



# PHYSICIANS FOR POLICY ACTION

August 1, 2017

Governor Charlie Baker  
Massachusetts State House  
Office of the Governor, Room 280  
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Comprehensive public health impact assessment of proposed Spectra/Enbridge natural gas compressor station in Weymouth

Dear Governor Baker,

Thank you for your July 14, 2017 letter to Mayor Robert Hedlund of Weymouth, calling for a comprehensive public health impact assessment (CHIA) of the proposed Spectra/Enbridge natural gas compressor station in Weymouth. As health advocacy groups representing more than 250 doctors, nurses and health professionals in the Boston region, we know that this assessment will be essential to informed decision-making around the proposed project.

With this letter, we urge you to ensure that the CHIA be performed in an open and transparent manner, and that it conform to widely-accepted best practices<sup>1</sup>. In particular, the CHIA should:

- Assess existing relevant health status and health determinants in the surrounding area of Weymouth and Quincy, and identify vulnerable and environmental justice populations
- Systematically consider the full range of potential impacts of the proposed project on health, health determinants, and health equity; these health impacts should include but not be limited to respiratory, cardiovascular, oncologic, dermatologic, reproductive, developmental, and neurologic diseases, as well as accidents and injuries
- Review relevant peer-reviewed literature from the medical and public health fields
- Document data sources and analytic methods, quality of evidence used, methodological assumptions, and limitations
- Involve and engage stakeholders affected by the proposal, including particularly vulnerable and environmental justice populations
- Produce a publicly accessible report that includes documentation of the CHIA's purpose, findings, and recommendations, and offers a public health monitoring framework

We are fortunate to have outstanding public health institutions and resources in the Commonwealth, and we are certain that a qualified team can be identified to perform the CHIA. Please contact us if we may be of assistance in this process.



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Respectfully,

Physicians for Policy Action, represented by Regina LaRocque, MD, MPH  
[www.physiciansforpolicyaction.org](http://www.physiciansforpolicyaction.org)

Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility, represented by Jim Recht, MD  
[www.psr.org/chapters/boston/](http://www.psr.org/chapters/boston/)

Massachusetts Health Professionals for Clean Energy, represented by Brita Lundberg, MD

## References:

1. "Minimum Elements and Practice Standards for Health Impact Assessments", North American Health Impact Assessment Practice Standards Working Group. September 2014. Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment ([www.hiasociety.org](http://www.hiasociety.org))

cc:

Monica Bharel, MD, MPH, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Health & Human Services  
Martin Suuberg, Commissioner, Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
Robert Hedlund, Mayor, Town of Weymouth  
Thomas Koch, Mayor, Town of Quincy  
Andrew Scheele, MPH, Commissioner, Quincy Health Department  
Maureen DelPrete, Chairwoman, Weymouth Board of Health