

June 22, 2023

Directors

Patrick Anderson
Bill Berg
Mary Angela Branch
Jim Chapman
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Save RGV has been diligently working to stop LNG projects in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) since 2014. The RGV is the only urbanized area on the Texas coast without the hellscapes of petrochemical industrialization.

When the ad below appeared in local media back in March of 2023, Save RGV was dismayed and disappointed to learn our elected officials publicly touted their support of Rio Grande LNG, a project we feel strongly will cause irreparable harm to our community, our health and our environment.

This harm has been evidenced and documented by 1) Cancer Alley in Louisiana, which contains over 200 petrochemical plants and refineries; 2) the Freeport LNG explosion along our Gulf Coast, June 2022, that shut down the plant for over 9 months and in which Federal regulators found was caused by inadequate processes, human error and fatigue; and, 3) the Sataritia, Mississippi Denbury LNG pipeline rupture in February 2020, which spewed 32,000 plus barrels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) for 4 hours and caused 200 people to be evacuated and 45 individuals hospitalized.

There have been many more such catastrophic events related to fossil fuel industrialization both on a historical and global level.

Therefore, we are sending this strong message to our elected officials and local government employees:

We love our Rio Grande Valley and we will be closely monitoring your campaign contributions and donations from the [NextDecade Corporation Political Action Committee \(PAC\)](#), and will proactively inform the general public of those contributions. Going forward, we urge you to refuse any fossil fuel campaign donations, and to make that a strong public commitment.

NextDecade Newspaper Advertisement



Thank you to our supporters of Rio Grande LNG

- Brownsville Navigation District
- Cameron County Commissioner
- Cameron County Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr.
- Former United Way CEO Traci Wickett
- Global LNG customer
- Local business leaders
- Los Fresnos Chamber of Commerce
- Los Fresnos City Manager Mark Milum
- Los Fresnos Mayor Alejandro Flores
- Port Isabel San Benito Navigation District
- Rep. Erin Gamez (D-TX-38)
- Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX-28)
- Rep. Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX-7)
- Rep. Vicente Gonzalez (D-TX-34)
- Rep. Wesley Hunt (R-TX-38)
- RGV Partnership
- Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX)
- Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX)
- Texas State Technical College
- Valley Regional Medical Center
- Workforce Solutions Cameron

Subsequently, on the heels of the above noted ad in March, we discovered through an article in [DeSmog Magazine](#) June 8, 2023, that the following hired and elected officials sent letters of support for the Rio Grande LNG project to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) urging the Commissioners to expedite their regulatory processes.

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These letters were found to be nearly carbon copies of the same letter, the draft of which was written by the Head of Community Relations for NextDecade, Andrea Figueroa Benton, who encouraged them to apply this draft to their letterhead and submit it to FERC. Each official obliged.

List of Officials who submitted letters to FERC

Erin Elizabeth Gamez, State Rep House District 38
Eddie Trevino, Cameron County Judge
Sofia Benavides, Cameron County Commissioner
Esteban Guerra, Chairman, Port of Brownsville
John Reed, Port Commissioner for the Port of Brownsville
Ralph Cowen, Port Commissioner for the Port of Brownsville
Sergio Tito Lopez, Port Commissioner for the Port of Brownsville
John Wood, Port Commissioner for the Port of Brownsville
Steven Bearden, Port Director, Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District
Eduardo Campirano, Port Director, Port of Brownsville
Mark Milum, Los Fresnos City Manager
Alejandro Flores, Los Fresnos Mayor
Jarrett Sheldon, Fire Chief for Brownsville Fire Department
Pat Hobbs, Exec Director for Workforce Solutions Cameron

Save RGV is letting the public know that this type of mindless knee-jerk reaction both on behalf of NextDecade as well as the elected officials is unacceptable and does not address the real issues. Again, Save RGV asks that our public servants, those elected to keep our safety, health, quality of life, and integrity of our environment at the forefront of their public duties, cease accepting any PAC contributions from NextDecade. We have made public each and every letter sent to FERC and again remind you we will continue to monitor your campaign contributions and donations.

In closing, there is no upside to Rio Grande LNG. Once it is built and the construction jobs are gone, what will we be left with? Few jobs, the hellscape of a massive industrial complex with 24-7 noise, lights & flaring, worsening air quality, catastrophic risks of fires & explosions, less green space for wildlife and recreation, and desecration of ancestral native-American land. Rare is the local politician who will say no to the oil and gas industry and their campaign money, no matter how damaging the industry is to the rest of humanity. At our peril, they ignore United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres' words, "Trading the future for thirty pieces of silver is immoral." In solidarity, as the Carrizo Comecrudo Nation of Texas wrote to Bechtel Corporation (NextDecade's third party construction contractor) earlier this year, 'Rio Grande LNG should cease and desist.'

Respectfully Submitted,
Save RGV