

Comment
Public Hearing
Liberty Natural Gas Port Ambrose Deepwater Port License Application
Environmental Impact Statement
July 10, 2013

RE: Docket # USCG-2013-0363

My Name is Louise Usechak and I am speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.

The League is a non-partisan, non-profit organization and has long held positions supporting clean air, clean water and protection of natural resources. It is in pursuit of these goals that we oppose the application for Liberty Natural Gas's Port Ambrose, a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facility off the New Jersey and New York coast. This is the same application Liberty Natural Gas put forward in 2010 which we opposed and which Governor Christie vetoed in 2011. Liberty has only moved its location.

However, since the Deep Water Port Act was amended December 2012, any license approved now will allow a LNG facility to import, export, or change from one use to the other over its lifetime -- without public notice and with no further opportunity for public input. Therefore, the EIS for this application needs to take into account all the direct and indirect impacts that could result from this facility's use over its lifetime.

Air pollution and global climate change come primarily from the use of fossil fuels. The League strongly supports efforts to move to renewable energy so that we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Port Ambrose would be in direct conflict with a proposal to build a wind farm in the area.

This project poses a security risk to shipping lanes that serve the largest port on the East Coast – the Port of NY-NJ – and it would create a slowdown in commerce during its nine to twelve month construction phase. A one mile exclusion zone around the proposed terminal will be required when ships are in port as well as when they are entering or leaving it. The construction and operation of this Port will negatively impact the commercial and recreational fishing industries, and will potentially threaten marine life as many fish species are migratory. Superstorm Sandy has shown us that waves in this area can be lethal. The EIS should evaluate

the impact of future storm events of this magnitude.

We are extremely disappointed in the Maritime Administration (MarAd) and the Coast Guard for not providing the citizens of NY and NJ a fair and reasonable opportunity to evaluate the one thousand five hundred pages of this application that have been made available to the public. The Federal Register notice of these hearings was released on June 24th, less than three weeks ago. The residents of our states need more time in which to evaluate this application. We strongly urge the Maritime Administration and the Coast Guard to hold additional scoping hearings in affected areas, including the NJ coast and “upstream” communities where natural gas is drilled. We also request an independent Environmental Impact Assessment and an extension of the public comment period to 120 days.