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## **“Protectors” Proclaim: Pipelines are DIRTY BUSINESS**

Roanoke, Virginia—Residents from across the region joined forces this morning to shine a light on Governor McAuliffe’s ill-conceived support of two proposed 42-inch fracked gas transmission pipelines—the Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley Pipelines. The protest, dubbed “Pipelines are DIRTY Business” was held outside the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce where Governor McAuliffe attended the Roanoke Clean Energy Business Roundtable.

“Governor McAuliffe claims that he’s helped move the state of Virginia towards renewable energy, yet he continues to give whole-hearted support for dirty fossil fuels via both the proposed Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley Pipelines,” said Carolyn Reilly, Community Organizer with the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL). Reilly, a landowner in the path of the proposed MVP, added, “McAuliffe also wants us to believe he can do nothing about the proposed pipelines in Virginia– that it is just a federal issue; but that’s a lie he hopes Virginians will believe. Our Governor has the power to deny permits through the Clean Water Act and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).”

Ed Reynolds of Roanoke stated, “Many of us don’t feel that the Governor clearly understands the circumstances surrounding the proposed MVP. For example: NO Virginia taps for distributed gas, NO demonstrated need with TWO other pipeline sources in the area, and NO bona fide economic benefit. Two Big Bite hotdogs and a Giant Slurpee for the pipeline installers at the local 7-Eleven store do not constitute ‘economic public benefit.’” Reynolds added, “Never underestimate the influence on FERC that Governors, Senators and Congressmen have ‘behind the curtain’ on projects like these proposed pipeline infrastructures.”

# Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

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Frequent news coverage of fossil fuel pipeline accidents and leaks, like what occurred last week in Alabama, alert the public surrounding the threats of massive transmission lines. “The public questions why the environment, private property, homes and their neighbors’ lives are being put at risk,” said Diane Wray of Franklin County. “Twentieth century business plans by energy companies chaining communities to fossil fuels is dirty business; it’s time to kick proposed pipelines to the curb and truly embrace the future of energy: renewables,” Wray concluded.

In recognition of International Day of Peace, a local network called Peace Week Roanoke, joined the protesters, stating, “We recognize the understanding that environmental destruction and the threat to life is one of the contributors to the nation’s violent atmosphere and realities. Cognizant of the many interlocking forms of violence, including poverty, racism, war, environmental destruction, many people are recognizing that now more than ever we need a systematic effort to mainstream the power of active nonviolence, or ‘the love that does justice,’ as Martin Luther King, Jr. called it.” Polly Branch of Peace Week Roanoke 2016, added, “ We must connect the dots between the great challenges we all face and, together, build a durable culture of peace capable of sustaining the planet and all its inhabitants.”

The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL) continues to support citizens, landowners, and communities from becoming sacrifice zones for greedy corporations who hope to benefit from endangering lives and ruining the environment and economies. BREDL’s focus is to Safeguard America’s Resources, protecting lives, rights, water, air and land demonstrating that Pipelines truly are Dirty Business.

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*The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League is a 32-year old community-based, non-profit environmental organization with chapters in seven states. Our founding principles are earth stewardship, environmental democracy, social justice, and community empowerment.*