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**SENATOR  
BRAD HOYLMAN**

27TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT  
STATE OF NEW YORK

**DISTRICT OFFICE:**  
322 EIGHTH AVENUE, SUITE 1700  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10001  
PHONE: (212) 633-8052  
FAX: (212) 633-8096

**ALBANY OFFICE:**  
ROOM 413  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG  
ALBANY, NY 12247  
PHONE: (518) 455-2451  
FAX: (518) 426-6846

**e-mail:**  
hoylman@nysenate.gov

**website :**  
hoylman.nysenate.gov

**COMMENTS OF NEW YORK STATE SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN TO THE UNITED STATES  
COAST GUARD REGARDING ANCHORAGE GROUNDS ON THE HUDSON RIVER FROM  
YONKERS TO KINGSTON (USCG-2016-0132)**

**DECEMBER 2, 2016**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments to the United States Coast Guard (USCG) regarding proposed anchorage grounds on the Hudson River between Yonkers, NY and Kingston, NY (USCG-2016-0132). I am the State Senator representing New York's 27th Senate District, which includes the neighborhoods of Clinton/Hell's Kitchen, Chelsea, Times Square, Greenwich Village, Midtown/East Midtown, the East Village, Columbus Circle, the Lower East Side, and the Upper West Side. My Senate District contains several communities along the Hudson River. As the Ranking Member of the New York State Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, I oppose the siting of ten new anchorage grounds for barges along the Hudson River on environmental grounds.

The proposed rulemaking would establish 43 new berths for shipping vessels in ten locations along the Hudson River between Yonkers and Kingston. At the request of the shipping industry, these anchorage sites would provide stopping locations for increased barge traffic that the Hudson has been experiencing in recent years – an increase that is largely due to crude oil being transported from North Dakota Bakken Shale, in addition to other oil and petroleum products.

These new berths are a clear affront to the environment in several ways. First, the increased ability to transport and store fossil fuels increases environmental risk to the Hudson River, a federal Superfund site that has dealt with a multitude of environmental hazards over the last several decades. Reports of oil spills in the river seem to be occurring more frequently, while dangerous PCB chemicals still linger in parts of the river as a legacy of decades of dumping by General Electric.

Adding these anchorage sites would increase the potential for spills, accidents, and disturbances that could harm the health of the Hudson. Local fish and wildlife depend on a healthy river ecosystem, including the endangered Atlantic and shortnose

sturgeon. Communities along the Hudson, including the City of Poughkeepsie, rely on the river as a primary drinking water source. Environmentalists warn that a crude oil spill can never be fully cleaned up. At worst, such a spill could destroy wildlife, endanger drinking water and human health, and take generations and infinite costs to reach any kind of meaningful recovery. Furthermore, a controversial proposal to allow for the transport of thick tar sands oil to and from the Port of Albany, if approved, could add even more dangerous fossil fuels to this stretch of the River.

In the face of rapidly progressing global climate change, oil and gas have quickly become outdated and unsustainable forms of energy. New York has taken major steps to advance clean energy, including the Governor's recently-adopted Clean Energy Standard to produce 50 percent of our electricity from renewable sources like wind and solar by the year 2030. New York's regulatory framework is sending a message to market forces that we need to invest in clean energy infrastructure - not the energy sources and industries of the past. Facilitating the transport of these fossil fuels is an irresponsible allocation of resources in a changing energy market.

In addition to environmental concerns, local communities such as Cortlandt, Beacon, Yonkers, and many others have expressed strong opposition to the new berths, citing harm to waterfront redevelopment initiatives, limitations on recreational water activities, negative aesthetic impacts, noise and light pollution, and many other valid concerns that must be addressed.

As society grapples with the enormous challenge of human-induced climate change, we must make decisions on regional and local projects that assert our need to protect our planet. Facilitating the movement of dangerous fossil fuels along the Hudson River represents a step backwards that our river and our planet cannot afford. I urge the USCG to reject this proposal. Should the proposal nonetheless advance, I urge USCG to conduct a comprehensive environmental impact study of the proposal with an opportunity for public input.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.