

December 12, 2016

We, The Health Advisory Council of Jewish Voice for Peace, support the standing Rock Sioux Tribe and its allies in their opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). The water protectors of Standing Rock are protesting the extension of an 1,200 mile oil pipeline that would traverse their ancestral and sacred lands and tunnel under the Missouri river. The risk of water contamination and other environmental disruption and destruction is great and all efforts must be made to protect the people's continued access to clean water and a safe environment in which to live.

We see many parallels between the struggles of indigenous peoples in the US and in Israel/Palestine. As Palestinians struggle every day to provide clean and safe water for their families and communities and are at the mercy of Israeli practices that steal and pollute their water supply, we stand in solidarity with the Standing Rock water protectors in their struggle to protect their communities from environmental devastation and trampling of their land and sacred spaces.

Oil and gas pipeline leaks, spills and explosions are common. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), there have been nearly 8,000 incidents resulting in more than 500 deaths and 4,000 injuries from 1986 to the present. In most instances the cleanup process is imperfect and leaves tens of thousands of barrels of oil on our land and in our water, polluting the surrounding environment for decades to come. (ProPublica update Dec. 6, 2016: *Pipelines Explained: How Safe are America's 2.5 Million Miles of Pipelines?* www.propublica.org and Stover, R.: *America's Dangerous Pipelines*, www.biologicaldiversity.com). The PHMSA does not have the resources to adequately inspect and monitor the millions of miles of pipelines, so safety and inspections are left up to the private industries that install and maintain the pipelines.

The DAPL protests in Standing Rock have been met with military force from law enforcement causing significant harm to the health and safety of the peaceful protestors. One woman was injured by a police projectile while handing out water bottles to protestors resulting in permanent damage to her arm and hand. Police use of water cannons, tear gas and pepper spray has resulted in numerous other injuries.

On December 4, 2016 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that it would not grant a permit to allow Energy Transfer Partners to drill under the Missouri River. Although we commend the U.S. government's decision and are heartened by this victory, the struggle is not over. Energy Transfer Partners plans to continue construction of the pipeline and hopes the Army Corps decision will be overturned. The Health Advisory Council of Jewish Voice for Peace salutes and stands in solidarity with struggle of the Standing Rock Sioux water protectors and their allies.