**Andrew Tyler**

Wingapo! I greet you in the language of my father's people. My name is Andrew Tyler. I am a member of the Coalition of Woodland Nations. We are the descendants of the original people of this continent. We were here first. We have been here for thousands of years. We have always been here. We are still here. Five hundred years ago my ancestors watched as the first boat people, the first undocumented aliens, the settlers, the colonist invaders, arrived on our lands in their wooden boats from a far-away place. They were armed with the doctrine of discovery. They looked upon our homes and claimed eminent domain, and they began to take and take and take. When they were starving we gave them food. They gave us smallpox and alcohol, they gave us bullets and cannon fire, genocide and forced relocation. They took our children and put them in boarding schools. They gave us five hundred plus years of colonization; but, despite their best efforts to eradicate us we are still here. This red tear that I wear under my left eye I wear to acknowledge the sacrifices of my ancestors they suffered much and gave much so that I can stand here before you today, and I give them thanks.

When I look to the future I think of my grandson. When he has grandchildren of his own what will the world be like. Will he have clean air to breathe, and clean water to drink? This is why I'm before you today. My grandson is counting on me. We as native people are taught to make decisions with the future generations in mind. My ancestors thought seven generations ahead, and I'm looking seven generations into the future. I can't let him down!

Look around you, you'll see that I'm not alone in this. So, here we are today, five hundred years later and the dominant culture still looks upon our homes and claims eminent domain. Only now they're not only looking at native people, but non-native people as well; people with homes and farms and businesses. Corporate entities and their political allies who are blinded by the sickness of greed, they're pitiful, I pray for their grandchildren as well as my own.

The Atlantic Coast pipeline and the Mountain Valley pipeline will be constructed through the traditional homelands of the original people of West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina; the Monican, the Meherrin, the Lumbee, the Haliwa-Saponi and the Tuscarora tribes to name a few. The mountains and the valleys and waterways; we still hold these places as sacred, because this is where our ancestors grew up and died and are buried. These pipelines will also go through lands occupied by many non-natives as well. Some of these people will come before you today. I humbly ask that you listen to the testimony of the citizens coming before you today. Listen with your hearts, listen with your grandchildren in mind. Long ago we tried to teach to those settlers to live in harmony with the land. They would not listen. Listen to me now! We can live without the Atlantic Coast pipeline. We can live without the Mountain Valley pipeline. We cannot live without clean water. We cannot live without clean air and clean land to grow food on. In closing, I give thanks for the honor and privilege of being able to stand before you today. I give you many blessings.