

Vernonians Attend No LNG Rally

Coalition of Groups from Across Oregon Rally Against Liquefied Natural Gas at the Capitol with Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

Over 600 Oregonians including farmers, ranchers, business owners, and conservationists gathered on Tuesday, May 26 at the Capitol steps in Salem for a rally to oppose liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports throughout Oregon. The rally included speeches from tribal leaders, impacted landowners, and a keynote speech from Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Waterkeeper Alliance President.

“Oregon is viewed as a leader in combating climate change, yet the fossil fuel industry is pushing to make Oregon a trafficker of fracked gas to the entire world through these LNG export proposals. Oregon should stand firm in protecting iconic salmon-bearing rivers like the Rogue and Columbia and in the process reaffirm its goal of reducing climate pollution by rejecting LNG export terminals and pipelines,” said Kennedy.

Oregon faces two LNG export proposals—one in Coos Bay and the other on the Columbia River—coupled with associated proposals to construct hundreds of miles of new natural gas pipelines throughout Oregon and Washington. Opposition to the LNG projects has created unusual alliances, inspiring conservative rural landowners near proposed pipelines to join forces with conservationists and climate activists.

“As a proud conservative Oregonian, I oppose the pipelines for LNG exports because it would destroy valuable farmland and forestland,” said rancher Bill Gow of Douglas County, Oregon. “There’s no way these companies are going to put a big scar through the middle of my ranch.” Like Gow, hundreds of Oregon and Washington families may have their land condemned to install a pipeline to export gas to overseas markets.

During the rally, participants called on Oregon decision-makers to use the state’s

power to protect Oregon from LNG projects while supporting clean energy, healthy rivers and forests, private property rights, safe communities, and a stable climate.

Vernonia area resident Steve Calhoun shared news of the Vernonia City Council’s recent resolution to oppose LNG projects with the crowd



Above: Robert F. Kennedy Jr. joined Oregon activists against LNG in Salem. Below: Vernonian Steve Calhoun was a speaker at the rally. Photo courtesy of ©Alex Milan Tracy.



at the Department of State Lands, one of the agencies with critical decision-making authority over the Oregon LNG and Jordan Cove LNG proposals.

Don West, Manager of the Cannery Pier Hotel in Astoria and owner of the Astoria Crest Motel, supported the rally’s message against LNG exports. “The future of our community and our business—a future that creates jobs by drawing people to iconic, salmon-bearing rivers like the Columbia—depends on the State of Oregon

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Alexis Baska Named Foster Club All-Star

Vernonia High School graduate Alexis Baska has been named a Foster Club All-Star.

Baska, who has spent the last three years in the foster care system following the death of her father, graduated from Vernonia High School on May 30, 2015.

Baska has been participating in Independent Living classes in St. Helens where she has been learning about applying for colleges and needed paperwork, about filing taxes, about personal finance, how to apply for a job and write a resume, and other helpful life skills.

As part of the Independent Living classes, Baska has attended several summer conferences, sponsored by a group called Foster Club. The conferences are held on college campuses and students stay in college dorms and learn about college life.

Baska was selected this year as one of only twenty-six Foster Club All-Stars, a paid internship position helping organize and present the summer conferences. She is the only All-Star selected from Oregon this year.

Baska says she will spend the summer traveling around the country for seven weeks. All-Stars must be between eighteen and twenty-five years old, and Baska was chosen in her first year of eligibility.

“We promote wellness for children in foster care and present success stories,” explains Baska about the conferences.

Baska has been an outspoken advocate for children in foster care. She has already been part of a group of students who helped craft two Oregon House bills through the Oregon Foster Youth Connections Legislative Action Team. HB 2889 allows foster youth to open a savings account on their own at the age of twelve. HB 2890 requires foster families, Department of Human Services (DHS) and foster youth to work together to ensure foster children have an opportunity to participate in at least one extracurricular school activity if the child wishes to. Both bills have strong bipartisan support and have passed the House and moved on to the Senate.

Baska will be attending Southern Oregon University next fall where she plans to study Psychology and Human Resources.



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Ride Inn Opens

Just in time for the start of summer, the Ride Inn has opened its doors to guests in Vernonia.

After a long renovation project, owner Jerry Cordell, along with business partners, brothers Elmer and Santos Rios, celebrated the grand opening of their fifteen room hotel on May 30 with an open house event, followed by a party for family, friends and neighbors at the Vernonia Golf Club.

The Ride Inn is the former Vernonia Inn and is located at 900 Madison Avenue. It is within easy walking distance of city parks, restaurants and other businesses in the downtown corridor.

Cordell, who will serve

as inn keeper, says the Ride Inn name indicates his hope to encourage bicyclists, car clubs, motorcycle riders and other day trip tourists to stay overnight and enjoy all the Vernonia region has to offer. He says he expects to serve customers visiting Vernonia for special events like weddings and local festivals. He also hopes to attract visiting family members of locals, as well as business travelers to book rooms for stays throughout the year.

All the rooms at the Ride Inn feature queen size beds, refrigerators, flat screen televisions with dish service, and

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