



December 16, 2016

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Johnson:

We the undersigned leaders of the Hudson Valley's business community respectfully request that you terminate the rulemaking process of the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) regarding proposed new anchorage grounds on the Hudson River. These 10 floating "parking lots" for 43 barges—each potentially filled with 4 million gallons of explosive crude oil—jeopardize both environmental and economic interests from Kingston to New York Harbor and stand to curtail projects critical for ensuring the region's future prosperity.

A great part of the Hudson Valley's appeal is its scenery, including vibrant parks and waterfronts. Over the last several decades, communities along the river have seen vast environmental improvements, largely the result of extraordinary public-private partnerships. Billions of dollars have been invested in transforming contaminated lands along the shore into exciting places to live, work and have fun. Real estate values in these towns have increased, despite continuing economic challenges.

This plan—clearly an attempt by the maritime industry to increase shipments of volatile crude oil from the Port of Albany to refineries and marine terminals for export—stands to impede our ongoing progress. Turning the Hudson into a crude oil superhighway increases the likelihood of collisions and spills. In a tidal river already lacking adequate emergency-response safeguards, such a disaster could pollute downtown riverfronts, wetlands and irreplaceable aquatic habitats from Kingston to New York Harbor.

In addition to these risks, the anchorages present distinct threats to public safety and health. If fully occupied, the proposed anchorage in Yonkers, New York's fourth-largest city, would enable the massing of 64 million gallons of volatile crude oil. The two anchorages offshore Cortlandt are within three miles of the Indian Point nuclear plant. Upriver anchorages are located near six essential drinking water intakes; it could take minutes for spilled oil to reach some of these.

Finally, the anchorages imperil many of the Hudson Valley's world-class recreational and cultural resources—foundation of the region's \$5.2-billion tourism economy that sustains nearly 85,000 jobs. The barges could mar vistas from nearly 250 sites on the National Register of Historic Places, including major tourist destinations. They also would spoil views from parks in the Hudson Highlands and Palisades that attract visitors from around the world, as well as many local parks where diverse populations connect with the river. In addition, the anchorages would reverse gains made to increase access to the Hudson River for boating, fishing, swimming and destination tourism. And the light, air and noise pollution from the barges not only would hamper enjoyment of the river but ongoing economic development projects and new recreational opportunities along it.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to discontinue the Coast Guard's rulemaking process prior to the administration's changeover. In the midst of an economic renaissance, the Hudson Valley communities and their residents simply cannot afford a project that would burden them with so many risks without offering any rewards.

Sincerely,

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