



## Protect Maryland from Fracked-Gas Pipelines

### Enact the Maryland Pipeline and Water Protection Act

Despite rapidly intensifying climate change, Maryland is being overrun with proposed dirty energy infrastructure and projects that will endanger clean water and harm communities while making climate change worse. Already, the state has seen the construction of a massive liquefied natural gas export facility at Cove Point in Southern Maryland, and more fracked-gas pipelines are being proposed.

#### Enough is enough.

Maryland banned fracking in 2017. Yet new fracked-gas pipelines pose significant risks to our state's water resources and threaten communities and our climate:

- Surface and ground waters can suffer long-term harms during the construction of fracked-gas pipelines.
- A drilling blow-out can release toxic drilling chemicals into the soil and adjacent waters. And construction can alter routes and rates of water flow.
- Once in operation, gas pipelines continue to pose contamination dangers. Gas leaked from a pipeline includes toxic chemicals. A pipeline failure will release explosive methane, and also can release toxic sludge which forms in gas pipelines.

Under the federal Clean Water Act, states have broad authority to review new proposed interstate gas pipelines, and deny a permit or establish strong and enforceable permit conditions if the project fails to satisfy clean water requirements. This is one of few ways states can regulate these pipelines since the federal government has broad approval authority.

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) reviews pipelines under the Clean Water Act. MDE currently has substantial discretion regarding the scope and rigor of its reviews. Unfortunately, MDE recently elected to not use its full authority under the Clean Water Act to properly protect our state from fracked-gas pipelines.



**The MDE must safeguard our water from new, proposed fracked-gas pipelines.**

**The Pipeline and Water Protection Act would make that happen.**

## WHAT IS WRONG WITH MDE'S CURRENT PROCESS?

In 2018, MDE granted a permit under the Clean Water Act for the construction of a fracked-gas pipeline underneath the Potomac River, putting the drinking water of over six million people at risk. Despite the significant problems with this pipeline, MDE failed to perform the full, independent water quality review it was authorized to undertake. Without new legislation requiring the state to complete full reviews allowed under the Clean Water Act, MDE could continue to follow the same inadequate process in reviewing future gas pipeline proposals.

## ARE ADDITIONAL PIPELINES PROPOSED?

Yes. An expansive network of pipelines is being proposed in Maryland, including pipelines to transport fracked gas through to other states and to the Cove Point LNG export facility. For example, a new, lengthy fracked-gas pipeline may be proposed on the Eastern Shore. We need to make sure that Maryland is required to use all of its authority to protect our surface and groundwater, and our communities.

## WHAT SHOULD THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DO IN 2019?

The Maryland Pipeline and Water Protection Act will require MDE to utilize its authority under the Clean Water Act to conduct full, independent reviews of new, proposed interstate gas pipelines to assess their impact on our water resources. MDE will not be allowed to waive this authority. These reviews will include analyses of impacts on private drinking water wells, drinking water aquifers, and downstream water supplies; water quality impacts and risks related to climate change; the risks presented by constructing gas pipelines through fragile karst terrain; and cumulative impacts from associated projects. As part of the review process, MDE will be required to hold public hearings, provide for a public comment period, and issue a final public decision in writing.

**We need Maryland to take action and protect our water. Pass the Pipeline and Water Protection Act of 2019.**



**Take Action** To sign the petition supporting the Pipeline and Water Protection Act, please visit [canactionfund.org/maryland/no-new-fossil-fuels](https://canactionfund.org/maryland/no-new-fossil-fuels). To volunteer with us, please contact Maryland Field Coordinator Emily Frias, [Emily@chesapeakeclimate.org](mailto:Emily@chesapeakeclimate.org)