

A Resolution Against the Sabal Trail methane pipeline and For Solar Power



WHEREAS, the Lowndes County Democratic Party (LCDP) has [on its platform](#): "*Georgia Democrats believe we have a moral obligation to leave our children and grandchildren with an earth as safe, beautiful, and majestic as the one bequeathed to us by our parents and grandparents*"; and

WHEREAS, the Sabal Trail Pipeline is being built to move natural gas from fracking sites to Florida and for Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) Export. Fracking is a known polluting technique, leaving behind undrinkable water and unusable earth. LNG export is no benefit to anyone in Georgia or Florida; and

WHEREAS, Sabal Trail [has already caused a frac-out](#) of drilling mud from its pilot hole under the Withlacoochee River and a sinkhole at its Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) site in Lowndes County; and

WHEREAS, [WWALS Watershed Coalition caught Sabal Trail illegally burning](#) prohibited materials in Brooks County, brought in from other sites that may include some in Lowndes County, all without a permit to burn anything at all; and

WHEREAS, the LCDP platform also says: "*Georgia Democrats believe in and uphold every citizen's right to equal and impartial justice under the law*"; and

WHEREAS, the taking of privately owned property by a private company is a property rights issue. Putting corporations above citizens is not equal, nor is it impartial. Lowndes County property owners have a right to say who can and cannot use their property and a pipeline that benefits no Georgians is a property rights violation; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia legislature has implemented a moratorium on petroleum products pipelines which could be extended to cover natural gas pipelines; and

WHEREAS, existing pipelines have a history of failures from poor monitoring and maintenance which have resulted in explosions, fires and deaths. The safety of Lowndes County citizens should be a top priority of our local and state governments; and

WHEREAS, the LCDP platform includes: *“Georgia Democrats believe every child in every classroom in every school in every county in Georgia should have access to a **high quality public education.**”*; and

WHEREAS, the Sabal Trail pipeline path goes barely a mile from Clyattville Elementary School, risking our children’s education; and

WHEREAS, on [March 8, 2014, the Lowndes County Democratic Committee already voted](#) to oppose the Sabal Trail pipeline; and

WHEREAS, on [December 9, 2014, the Lowndes County Commission passed a resolution](#) opposing the Sabal Trail pipeline; and

WHEREAS, on [December 11, 2014, the Valdosta City Council passed a resolution](#) opposing the Sabal Trail pipeline; and

WHEREAS, [nine other counties and at least three other cities in Georgia and Florida also passed resolutions](#) opposing the Sabal Trail pipeline; and

WHEREAS, on [March 28, 2016, the Georgia House of Representatives voted 128 to 34 to deny easements Sabal Trail wanted to drill under Georgia rivers](#), demonstrating that opposing this pipeline is a bipartisan matter of water and property rights, even though Sabal Trail later sued in county superior courts and got the easements; and

WHEREAS, further demonstrating bipartisan opposition to this pipeline, many elected representatives wrote to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) opposing Sabal Trail, starting with on [March 3, 2014, Valdosta City Council Tim Carroll](#). **Members of the Georgia legislature:** on [November 14, 2014](#) and again [on July 20, 2015](#) Winfred Dukes, Georgia House District 154, on [November 18, 2014 Gerald Greene, Georgia House District 151](#), on [January 5, 2015 Dexter Sharper, Georgia House District 177](#), on [23 October 2015 Freddie Powell Sims, Georgia Senate District 12](#). **Members of Congress from Georgia:** on [May 29, 2015 Sanford Bishop, U.S. Congress GA-02](#), on [October 23, 2015 Sanford Bishop GA-02, John Lewis GA-05, Hank Johnson GA-04, and David Scott GA-13](#), and again [on May 27, 2016 Sanford Bishop GA-02](#).

WHEREAS, on [February 20, 2017, the Orange County, Florida Democratic Executive Committee \(DEC\) voted to oppose](#) the Sabal Trail pipeline; and

WHEREAS, since then at least three other Florida county DEC’s have voted to oppose the Sabal Trail pipeline; and

WHEREAS, LCDP agrees with Orange County DEC that *“building a five hundred and sixteen mile, three-foot-wide pipeline, carrying up to 1 billion cubic feet of natural gas, would provide an extreme health hazard to residents of all counties, as well as all wildlife, as the proposed pipeline runs near schools, through residential areas, and the Florida Aquifer, an aquifer that makes up nearly sixty percent of Florida’s drinking water. In addition, there is a greatly increased risk of sinkholes, as a result of digging and displacement of the water-table, that could*

potentially cause injuries or even deaths to residents, and furthermore, cost tax payers unnecessary additional monies via repairs to already crumbling physical infrastructure”; and

WHEREAS, in [2013 Florida Power and Light convinced](#) the Florida Public Service Commission and later the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that Sabal Trail was needed because FPL claimed Florida needed new electricity; and

WHEREAS, FPL’s [2016 Ten Year Plan](#) says “**Difference: FPL does not project a significant long-term additional resource need until the years 2024 and 2025**”, thus contradicting any alleged need for this pipeline; and

WHEREAS, Florida is the Sunshine State and could generate any needed electricity from less expensive and more environmentally friendly renewable sources of solar and wind, as demonstrated by the extensive research of Stanford Professor Mark Z. Jacobson and his research team and visible in thesolutionsproject.org; and

WHEREAS, in November 2016 Floridians voted in favor of solar power [by voting down a fake solar amendment](#); and

WHEREAS, more new U.S. electricity in 2016 came from solar power than any other source, [according to the US Energy Information Administration](#); and

WHEREAS, the solar power industry already employs more people than coal, oil, and natural gas combined, according to the U.S. Department of Energy's second annual [U.S. Energy and Employment Report](#); and

WHEREAS, solar jobs are local, unlike pipeline jobs which mostly went to people from other states; and

WHEREAS, the LCDP platform says, “*Georgia Democrats believe that the **American Dream of opportunity for all** should guide government policies at all levels*”; and

WHEREAS, in [March 2014 LCDP already voted to support a solar power financing bill](#) then in the Georgia legislature, and [a version of that bill passed into law in 2015](#); and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Lowndes County Democratic Party (LCDP) that LCDP opposes the Sabal Trail pipeline and supports the rapid deployment of solar power; and

Therefore be it further resolved, that the membership of the Lowndes County Democratic Committee oppose the construction and completion of the Sabal Trail Pipeline, on behalf of the safety and welfare of its all residents.

Therefore be it further resolved, that in an effort to de-fund Sabal Trail and thus prevent financing of the project, that the membership of the Lowndes County Democratic Committee avoid doing business with companies and/or banks who in turn do business with Sabal Trail Transmission LLC or any of its parent companies, which include but are not limited to, Florida Power and Light, NextEra, Duke, and Spectra Energy, as well as from banks that finance this

project, including, but not limited to, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, TD Bank, ING Bank, SunTrust, and CitiBank.

Therefore be it further resolved, that on this day LCDP ask that all elected public officials shall take an official stance, both vocally, in public, and in writing, via press release, opposing the Sabal Trail pipeline. They shall also pledge to not any take corporate donations, be they monetary or otherwise, of any amount, from Sabal Trail Transmission LLC, or any of its parent companies, which include but are not limited to, Florida Power and Light, NextEra, Duke, and Spectra Energy.

Therefore be it further resolved, that LCDP advocates expanding the Georgia moratorium on eminent domain for petroleum products pipelines to include a moratorium on natural gas pipelines, and to extend that moratorium to become a permanent ban; and

Therefore be it further resolved, that LCDP advocates removing eminent domain from the federal Natural Gas Act; and

Therefore be it further resolved, that a copy of this resolution be provided, officially, directly to all elected officials in Lowndes County, as well as their staff, and to the local delegation of state and federal elected officials, by the LCDP Secretary or Chair, within a time frame of no less than seven (7) days.

Therefore be it further resolved, that LCDP assist other Georgia counties and their Democratic Party Committees in also passing their own resolutions opposing the construction of the pipeline and supporting solar power, for the benefit and well-being of their own residents.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE LOWNDES COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY, GEORGIA,

this 27 day of March, 2017.



By: J.D. Rice, Chair, Lowndes County Democratic Party

Attest: _____