



June 9, 2011

The Honorable John M. McHugh
Secretary, U.S. Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310

Dear Secretary McHugh:

The National Puerto Rican Coalition (NPRC) is the premier non-partisan non-profit Hispanic organization representing the voice of the Puerto Rican community based in Washington DC. We are writing to express grave concerns over the proposed natural gas pipeline project ("*Via Verde*") currently being evaluated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Information shared with us by several groups of local community based organizations including Casa Pueblo, Sierra Club Puerto Rico Chapter, and the Comité Amplio de Arecibo Contra el Gasoducto y el Incinerador (CAACGI) leads us to question the positive impact that this pipeline will have as a long term renewable energy source while its construction impacting negatively the natural resources, public health, and safety of U.S citizens, something the USACE is bound to protect.

This project, which has very little support from the community at large, is being steamrolled by the local government using questionable tactics, non-factual information, lack of public hearings, and transparency.

As an example, today in an interview on a local publication called La Perla del Sur, Co-President and General Manager of Administration and Finance of Eco Eléctrica Jaime Sanabria Hernandez stated that his company, which in the local governments building plans is the only company capable of handling the liquid gas storage and conversion essential to the pipeline "*does not have the capability to supply gas to the pipeline unless they construct another storage tank*", which they currently do not have the FERC permissions or the \$200 million to build. He also stated that if they were to have the permissions and the funds "*it would take between 4 and 5 years to complete*", which places the testing and usage of the pipeline in limbo till the new tank is fully operational.

Referenced Article (In Spanish):

http://www.periodicolaperla.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2667:ecoelectrica-corta-de-gas-para-alimentar-la-via-verde&catid=81:locales&Itemid=198

NPRC is proud of our record as one of the most visible and effective voices in Washington, DC on issues affecting the Puerto Rican community. We urge you to take personal interest on this evaluation and ensure transparency and accountability of the process. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at rfantauzzi@nprcinc.org or (202) 223-3918.

I hereby formally request that this document in its entirety be considered by the USACE and be made part of the *Via Verde* Natural Gas Pipeline; SAJ---2010---02881 (IP---EWG) file.



On a personal note, my father Col. Rafael Fantauzzi Ruiz was the Chief of the Engineering Division of the Puerto Rico National Guard and a very proud Colonel of the U.S. Army. He taught me the seven Army values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. I sincerely hope that the USACE, which you oversee, engage in embodying those values as they consider the impact on the daily lives of the more than 3.6 million U.S. Citizens on the Island of Puerto Rico.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rafael A. Fantauzzi', written over a horizontal line.

Rafael A. Fantauzzi
President & CEO