



Congressman Tim Bishop

FIRST DISTRICT -- NEW YORK

NEWS RELEASE

MARCH 15, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BISHOP: NEW GOVERNMENT REPORT RAISES MORE SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT BROADWATER

*GAO Report Highlights Incomplete Research by Government on Risks from Terrorist Attacks on
LNG Tankers, Terminals*

Washington—Congressman Tim Bishop urged a new look at the Broadwater Energy proposal in the wake of a government report released today by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), which contends that the Government has not conducted sufficient research of the vulnerabilities to a terrorist attack on Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) tankers.

“We should not be licensing a facility until we fully understand the threat it may present,” Bishop said. “This report casts serious doubts on the assumption that we are doing everything possible to protect the health and safety of Long Islanders. It also raises serious questions about why the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is steamrolling this process forward.”

The report is titled, “Public Safety Consequences of a Terrorist Attack on a Tanker Carrying Liquefied Natural Gas.” In it, the GAO urges the Department of Energy (DOE) to conduct new studies on public impacts from a major fire or vapor cloud release from an attack on an LNG tanker.

The GAO surveyed nineteen LNG experts who agreed that the most likely public safety impact of an LNG spill is heat impact from a fire. Eleven of these experts concurred that the one mile protection zone to protect public health from the heat impact of a fire and used by federal agencies in assessing waterways and permitting LNG terminals is “about right” or “should be smaller.” However, four experts believed the protection zone was not large enough.

The experts suggested priorities to guide future research aimed at clarifying uncertainties about heat impact distances and cascading failure particularly in the case of an attack, including large-scale fire experiments, large-scale LNG spill experiments on water, the potential for cascading failure of multiple LNG tanks and improved modeling techniques. The DOE’s recently funded study involving large-scale LNG fire experiments addressed some but not all of these priorities. This research is important because new tankers are being deployed that are nearly twice as large as current tankers and could fuel even larger fires.

“These potentially lethal hazards underscore why so many Long Islanders are concerned about Broadwater,” said Bishop. “In the coming weeks, I will introduce new legislation, the National Estuary Protection Act of 2007, which would prevent highly volatile and environmentally hazardous LNG facilities from being placed in estuaries of national significance, such as the Long Island Sound.”

To protect estuaries from industrialization, this new legislation would amend the Clean Water Act to avoid exposing the environment to LNG vulnerabilities such as spills, explosions and other dangers. These estuaries are designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to protect public water supplies and indigenous wildlife species.

The full GAO report is available at <http://energycommerce.house.gov>.

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