmental aspects of the Princeton Ridge while developing the proposed pipeline alignment and has applied standard engineering design practices to an area that demands extraordinary planning and sensitive design; and

WHEREAS, despite these numerous negative impacts, Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are not proposing to conduct an Environmental Impact Study of this project; and

WHEREAS, The Princeton Council is concerned that the existing Transco pipeline is over 50 years old and is located in a unique glacially-formed material containing large, loose boulders, and that damage to it may occur as the new pipeline is installed next to and, in some portions, underneath the existing line; and

WHEREAS, the blasting and jackhammering of volcanic rock that will be required to clear the trench for the new pipeline may cause serious damage to the foundations, swimming pools and septic systems of adjacent homes; and

WHEREAS, any damage to the septic systems may result in pollutant leakage into the ground water and related aquifers; and

WHEREAS, many of the homes on the Princeton Ridge get their water from wells, and therefore any such leakage into the ground water would contaminate the source of drinking water of these Princeton residents; and

WHEREAS, Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are not proposing to conduct a comprehensive Conditions Survey and Engineering Analysis of the existing pipeline

prior to finalizing design of the proposed installation of the new pipeline, nor conduct an Engineering Analysis of the effects of blasting and jackhammering on all existing structures and utilities that will be impacted by the proposed installation; and

WHEREAS, The Princeton Council is concerned that the combined effect of the age of the existing pipeline coupled with the means and methods required for the installation of the new pipeline will create an unacceptable potential for a disaster to occur; and

WHEREAS, in addition to close proximity to 29 homes in Princeton immediately abutting the pipeline, the pipeline right of way is near at least 50 other homes in Princeton that will be immediately impacted and in the vicinity of hundreds more, and in addition, it crosses residential streets and is adjacent to The Stuart Country Day School, which has an enrollment of approximately 450 girls, and The Princeton Academy, a pre-school for boys, all of which will suffer from substantial disruption; and

WHEREAS, these homes, streets, and schools will be in the "Blast Zone" should a disaster occur unless the existing pipeline is shut down during construction; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the dangers of being in a Blast Zone, the Princeton Council is concerned that the students at The Princeton Academy and The Stuart Country Day School may be exposed to harmful sound levels, resulting in noise-induced permanent hearing loss (the CDC has written that construction and maintenance activities in or around a school can expose students to such harmful sound levels); and.

WHEREAS, Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are not proposing to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan to reduce the potential for ordinary accidents and damage to the environment caused by normal construction means and methods nor prevent the rare but catastrophic accident; and

WHEREAS, Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are not proposing to develop an Emergency Response Plan, even though an accident of significant magnitude as could occur during construction and afterwards, and would create an enormous burden on emergency response and hospital personnel and equipment in Princeton and all mutual and response communities, and would leave people and incidents without adequate and timely emergency medical, police, fire and environmental response in Princeton and surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are not proposing to develop comprehensive Staging, Sequencing, and Maintenance of Traffic
Plans identifying the financial and operational burdens that will be placed on the Municipality of Princeton for facilitating such work as well as the displacements and inconvenience that will be required of the residents of the Ridge; and

WHEREAS, The Princeton Council is concerned that the 9+ streams that will be breached and potentially contaminated during construction drain into Beden's Brook which, via

the Millstone River, enters the Raritan River, a source of drinking water for over one million central New Jersey residents; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association performed a detailed environmental assessment of the Beden's Brook Watershed, as memorialized in a 90-page report, that demonstrates the deteriorating ecology and water quality of this stream; and

WHEREAS, the Princeton Council is concerned that the combined negative effects of the proposed pipeline construction will result in a reduction of property values of homes on the Ridge; and.

WHEREAS, the Princeton Council has determined that the potential adverse effects on the economic interests of the Municipality of Princeton including property values, combined with the material adverse effects on the health, safety and welfare of our citizens outweigh any benefits that Transco will gain by expanding its pipeline through Princeton; and.

WHEREAS, Transco is not planning to post for public inspection and review all documents and materials submitted to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for the required permits and letters of interpretation.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Princeton Council:

1.) That the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission be called upon to hold a separate scoping hearing in Princeton and/or Montgomery for the Skillman Loop.

2.) That the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission be requested to require Transco to place on the Internet for public inspection and review all applications and supporting documents submitted to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for permits and letters of interpretation.

3.) That the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission be called upon to prepare a full Environmental Impact Statement, not an Environmental Assessment for the Skillman Loop, and that the Princeton Council believes that a Finding of "No Significant Impact" would be erroneous.

4.) That Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission be called upon to prepare a comprehensive Conditions Survey of the existing pipeline and its associated facilities as well as a comprehensive Engineering Analysis of the effects of the blasting and hammering required to facilitate the proposed construction on all affected structures.

5.) That Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission be called upon to prepare a comprehensive Hazard Mitigation Plan including estimates of the financial costs and operational impacts to be borne by the Municipality of Princeton.

6.) That Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission be called upon to prepare construction plans and specifications, using best management construction practices to minimize damage to the environment, including temporally relocating stream beds into pipes to minimize damage to stream beds, for the approval of NJDEP, Mercer County Soil Conservation District and the Municipality of Princeton.

7.) That Transco be requested to examine and PIG the old pipeline immediately after construction of the new pipeline and before the new one is started up, and further, that the old pipeline be shutdown during excavation of the new pipeline (it should be noted that the existing pipeline is scheduled to be pigged in 2014, which most likely will be before construction has been completed, and that then the pipeline is not scheduled again for re-PIGing for another 7 years.

8.) That Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission be called upon to prepare an Emergency Response Plan, including the cost of putting such a plan into readiness; and

9.) That the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission require Transco to prepare a comprehensive Environmental Restoration Plan, including estimates of the costs and operational impacts.

10.) That Transco be requested to perform a tree survey which includes all trees 6 inch in caliper or greater extending 50 feet beyond the limit of disturbance and fully adhere to the Princeton tree ordinance requirements should trees be required to be removed.

11.) That Transco be required to provide a plan detailing the Environmental Mitigation and Restoration measures to be utilized including, soil preparation, replanting and maintenance of native habitat using native species and best practices, including preventing invasive species from taking a foothold, and providing plans for washing down equipment for the approval of the Mercer County Soil Conservation District and the Municipality of Princeton.

12.) That Transco be required to obtain street opening permits from the Municipality of Princeton prior to construction for road and utility repairs and replacements necessary to remediate damage from pipeline construction, including road bed repair, the repair of shoulders and sidewalks, the repair of stormsewers, sanitary sewer, etc.

13.) That Transco be called upon to monitor noise levels to insure levels below potential auditory nerve injury and Municipal noise ordinance requirements.

14.) That Transco be called upon to investigate and evaluate alternatives to the existing proposal (should it move forward) that:

a.) Do not require the expansion in any significant way of the current right of way through the Ridge.
b.) Do not require blasting, jackhammering and removal of extensive amounts of volcanic rock, boulders and timber.
c.) Protect the water quality of the 9+ streams crossed by the pipeline as well as the ground water.
d.) Protect the special species and soils on the Ridge
e.) Minimizes air pollution by not allowing machinery to idle beyond the limits of State Law.

The alternatives should include, but not be limited to:

a. A No Action alternative
b. An alternate that would allow the pipeline to be installed within or along an existing roadway.
c. An alternate alignment that by-passes the Ridge.
d. Replacement of the 50+ year old pipe with 1 or 2 new pipes re-using the original excavation.

15.) That the Princeton Council intends to request another public meeting with Transco and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission whereby local citizens can ask additional questions

Councilperson	Absent	Present	1st	2nd	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Disqualified
Ms. Butler		x		x	X			
Ms. Crumiller		x	x		X			
Ms. Howard		x			X			
Mr. Liverman		x			X			
Mr. Miller		x			X			
Mr. Simon		x			x			
Mayor Lempert		n/a						

I, Linda S. McDermott, Clerk of the Municipality of Princeton, do hereby certify that the above is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Mayor and Council of said Municipality at a meeting held May 13, 2013.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and affix the corporate seal of said Municipality, this 14th day of May, 2013.

Linda S. McDermott

Linda S. McDermott

Municipal Clerk