

BAKKEN PIPELINE RESISTANCE COALITION

February 4, 2015

Dear Governor Branstad:

The undersigned organizations oppose the newly proposed Bakken Pipeline by Energy Transfer Partners LP of Dallas, Texas.

The proposed pipeline would originate from the Bakken oil fields in North Dakota, cut across eighteen of Iowa's counties, and run underneath the Mississippi River to Patoka, Illinois. The pipeline would carry crude oil produced through hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, through Iowa communities and farmlands.

Bakken crude oil is considered to be extremely volatile, flammable, and dangerous. The oil is highly explosive and pipeline systems are chronically under-regulated to guarantee safe transportation. We urge you to join us in opposing this ill-conceived project that will risk the health and safety of all Iowans, jeopardize environmental resources and generations of family farms, and halt progress on our state's clean energy future.

The proposed Bakken Pipeline would allow Energy Transfer Partners LP to transport oil from oil fields in North Dakota through South Dakota, Iowa, and Illinois, where it would connect to an existing pipeline, with a destination of Texas Gulf Coast. The pipeline would accelerate the transport of this fossil fuel-infrastructure that is susceptible to corrosion and leakage problems. According to the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration (PHMSA) only has 135 inspectors to oversee 2.6 million miles of pipeline and only a fifth of that pipeline system has been inspected by PHMSA or its state partners since 2006¹. Bringing this fuel into our state endangers our families, farmland, property, water and environment.



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Lack of inspections and highly corrosive material makes the risk of a spill very real. Bakken oil is extremely volatile and dangerous. The *Wall Street Journal* compared oil from 86 locations around the world and found Bakken crude oil to be the most explosiveⁱⁱ. In October 2013, a spill of Bakken crude from a pipeline in Tioga, North Dakota resulted in over 20,600 barrels--equivalent to 865,200 gallons--of oil escaping into an agricultural field. The event was one of the largest onshore oil spills in recent history and covered over 7 acres. Soil was contaminated 30 feet underneath the earth's surface. According to the North Dakota Department of Health, the spill will take over two years to clean upⁱⁱⁱ.

In recent years we have seen oil pipeline spills have disastrous impacts around the country, most notably the 2013 Pegasus spill in Mayflower, Alabama (\$70+ million) and the 2010 Enbridge spill in Kalamazoo, Michigan (\$1.2 billion). Iowa law currently requires pipeline operators to provide a surety bond of only \$250,000, or have property in Iowa worth only \$250,000, to provide financial protection to the state^{iv}. In comparison, the statutory amount of financial responsibility required in Alaska is \$50 million, which is indexed to inflation^v. Bringing the Bakken Pipeline into Iowa will bring considerable financial risk to our state as it threatens our environment and public health only to increase profit for the fossil fuel industry. It is fiscally irresponsible to expect our state to bear this risk.

The Bakken Pipeline is proposed to run diagonally through the center of Iowa, crossing our major watersheds and the Mississippi River. Our state, often referred to as "America's Heartland", is known for its valuable farmland. Thirteen of the eighteen counties along the proposed Bakken Pipeline route have implemented the Natural Resource Conservation System (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection Program^{vi}. The Bakken Pipeline would travel through fragile wetlands that provide Iowa with numerous benefits including biodiversity protection, water quality improvement, reduced sediment delivery, wildlife habitat, reduced impacts of floods, and farm income generation. The future of our state's greatest resource, agricultural land depends upon the protection of this environmentally sensitive region from polluting fossil fuel infrastructure.

Pipeline construction would have deleterious effects on both the rural farmlands and urbanized communities through which it would pass. Seventy-five percent of all Iowans rely on groundwater as their drinking water source. The Jordan Aquifer is the largest groundwater source in Iowa and provides drinking water for 300,000 Iowans. Iowa already has numerous impaired waterways that are costing residents to pay for extensive water treatments. The last thing Iowa communities need to worry about is



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more water pollution and even more of their money going towards water treatment costs.

Further, the Bakken shale boom exploits both land and people. The oil transported through this proposed pipeline would be extracted in the Bakken region of North Dakota by fracking. The production of this oil has serious harmful environmental impacts including, water depletion, creation of toxic air emissions and wastewater, and an exponential increase in carbon emissions through the production of methane, which continues to create climate change. The construction of this pipeline across Iowa endorses the environmental destruction at the Bakken shale extraction sites, which impact the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota. Additionally, it perpetuates escalating violence and human trafficking in the Bakken oil boom towns^{vii}. The disastrous cumulative impacts of this pipeline project cannot be ignored.

Iowa is a renewable energy leader. Knowing that the extraction of oil contributes to the acceleration of climate change and given the history of previous spills, explosions, and leaks from oil pipelines across the country, we are fortunate to have alternatives for energy, that have resulted in job creation in our state. We should encourage investment in wind and solar infrastructure to generate permanent, full time jobs and clean energy, in order to truly create the healthiest state in the nation, one that we are proud of that provides a sustainable future we can all live with for generations to come, without risking our communities and environment. The proposed Bakken pipeline is wrong for Iowa's future and does not meet the "public convenience and necessity" of the people of Iowa. This pipeline is all risk and no benefit to the people and the state of Iowa and we urge you to oppose it.

Thank you for considering these comments and the future of our great state.

Sincerely,
The Bakken Pipeline Resistance Coalition

100Grannies for a Livable Future, 1000 Friends of Iowa, Allamakee County Protectors, Citizens' Climate Lobby, Drake Environmental Action League, Food and Water Watch, Iowa Audubon Society, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Iowa Climate Advocates, Iowa Interfaith Power and Light, Iowa Pipeline Abatement Group, Iowa Renewable Energy Association, Iowa State University ActivUs, Iowa State University Sustainable Agriculture Student Association, No Bakken Here, Science and Environmental Health Network, Sierra Club (Iowa Chapter), Women, Food and Agriculture Network.



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ⁱ Stern, Marcus and Sebastian Jones. "Exclusive: Pipeline Safety Chief Says His Regulatory Process Is 'Kind of Dying'" *Inside Climate News*. 11 Sept 2013.

<http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20130911/exclusive-pipeline-safety-chief-says-his-regulatory-process-kind-dying>

ⁱⁱ Gold, Russell. "Bakken Shale Oil Carries High Combustion Risk." *The Wall Street Journal*.

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304834704579401353579548592>

ⁱⁱⁱ Smith, Nick. North Dakota oil spill cleanup to last at least two more years. *Bismarck Tribune*. 11 February 2014.

http://bismarcktribune.com/bakken/north-dakota-oil-spill-cleanup-to-last-at-least-two/article_c3af1d8c-9365-11e3-bc88-0019bb2963f4.html

^{iv} Iowa Code section 479B.13.

^v Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. "Spill Prevention and Response."

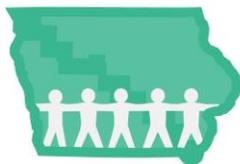
<http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ipp/fr.htm>

^{vi} "Restoring Iowa Wetlands". Natural Resources Conservation Service.

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs142p2_006832.pdf

^{vii} Horwitz, Sari. "Dark Side of the Boom." *The New York Times*.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2014/09/28/dark-side-of-the-boom/>



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