

**Testimony of Caswell F. Holloway  
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**United States House of Representatives  
Before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands  
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Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. I am Caswell Holloway, New York City's Deputy Mayor for Operations. On behalf of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.R. 2606, the New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act. This legislation is not just about facilitating the construction and operation of a natural gas pipeline—though the jobs created by the project are certainly a good thing. This pipeline is critical to building a stable, clean-energy future for New York City, and dramatically improving the public health of New Yorkers.

As the members of the Committee know, H.R. 2606 will make possible the construction of a 3-mile, 26" diameter natural gas line that will enable National Grid to supply gas consumers in Brooklyn from an existing bulk pipeline in the Atlantic Ocean that is operated by the Williams Companies. Congressional action is needed to authorize the pipeline route to cross beneath the Gateway National Recreation Area (Gateway), which is operated by the National Park Service. I note that Mayor Bloomberg is working closely with the National Park Service on many initiatives to improve public access to and use of Gateway and City and National Parks throughout New York City.

As with any pipeline project, the primary concern is public safety—and Williams and National Grid are taking steps to ensure that this pipeline is safe, and has a minimal impact on Gateway, as well as property along the entire route. Foremost among these measures is the planned use of horizontal directional drilling, a trenchless construction method, that will install

the pipeline at a considerable depth below ground—from 30 to as much as 80 feet at certain points. And trenchless technology, which the City has used successfully on our own water and sewer projects, will minimize the impact of the construction itself. In addition, the developers have stated that they will: (1) use piping of a gauge and strength that will greatly exceed the safety requirements established by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration; (2) undertake rigorous safety measures beyond those directed by federal regulators at DOT and at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), such as the use of automatic shut-off valves; and (3) voluntarily meet a number of additional safety and reliability measures sought by New York City and by the TriBorough Bridge and Tunnel Authority, including a reinforcing concrete cap over a portion of the pipeline. The TBTA is part of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and part of the pipeline route crosses through a right-of-way deep beneath an MTA property. The City will lead the environmental review for the National Grid portion of the project, and FERC will act as lead agency for the environmental review of the Williams part of the line, from the ocean connection point on the Transco line to the approach of the principal bridge connecting the Rockaways to the Brooklyn mainland. As you can see from this description, getting this project done is a major effort that includes the private sector, and the City, State, and Federal governments.

As I noted at the outset, this project is vitally important to New York City. Energy demand in New York City is increasing, and will continue to grow. Indeed, this past July, the City’s electric utility company, Con Edison, reported that overall demand peaked at 13,189 megawatts, eclipsing the former all-time record set in 2006.

And some 90% of New York City’s electric generation – much of it located in Brooklyn and Queens – uses natural gas as its primary fuel. Consequently, there is a very close

relationship between the availability of natural gas, and our ability to ensure adequate and affordable electricity for New York City's 8.4 million residents, and the millions more who work in and visit New York City. It has never been more important to secure clean, reliable, domestic energy sources to meet this demand.

In 2007, Mayor Bloomberg issued *PlaNYC*, a comprehensive long-range sustainability program for the City. Among other ambitious goals, the plan seeks to achieve a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, wider use of repowered electric generation facilities, and a dramatic reduction in the use of highly polluting heating fuels—particularly Number 4 and 6 grade oils. When burned, 4 and 6 oil produce carbon dioxide at a rate that greatly exceeds that of natural gas. In addition, the combustion of these fuels throws off significantly higher levels of pollutants such as sulfur and nickel, and particulate matter emissions. We estimate that the elimination of these fuels alone will save more than 200 lives, and eliminate 100 hospital visits per year. This is an amazing return on a comparatively small investment—changing the fuel supply at approximately 10,000 of the 950,000 buildings in NYC. Mayor Bloomberg recently enacted regulations that mandate phasing out the use of dirty heating fuels by 2030—but to meet that goal, we have to increase the availability of natural gas in New York City.

No new bulk gas transmission lines have been built in New York City for more than forty years, and without new supply, many parts of the City will have to continue to rely on dirty fuels for heat and electricity. Natural gas is the most efficient and cleanest-burning fossil fuel available. The National Grid/Williams pipeline will increase our access to gas by 100 million cubic feet per day, and given the location of the Rockaways area of Queens that the gas line will serve, and the geographic position of the Gateway Recreation Area, there is no practicable alternative to traversing beneath Parks' property.

In sum, I urge your passage of H.R. 2606 as a means of ensuring that New York City's future energy needs are met in a way that assures system reliability, reduces our carbon footprint, and protects public health. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.