



Legislation Text

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CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION addressing a proposed liquefied natural gas facility in Tacoma, and urging the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency to improve tribal consultation procedures and collaborate with regional mayors, leaders, and tribes to address the growing impact of climate change.

WHEREAS, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), a for-profit company, is developing a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility at the Port of Tacoma in the Tacoma Tidelands for the purpose of producing, storing, and distributing liquefied natural gas; and

WHEREAS, the regional 2008 Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy set ambitious goals for reducing emissions from ships and other port-related sources and improving regional air quality; and

WHEREAS, most cargo ships in the Puget Sound region currently run on diesel or bunker fuel, and emissions from ships are responsible for 63 percent of maritime-related diesel particulate matter emissions; and

WHEREAS, vessels operating in Puget Sound must meet appropriate federal emissions standards; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council considers climate change to be a threat to people everywhere in the world, and a vital concern for the people of Seattle and the Northwest, and data shows that LNG is one choice to fuel some ships and provide natural gas to residential and commercial customers to reduce sulfur emissions, harmful diesel particulate matter by 90 percent, nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide emissions by 90 percent, and carbon dioxide emissions by 35 percent over that of diesel or bunker fuel; and

WHEREAS, dockworkers, pilots, and communities surrounding vessel routes and docking that utilize bunker fuel experience decreased air quality, significantly impacting the public health of workers and communities in the Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, workers exposed to harmful particulate matter from vessels burning diesel or bunker fuel is a serious health concern, and Seattle City Council supports finding energy alternatives that both protect workers and our climate; and

WHEREAS, allies in labor organizations and the environmental community, as well as tribal, city, county, and state governments, should work collaboratively on measures to decrease the harmful impacts of emissions that harm public health and impact climate change; and

WHEREAS, natural gas, like other fossil fuels, emits carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change when used as a fuel source, and leaks along the natural gas supply chain emit methane, a gas with 86 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; and

WHEREAS, many natural resources are disappearing faster than they can be restored due to the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Native tribes who rely heavily on the cultural and subsistence practices of their ancestors are disproportionately impacted by climate change due to their geographic locations and direct connection to the surrounding environment, particularly those tribal nations located in coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, in Resolution 31757 The City of Seattle committed to “doing its part to meet the United States’ obligation under the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius”; and

WHEREAS, Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 173-441, regarding the reporting of emissions of greenhouse gases, and WAC Chapter 173-442, known as the Clean Air Rule, establish greenhouse gas emission standards for natural gas distributors; and

WHEREAS, natural gas is often extracted from the earth through hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”), causing environmental damage beyond the impacts on climate change; and

WHEREAS, PSE’s proposed LNG facility in Tacoma would process a steady supply of gas from offsite wells

including gas extracted through fracking, potentially exposing communities living near those wells to toxic and carcinogenic chemicals and polluting local waters; and

WHEREAS, LNG is natural gas that has been condensed into a liquid, taking one-six-hundredth the volume of its gas form when cooled to -260 degrees Fahrenheit; and

WHEREAS, PSE's proposed LNG facility includes a storage tank that could hold up to 8 million gallons of LNG, which is the equivalent of 4.8 billion gallons of natural gas in vapor form; and

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Native tribes depend upon natural resources to sustain their way of life, and the proposed Tacoma LNG facility places a disproportionate share of health and safety risks on tribal lands and tribal members; and

WHEREAS, local, state, and federal permitting and other approval processes require tribal consultation; and

WHEREAS, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) is a regional organization comprised of American Indians and Alaska Natives, and represents tribes in the states of Washington, Alaska, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Oregon; and

WHEREAS, the ATNI adopted Resolution 17-51 in September 2017, included as Attachment A to this resolution, opposing the siting of the proposed Tacoma LNG facility, supporting documentation and disclosure of the risks of constructing and operating an LNG storage and distribution facility, promoting the siting of such facilities where the risks are lessened for the public as a whole and not disproportionately absorbed by tribes, and calling for the cessation of construction activities on the proposed Tacoma LNG facility; and

WHEREAS, the ATNI adopted Resolution 18-10 in January 2018, included as Attachment B to this resolution, stating that several of the failures to document and disclose the risks of constructing and operating an LNG facility are best addressed through a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), an environmental justice analysis, and a human health study; calling on the City of Tacoma to require a Supplemental EIS; and reiterating many of the positions contained in ATNI Resolution 17-51; and

WHEREAS, ATNI Resolutions 17-51 and 18-10 were signed by the Honorable Leonard Forsman, President of ATNI and Chair of the Suquamish Tribe, located in Kitsap County; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, NCAI adopted Resolution MKE-17-034 in October 2017, included as Attachment C to this resolution, opposing the siting of LNG facilities that would harm tribal lands, and urging disclosure of the risks associated with construction and operation of LNG facilities to ensure that any risks are reduced for the public as a whole and not disproportionately absorbed by tribes; and

WHEREAS, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians adopted Resolution 180118F in January 2018, included as Attachment D to this resolution, opposing the Tacoma LNG facility and approving a statement declaring that the review and permitting process has been inadequate and that construction activities should cease until all tribal consultation and public participation requirements are met and all permit requirements are satisfied; and

WHEREAS, Puyallup Tribe of Indians Chair Bill Sterud supports the adopted statement by the Tribal Council that “The Puyallup Tribe of Indians opposes the location of the Liquefied Gas storage facility because of its direct threat to our homeland, culture, way of life, and tribal members.... This area is all that we have left of our aboriginal homeland, and it cannot be replaced”; and

WHEREAS, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) is a special-purpose, regional government agency chartered by state law in 1967 under the Washington Clean Air Act with jurisdiction covering four counties: King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish; and

WHEREAS, the PSCAA is governed by a Board of Directors composed of elected officials from the cities and counties within its jurisdiction, along with one member representing the public at large; and

WHEREAS, the PSCCA Board of Directors does not include elected tribal leadership from any of the nine tribes located within those four counties; and

WHEREAS, the nine tribes within PSCAA's jurisdiction are:

- a) Pierce County: Nisqually, Puyallup
- b) King County: Muckleshoot, Snoqualmie
- c) Kitsap County: Port Gamble S'Klallam, Suquamish
- d) Snohomish County: Sauk-Suiattle, Stillaguamish, Tulalip; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Mayor Durkan holds a seat on the Board of Directors of the PSCAA; and

WHEREAS, PSE began construction of the LNG facility without first obtaining the necessary approval by the

PSCAA, resulting in issuance of Notice of Violation 3-008343 by the PSCAA in April 2017; and

WHEREAS, the PSCAA is currently considering PSE's application for a permit to build and operate the LNG plant in Tacoma; and

WHEREAS, in January 2018, the PSCAA placed PSE's application on hold after determining that a

Supplemental EIS is required to quantitatively identify and analyze greenhouse gas emissions

throughout the fuel life cycle, including emissions upstream and downstream of the proposed project;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:

Section 1. The Seattle City Council is deeply concerned by the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in general, and is specifically troubled by the proposed siting of a new liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility by Puget Sound Energy (PSE) in Tacoma. The Seattle City Council requests the Office of Intergovernmental Relations to communicate this resolution to the Northwest Seaport Alliance including the Port of Tacoma, the Tacoma City Council, the Mayor of Tacoma, and Washington State Governor Jay Inslee.

Section 2. Due to the disproportionate impact of the proposed LNG facility on tribal lands, and in light of the lack of tribal consultation in spite of the significant presence of tribes in the area, the Seattle City Council urges the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) to:

- A) Improve its tribal consultation procedures and engage in a government-to-government

relationship with tribes on matters related to PSE’s application; and

- B) Collaborate with regional mayors, leaders, and tribes to address the growing impact of climate change; and
- C) Promote investments in clean energy that will reduce regional reliance upon fossil fuels; and
- D) Include an examination of hydraulic fracturing in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement that was announced in January 2018; and
- E) Provide timely information regarding the environmental impacts of any proposed facility affecting tribal land prior to any hearings on these facilities.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2018, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2018.

President _____ of the City Council

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2018.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)

Attachments:

- Attachment A - Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Resolution 17-51
- Attachment B - Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Resolution 18-10
- Attachment C - National Congress of American Indians Resolution MKE-17-034
- Attachment D - Puyallup Tribe of Indians Resolution 180118F