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**\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\***

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**PUERTO RICAN ELECTED OFFICIALS FROM NEW YORK EXPRESS  
CONCERN OVER PROPOSED NATURAL GAS PIPELINE PROJECT IN  
PUERTO RICO**

**New York, NY** – Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito and seven of her Puerto Rican colleagues in government from New York sent a letter yesterday to U.S. Army Secretary John M. McHugh, Secretary and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) District Commander Alfred Pantano to express their strong opposition to the "Via Verde" natural gas pipeline project in Puerto Rico (A copy can be viewed at <http://scr.bi/mATdHJ>). New York State Assembly Members Carmen Arroyo, Marcos Crespo and Robert Rodriguez and City Council Members Joel Rivera, Sara Gonzalez, Rosie Mendez and Annabel Palma joined Council Member Viverito in citing serious concerns over the potential for an environmental disaster as a result of this project as well as the lack of public process as the Puerto Rican government made its decision to support the project.

“Via Verde” is a 92 mile long cross-island natural gas pipeline project being proposed in Puerto Rico. This project does not comply with the most basic regulatory standards and procedural safeguards for the construction of such a high-risk project. Because the Governor of Puerto Rico declared an “energy emergency,” the project has been fast-tracked, and no public hearings or environmental impact assessments have been conducted. Still, polling data indicates that a vast majority of the Puerto Rican people oppose the pipeline.

The Puerto Rican elected officials who signed this letter demanded that a thorough and transparent process be conducted in order to assure that the well-being of the Puerto Rican people affected by this project is preserved. The signers have asked that USACE slow down the process by denying all requests for permits until public hearings can be held and a thorough environmental impact study can be conducted.

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