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H.R. 2295, "NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY CORRIDORS ACT"

LEGISLATIVE HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

Serial No. 114–8

Printed for the use of the Committee on Natural Resources



Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.fdsys.gov
or
Committee address: http://naturalresources.house.gov

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

94–773 PDF WASHINGTON : 2015

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Publishing Office
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LEGISLATIVE HEARING ON H.R. 2295, TO AMEND THE MINERAL LEASING ACT TO REQUIRE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO IDENTIFY AND DESIGNATE NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY CORRIDORS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NATURAL GAS PIPELINES ON FEDERAL LAND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, "NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY CORRIDORS ACT"

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

U.S. House of Representatives

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

Committee on Natural Resources

Washington, DC

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in room 1334, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Doug Lamborn [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Lamborn, Thompson, Benishek, Gosar, Labrador, Cook, Graves, Hice, Mooney, Hardy; Lowenthal, Costa, and Cartwright.

Also present: Representatives MacArthur and Rouzer.

Mr. LAMBORN. The Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources will come to order. The subcommittee is meeting today to hear testimony on H.R. 2295, introduced by Representative MacArthur, the National Energy Security Corridors Act.

Under Committee Rule 4(f), any oral opening statements at the hearing are limited to the Chairman and the Ranking Member and the Vice Chairman and a designee of the Ranking Member. This will allow us to hear from our witnesses sooner, and help Members keep to their schedules.

I also ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. MacArthur, and the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Rouzer, be allowed to sit on the dais and participate in today's hearing.

[No response.]

Mr. LAMBORN. Hearing no objection, so ordered.

I also ask unanimous consent that all other Members' opening statements be made part of the hearing record if they are submitted to the Subcommittee clerk by 5:00 p.m. today.

[No response.]

Mr. LAMBORN. Hearing no objection, so ordered. I now recognize myself for my opening statement.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. DOUG LAMBORN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF COLORADO

Mr. LAMBORN. This morning's hearing is on H.R. 2295, the National Energy Security Corridors Act, introduced by Representative Tom MacArthur and Representative Cedric Richmond, legislation that would facilitate natural gas pipeline rights-of-way on Federal lands.

If we are going to have an open and honest discussion about the energy needs of this country, a necessary part of that dialog must be dedicated to how that energy gets from point A to point B. If it was only just that simple.

The truth of the matter is that our Nation's energy infrastructure needs are facing more challenges by the day. We cannot get our domestic resources to American families and businesses that rely upon them for daily use. Hydro, solar, wind, coal, natural gas, nuclear, and crude are all facing an uphill battle when it comes to getting these important energy resources to market, especially when you have to cross Federal lands to get there.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Our Nation's energy landscape has completely changed over a relatively short period of time, and our energy infrastructure is still catching up. For instance, in 2007, the Marcellus Shale was producing just over 1 billion cubic feet per day of natural gas. This April, Marcellus averaged 16.7 billion cubic feet per day, and accounts for 18 percent of our Nation's natural gas supply.

We should be proud of the fact that the United States is the global energy leader. U.S. oil and gas production has surpassed Russia and Saudi Arabia. Yet we still see over 25 states in January of this year where families are facing residential natural gas prices that are higher than the national average.

[Slide]

Mr. LAMBORN. As you can see displayed on the screens, most of these states are on the East Coast. And you will see the red states on the U.S. map there, on both screens.

Massachusetts is 54 percent above the national average. New York is 11 percent above. Even right here, in the DC Metro area, we see Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia in the double digits.

Pennsylvania is mere hours away from this hearing room, and is producing over 16 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day. Doesn't it make sense that this energy produced by the American people should be able to reach these East Coast markets?

One of the biggest obstacles preventing the full benefits of our Nation's shale gas revolution from reaching these areas is Federal lands. While all other agencies under the purview of the Secretary of the Interior are able to negotiate rights-of-way so that natural gas pipelines can cross Federal lands, the Mineral Leasing Act exempts national park system lands from having this authority.

To put it simply: every single time a pipeline needs to cross a parcel of land managed by the National Park Service, a company needs to get congressional approval. Since the late 1980s, there have been five bills to grant this approval. It should not take an Act of Congress to get this done.

Representative MacArthur's legislation demonstrates a willingness to work across the aisle and formulate common-sense, bipartisan solutions that will help connect areas where the shale gas revolution is charging ahead to areas where it can be utilized. This bill provides the Secretary of the Interior with the authority to permit right-of-way for natural gas pipelines only on all Federal lands. The bill also takes a creative approach in providing the Secretary additional authority to work with her counterparts at the Federal, state, and local level to plan for the future and find areas that make the most sense for natural gas pipeline crossings, and to designate those areas as National Energy Security Corridors.

The issue at hand is very simple. Federal lands are entrusted to the Federal Government for a reason: to make sure those Federal lands are being managed in the best interests of the American people. The longstanding position to just say "no," or "go ask Congress," has never been a workable solution for all parties involved. We cannot stand idly by as entire regions of our Nation are held back from our vast domestic and affordable natural gas supply. There has to be a way for responsible land management and energy security to coexist. I think Mr. MacArthur's bill puts us on that path.

The United States does not derive energy security from production alone. It also comes from harnessing these energy resources and using them to help American families and American businesses thrive on our shores. As more and more Americans rely on domestic natural gas for electricity generation, heat, and manufacturing, we need to find ways to help that supply get to where it needs to go. I hope this is one of the areas where we can work together across the aisle to promote economic prosperity and grow energy security in our Nation.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lamborn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. DOUG LAMBORN, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

This morning's hearing is on H.R. 2295, the "National Energy Security Corridors Act" introduced by Rep. Tom MacArthur (R-NJ) and Rep. Cedric Richmond (D-LA)—legislation that would facilitate natural gas pipeline rights-of-way on Federal lands.

If we are going to have an open and honest discussion about the energy needs of this country—a necessary part of that dialog must be dedicated to how that energy gets from point A to point B. If only it was just that simple. The truth of the matter is that our Nation's energy infrastructure needs are facing more challenges by the day. We cannot get our domestic resources to American families and businesses that rely upon them for daily use. Hydro, solar, wind, coal, natural gas, nuclear, and crude—all are facing an uphill battle when it comes to getting these important energy resources to market—especially when you have to cross Federal lands to get there. But it doesn't need to be that way.

Our Nation's energy landscape has completely changed over a relatively short period of time—and our energy infrastructure is still catching up. For instance, in 2007, the Marcellus Shale was producing just over 1 billion cubic feet per day of natural gas. This April, Marcellus averaged 16.7 billion cubic feet per day and accounts for 18 percent of our Nation's natural gas supply. We should be proud of the fact that the United States is THE global energy leader. U.S. oil and gas production has surpassed Russia and Saudi Arabia. Yet, we still see over 25 states in January of this year where families are facing residential natural gas prices that are higher than the national average. As you can see displayed on the screens, most of these states are on the East Coast. Massachusetts is 54 percent above the national average. New York is 11 percent above. Even right here in the DC Metro area—we see Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia in the double digits.

Pennsylvania is mere hours away from this hearing room—and producing over 16 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day. Doesn't it make sense that this energy produced by the American people should be able to reach these East Coast markets?

One of the biggest obstacles preventing the full benefits of our Nation's shale gas revolution from reaching these areas is Federal lands. While all other agencies under the purview of the Secretary of the Interior are able to negotiate rights-of-way so that natural gas pipelines can cross Federal lands, the Mineral Leasing Act exempts National Park System lands from having this authority.

To put it simply: every single time a pipeline needs to cross a parcel of land managed by the National Park Service, a company needs to get congressional approval. Since the late 1980s, there have been five bills to grant this approval. It should not take an Act of Congress to get this done.

Rep. MacArthur's legislation demonstrates a willingness to work across the aisle and formulate common-sense, bipartisan solutions that will help connect areas where the shale gas revolution is charging ahead to areas where it can be utilized.

This bill provides the Secretary of the Interior with the authority to permit right-of-way *for natural gas pipelines only* on all Federal lands.

The bill also takes a creative approach in providing the Secretary additional authority to work with her counterparts at the Federal, state and local level to plan for the future and find areas that make the most sense for natural gas pipeline crossings and designate those areas as National Energy Security Corridors.

The issue at hand is very simple. Federal lands are entrusted to the Federal Government for a reason: to make sure those Federal lands are being managed in the best interests of the American people. The longstanding position to just say "No" or "Go ask Congress" has never been a workable solution for all parties involved. We cannot stand idly by as entire regions of our Nation are held back from our vast domestic and affordable natural gas supply. There has to be a way for responsible land management and energy security to co-exist. I think Mr. MacArthur's bill puts us on that path.

The United States does not derive energy security from production alone. It also comes from harnessing these energy resources and using them to help American families and American businesses thrive on our shores. As more and more Americans rely on domestic natural gas for electricity generation, heat, and manufacturing, we need to find ways to help that supply get where it needs to go. I hope this is one of the areas where we can work together across the aisle to promote economic prosperity and grow energy security in our Nation.

Mr. LAMBORN. I now recognize the Ranking Member for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you to all the witnesses for being here today. I would like to start out by saying that I think we could have a productive, bipartisan conversation about building natural gas pipelines when they are thoughtfully sited.

Pipeline infrastructure is necessary to prevent wasteful venting and flaring at oil wells, to allow power plants to receive the steady fuel supply that they need to switch away from coal to natural gas, and to keep consumers from facing painful price spikes during cold weather. When planned properly, I also support the designation of infrastructure corridors. It simply makes sense to identify areas that are less environmentally sensitive and have fewer land use conflicts, and to try to concentrate new pipelines or transmission lines in those areas.

Unfortunately, the bill we are discussing today still needs more work in order to accomplish these positive goals. We need a bill that speeds the development of well-planned new pipelines while

paying attention to landowner and community concerns and protecting sensitive areas.

The bill, as written, overturns the longstanding requirement for congressional approval of natural gas pipelines through national parks. Congress specifically required this extra level of attention because our parks deserve a higher standard of care. We have repeatedly passed laws to authorize pipelines through national parks, and I believe that Congress should retain that responsibility.

This bill goes further than that with regards to national parks. It would have the Secretary employ the principle of multiple use for routing pipeline corridors through parks. For those who are less familiar with the concept, multiple use is how the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service operate. It means managing the land to balance a variety of different uses, from recreation to energy production to timber harvesting to grazing to conservation.

But that is not the mission of the National Park Service. Its mission is to conserve and protect particularly special natural and cultural resources for the enjoyment of future generations. This bill would effectively amend that mission and provide for natural gas pipeline corridors. I believe that is a wholly inappropriate use of our national parks, and it is not necessary in order to meet our needs to upgrade and expand our natural gas pipeline system.

The bill, as written, would also establish corridors with virtually no public input. Utilities and pipeline companies are given the opportunity to suggest corridors that limit community impacts to the extent practical. And state, local, and tribal governments get to weigh in, although not about impacts to their states or towns, but only on what routes are the most cost-effective and commercially viable. When combined with the waiver of the National Environmental Policy Act in this bill, the public is effectively shut out from having a say in these corridors. This could result in more local opposition to new pipelines, and would be counterproductive to building the infrastructure that we need. And I repeat, we need to build infrastructure.

Another concern is the mandate in the bill that the Secretary designate no less than 10 corridors in the eastern half of the United States. It is an arbitrary minimum, and ignores the findings of a report from the Department of Energy issued less than 4 years ago, and written to fulfill Section 368(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. That report concluded that energy corridors on Federal land in the East are unnecessary and unhelpful. It states, "Fragmented patterns of Federal land jurisdiction in the East, coupled with limited opportunities for utility scale development on many classes of Federal land, make the designation of Federal energy transport corridors an inefficient solution to resolving energy transmission siting challenges."

The Department of Energy's recently released Quadrennial Energy Review, which has received praise from both sides of the aisle, offers some practical suggestions on how to improve how we site and permit pipelines. One of the recommendations, prioritizing early and meaningful public engagement, is in contrast to the approach taken in this bill.

The rest of DoE's recommendations I believe also deserve careful consideration. But careful consideration, unfortunately, is not what this particular bill is about. It is about a rush to designate unnecessary corridors with almost zero public input. I hope we can work together to craft legislation that can help to site pipelines on public lands in a more thoughtful way. Thank you, and I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lowenthal follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL, RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you to the witnesses for being here today.

I would like to start out by saying that I think we can have productive bipartisan conversation about building natural gas pipelines when they are thoughtfully sited. Pipeline infrastructure is necessary to prevent wasteful venting and flaring at oil wells, to allow power plants to receive the steady fuel supply they need to switch away from coal to natural gas, and to keep consumers from facing painful price spikes during cold weather.

And when planned properly, I also support the designation of infrastructure corridors. It simply makes sense to identify areas that are less environmentally sensitive and have fewer land-use conflicts, and try to concentrate new pipelines or transmission lines in those areas.

But the bill that we are discussing today needs more work in order to accomplish these positive goals. We need a bill that speeds the development of well-planned new pipelines while paying attention to landowner and community concerns and protecting sensitive areas.

First, this bill as written overturns the longstanding requirement for congressional approval of natural gas pipelines through national parks. Congress specifically required this extra level of attention because our parks deserve a higher standard of care. We have repeatedly passed laws to authorize pipelines through national parks, and I believe that Congress should retain that responsibility.

This bill goes further than that with regard to national parks, however. It would have the Secretary employ the principle of multiple-use for routing pipeline corridors through parks. For those of you who are less familiar with the concept, multiple-use is how the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service operate. It means managing the land to balance a variety of different uses, from recreation to energy production to timber harvesting to grazing to conservation.

But that is not the mission of the National Park Service. Its mission is to conserve and protect particularly special natural and cultural resources for the enjoyment of future generations. This bill would effectively amend that mission, and provide for natural gas pipeline corridors. That is a wholly inappropriate use of our national parks, and not necessary in order to meet our needs to upgrade and expand our natural gas pipeline system.

This bill as written would also establish corridors with virtually no public input. Utilities and pipeline companies are given the opportunity to suggest corridors that limit community impacts to the extent practicable. And state, local, and tribal governments get to weigh in, although not about impacts to their states or towns, but only on what routes are the most cost-effective and commercially viable. When combined with the waiver of the National Environmental Policy Act in this bill, the public is effectively shut out from having a say in these corridors. This could result in more local opposition to new pipelines, and would be counterproductive to building the infrastructure that we need.

Another concern is the mandate in the bill that the Secretary designate no less than 10 corridors in the eastern half of the United States. It's an arbitrary minimum, and ignores the findings of a report from the Department of Energy, issued less than 4 years ago, and written to fulfill Section 368(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

That report concluded that energy corridors on Federal land in the East are unnecessary and unhelpful. It states, "Fragmented patterns of Federal land jurisdiction in the East, coupled with limited opportunities for utility-scale development on many classes of Federal land, make the designation of Federal energy transport corridors *an inefficient solution* to resolving energy transmission siting challenges."

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prioritizing early and meaningful public engagement—is in contrast to the approach taken by this bill. The rest of DOE's recommendations I believe also deserve careful consideration.

But careful consideration, unfortunately, is not what this particular bill is about. It's about a rush to designate unnecessary corridors with almost zero public input, and I hope we can work together to craft legislation that can help site pipelines on public lands in a more thoughtful way.

Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. LAMBORN. All right, thank you.

I now recognize the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. MacArthur, for a brief statement on the bill.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. THOMAS MACARTHUR, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Mr. MACARTHUR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Lowenthal. I appreciate this speedy hearing on the National Energy Security Corridors Act. If all of Congress moved this fast, we would be getting somewhere, I think.

And I want to thank Representative Richmond. He couldn't be here today, but has supported the bill and made it truly a bipartisan effort. Without objection, I would like to submit my written statement, Representative Richmond's written statement, and supporting statements from the America's Natural Gas Alliance and the Interstate Natural Gas Association of America.

Mr. LAMBORN. If there is no objection, so ordered.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Thank you. This bill is about enhancing natural gas distribution, making it more reliable, resilient, secure, and promoting economic growth.

Let me frame the issue. America is committed to energy independence, and we should be. The President supports it, Congress supports it, and more importantly, the people of the United States support it. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 required multiple agencies to establish energy corridors across Federal lands. Ten years later, we have exactly zero of those corridors in the eastern United States. Why? Because the National Park Service lacks the authority to negotiate natural gas pipelines. It requires an Act of Congress for every individual project.

Let me give one example. The Appalachian Trail is a major huge national park, 2,200 miles long, comprised of 14 states; and to get a pipeline across it requires an Act of Congress. The Department of the Interior can't issue those permits. There is no sense in using a legislative body to manage and oversee individual site-specific applications. It is bad for consumers, it is bad for the producers in the West.

[Slide]

Mr. MACARTHUR. I would point to the map that is up on the board. It is similar to the one the Chairman referenced earlier. In Linden, New Jersey, near me, we are paying $22.35 for 1 million BTU's—$22.35. Go to Wichita, Kansas, it is $2.64. It is nearly 10 times more in the eastern United States. That isn't good for anybody.

This bill is a simple effort to try to solve this by requiring the Department of the Interior to do what they should have done years ago, and that is designate, at a minimum, 10 energy corridors across Federal lands within 2 years of enactment of this legislation. This is for natural gas only. It would also streamline the process for granting rights-of-way across those corridors.

This is not a new concept. The Mineral Leasing Act authorized the Secretary of the Interior to grant rights-of-way across Federal lands, except for the national parks. The National Park Service already grants rights-of-way across its lands for electric transmission lines, for telephone lines, for water lines.

So why was natural gas left out? Maybe because the Mineral Leasing Act was passed in 1911, and I don't think we were thinking about natural gas pipelines over 100 years ago. It is high time for us to update our legislation to allow for natural gas pipelines.

And I want to point out that every individual project still has to go through permitting that is subject to the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA.

The bill enjoys broad support for good reason. It will further energy independence and, I believe, national security along with it. It will create jobs, both construction and maintenance jobs. That is why the operating engineers in the building trades union support it. It is environmentally sensitive. It is natural gas only. It is planned, intentional, and it is a cohesive approach. It ends this willy nilly haphazard approach of approving one pipeline at a time through an Act of Congress. In my mind this is a common-sense update to a 100-year-old law. It brings our energy policy into the 21st century. And I urge, support, and yield back.

I encourage my colleagues who might see issues with it here and there, don't let the perfect become the enemy of the good. This is good legislation, and it will certainly help people in the eastern United States.

I yield back, thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. MacArthur follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. THOMAS MACARTHUR, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Thank you Chairman Lamborn, and Ranking Member Lowenthal, for bringing the National Energy Security Corridors Act up for a hearing today and allowing me the opportunity to discuss this bill with the subcommittee. I'd also like to thank Rep. Richmond for his support and for helping us create a great bipartisan bill. My legislation seeks to enhance our Nation's natural gas distribution network for reliability, resiliency, national security, and economic growth.

I'd like to include letters of support from America's Natural Gas Alliance, Interstate Natural Gas Association of America, and a statement from my original co-sponsor Rep. Richmond for the record.

Specifically, it's going to update the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which required multiple agencies to collaborate to establish energy right-of-way corridors on Federal lands throughout the United States. Unfortunately, a full 10 years later, no corridors have been established in the eastern United States. We can do better, and if we are to become more energy independent, we should do better. That's why this bill will require the Department of Interior to designate 10 of these corridors within 2 years of the bill's enactment, and will allow the Secretary of the Interior the authority to establish National Energy Security Corridors on Federal lands for natural gas pipelines. On top of that it will establish a streamlined approach to granting right-of-way across such corridors.

The President himself described the energy corridors program in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 as, "An important avenue to improve the processes is the designation of energy right-of-way corridors on Federal lands," and, "Designated energy

corridors provide an opportunity to co-locate projects and share environmental and cultural resource impact data to reduce overall impact." We agree with the President and are looking to empower the Department of Interior to manage its land the same way it does everywhere else.

Currently, the Mineral Leasing Act permits the Secretary of Interior to grant right-of-ways across all Federal lands except those in the National Park System. The National Park System already has authority to grant right-of-ways over NPS land for electrical transmission and distribution lines, telephone lines and water lines, but makes no mention of natural gas pipelines. Perhaps that's because in 1911, when this legislation was passed, we didn't have a lot of natural gas pipelines. It's 2015, high time for an update.

NPS says they lack the authority to negotiate for natural gas pipelines, meaning these approvals require project specific authorization language from Congress. It does not make sense to put a legislative body in charge of regulating and permitting site specific projects, when agencies like the Department of Interior handle this job for nearly every other similar project.

For example, consider the Appalachian Trail where a project is stalled currently. The trail stretches approximately 2,200 miles through 14 states as a national park. The Trail's length and presence in multiple states ensures that all natural gas pipelines crossing it have to receive a project specific authorization from the Congress, rather than the standard permitting procedure of working through the Department of Interior. That requirement brings these projects to a *standstill*. This oversight in designing the process has caused natural gas users in the Northeast, separated by the Appalachian Trail from producing states in the West, to pay significantly more for gas than the rest of the country. During these difficult times of economic recovery, all of our constituents deserve to benefit from lower energy prices.

Our bipartisan legislation would be specific to natural gas and no other form of pipeline or energy. Nothing in this legislation would preclude the National Environmental Policy Act requirements for the building and siting of the pipelines that would be considered in these corridors. This legislation has broad support from a variety of stakeholders. It's a common-sense update to a 100-year-old law. Let's bring our energy policy into the 21st century.

Workers should support this legislation because it provides jobs and income to communities, business owners should support this legislation because it will help minimize costs and disruptions in energy prices, and environmentalists should support this legislation because it forces the Department of Interior to take a comprehensive, long-term look at the siting of pipelines from coast to coast.

I urge support for the National Energy Security Corridor Act, and yield back.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you. I would like to now introduce the witnesses.

But before I begin, Mr. Rouzer would like to briefly introduce his constituent, who is testifying before us today.

Mr. ROUZER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that very much. I am balancing my time here with a roll call vote over in the House Agriculture Committee. So, after I introduce Mr. Linwood Parker, the Mayor of Four Oaks, I am going to have to run right out. Mr. Mayor, I am sorry I will not get an opportunity to listen to your testimony.

I have known Mr. Parker since I was a toddler. He went to school with my mother and her two sisters. And they have probably a number of different stories that they would love to tell you, which I will not.

[Laughter.]

Mr. ROUZER. However, what I will state for the record is that the Mayor, the fine Mayor from Four Oaks, is a man of good common sense, and a great deal of humor, as well. And I commend him highly to the committee. I am sure he will have testimony worthy of this committee, and worthy of the issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you, Representative Rouzer. Fortunately, you don't have very far to go. You are on the same floor in this building.

So, we also have testifying today Mr. Tim Spisak, Senior Advisor for Minerals and Realty Management of the Bureau of Land Management; Mr. Jim Moore, Vice President of Commercial Development for the Williams Companies; Mr. Sean McGarvey, President of North America's Building Trade Unions; and Mr. Gregory Buppert, Senior Attorney for the Southern Environmental Law Center.

Let me remind the witnesses that under our Committee Rules, they must limit their oral statements to 5 minutes, but their entire statement will appear in the hearing record.

When you begin, the lights on the witness table will turn green. After 4 minutes, the yellow light comes on. Your time will have expired when the red light comes on, and I would ask that you finish your statement at that time.

I will also allow the entire panel to testify before questioning the witnesses.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Spisak to testify.

STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY SPISAK, SENIOR ADVISOR FOR MINERALS AND REALTY MANAGEMENT, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. SPISAK. Chairman Lamborn, Ranking Member Lowenthal, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 2295, the "National Energy Security Corridors Act." My name is Tim Spisak, Senior Advisor for Conventional Energy with the Bureau of Land Management, and I am accompanied by Ray Sauvajot, Associate Director with the National Park Service.

I want to thank the subcommittee for focusing on the important national issue of energy transition corridors. The Department shares the subcommittee's goals in providing the safe, timely, and efficient transmission of energy resources across Federal lands. We appreciate the subcommittee's efforts on the legislation, and would like to continue to work with you to find ways to further our common goals.

The BLM administers public lands for a broad range of uses, and manages lands with some of the most advanced energy development in the world. Our contribution to the national energy portfolio provides an important economic benefit. In Fiscal Year 2014, onshore Federal oil and gas royalties exceeded $3 billion, approximately half of which were paid directly to the states in which the development occurred.

We are coordinating closely with partners across the country to ensure that the development of energy resources occurs in the right places, and that those projects are managed safely and responsibly. The BLM places a special emphasis on transparency and public processes to incorporate the input and needs of the American people. The BLM's activities provide critical infrastructure, as well as energy for our Nation, reducing our reliance on oil imports, while protecting our public land and water resources.

As part of this effort, we are working with other agencies in support of Executive Order 13604, to improve the performance of Federal permitting and review of infrastructure projects by increasing transparency and predictability.

In 2009, under the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the Department designated approximately 5,000 miles of energy corridors, amending 92 land use plans in 11 western states. Since 2009, the BLM has participated in the approval of nine major pipeline expansion projects totaling nearly 2,000 miles of new oil and gas pipeline, with over 1,000 of those miles crossing Federal lands.

In the next 18 months, the BLM is expected to complete review of three more major pipeline projects, totaling nearly 1,000 additional miles, nearly half of which are on Federal lands. These are in addition to the thousands of miles of smaller oil and gas pipeline projects approved every year.

While the Department supports the goals of H.R. 2295, we believe many of the activities authorized by the bill are already within the scope of existing authorities. We also feel that the bill's NEPA waiver would only complicate the deliberative process necessary for the appropriate consideration of specific authorization decisions. The BLM routinely designates energy corridors as part of a land use plan, or along with the environmental review for a major infrastructure project. These are typically addressed with an EIS-level analysis, which includes substantial agency, tribal, public, and industry input.

The Department is committed to providing full environmental review and public involvement opportunities required by NEPA for proposals for the use of the Nation's public lands.

The Department also questions the significant role given to it in designating corridors in the eastern United States under H.R. 2295. The Department manages very little multiple-use land in the East, where it has a significantly different role than it does in the western United States.

Finally, as expressed in our written statement, the Department strongly opposes the bill's provisions that would authorize the Secretary to issue a right-of-way on national public service lands. The statement notes that the exclusion of national parks from the Mineral Leasing Act has not prevented the issuing of rights-of-way for pipelines through national park units. The Department has supported legislation authorizing rights-of-way for oil and gas pipelines on a park-by-park basis, when it has been appropriate to do so.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of the Interior has a proven record of facilitating responsible siting of oil and natural gas pipelines. We appreciate the subcommittee's interest in this important work, and look forward to working with you on these important issues. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Spisak follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY SPISAK, SENIOR ADVISOR, ENERGY, MINERALS AND REALTY MANAGEMENT, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Department of the Interior (Department) on H.R. 2295. This bill requires the Secretary of the Interior to designate National Energy Security Corridors for the construction of natural gas

pipelines on Federal lands, and provides for expedited review of natural gas pipeline authorizations. It also authorizes the Secretary to issue natural gas pipeline rights-of-way on National Park Service (NPS) lands.

The Department shares and supports the subcommittee's goal to provide for the safe and efficient transmission of energy resources, including natural gas, across Federal lands by efficiently and effectively siting corridors and permitting pipeline projects in a timely manner. However, most of the authorizations of H.R. 2295 are already within the scope of existing Department authorities, and consistent with current priorities and activities. Additionally, the Department strongly opposes the bill's provisions that would authorize the Secretary to issue natural gas pipeline rights-of-way on NPS lands. The Department would like to continue to work with the committee to find ways to further our common goal to promote the responsible and efficient development and transmission of our Nation's energy resources from Federal lands.

BACKGROUND

The Department of the Interior administers a wide range of lands and resources that includes wilderness areas, lands held in trust for Native Americans, our National Park System, our National Wildlife Refuge System, and our National System of Public Lands. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for protecting the resources and managing the uses of our Nation's public lands, located primarily in 12 western states, including Alaska. The BLM administers more land—over 245 million surface acres—than any other Federal agency. The BLM also manages approximately 700 million acres of onshore Federal mineral estate throughout the Nation.

The BLM manages this vast portfolio on behalf of the American people under the dual framework of multiple use and sustained yield. This means the BLM administers public lands for a broad range of uses including renewable and conventional energy development, livestock grazing, timber production, hunting, fishing, recreation, and conservation. We manage lands with some of the most advanced energy development in the world and some of North America's most wild and sacred landscapes. This unique role often puts the BLM in the middle of some of the most challenging natural resource issues facing our country. The BLM places a special emphasis on transparency and public processes to incorporate the input and needs of the American people and of the communities in which we live and work.

The BLM's activities provide critical infrastructure as well as energy for our Nation and reduce our reliance on oil imports, while protecting our public land and water resources. The BLM's contribution to the national energy portfolio provides an important economic benefit. The Department collects billions of dollars annually for the Federal Treasury through mineral lease rents and royalties for mineral extraction and other activities, and shares these revenues each year with states, tribes, counties, and other entities. In many states, energy production and other activities are a critical component of the local economy. For example, in Fiscal Year 2014, onshore Federal oil and gas royalties exceeded $3 billion, approximately half of which were paid directly to the states in which the development occurred. In the same period, tribal oil and gas royalties exceeded $1 billion with all of those revenues paid to the tribes and/or individual Indian owners of the land on which the development occurred.

Secretary Jewell has made it clear that as we expand and diversify our energy portfolio, the development of conventional energy resources from BLM-managed lands will continue to play a critical role in meeting the Nation's energy needs and fueling our economy. The BLM is committed to promoting responsible domestic oil and gas production in a manner that will protect consumers, human health, and the environment. Facilitating the safe and efficient development of these resources is one of the BLM's many responsibilities and part of the Administration's broad energy strategy, outlined in the President's *Blueprint for a Secure Energy Future*. Environmentally responsible development of these resources will help protect consumers and reduce our Nation's reliance on oil, while also protecting our Federal lands and the environment. As part of this effort, the Department is working with various agencies in support of Executive Order 13604 to improve the performance of Federal permitting and review of infrastructure projects by increasing transparency and predictability of infrastructure permitting and reviews.

Energy Corridors on Federal Lands

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAct; P.L. 109–58, Section 368(a)) directed the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, and the Interior to designate corridors for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and distribution facilities on Federal lands in the 11 contiguous western states. Congress

also directed the agencies to perform any environmental reviews that may be required to complete the designation of the corridors and incorporate the corridors into land use plans. In 2006, the U.S. Department of Energy, BLM, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and U.S. Department of Defense initiated a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement—Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Land in the 11 western states. This was completed in 2008. On January 14, 2009, the Department of the Interior approved a record of decision (ROD) to designate approximately 5,000 miles of corridors which included amendments to 92 land use plans in 11 western states. The USFS issued a ROD on January 14, 2009, which amended 38 national forest land management plans and designated approximately 1,000 miles of corridors in 10 states.

EPAct Section 368(b) requires the Secretaries, in consultation with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, affected utility industries, and other interested persons, to jointly identify energy corridors on Federal land in states other than the 11 western states identified under Section 368(a) of EPAct. On October 3, 2008, the Department of Energy, as lead agency, issued a Federal Register notice to determine public and stakeholder interest. There were relatively few responses from public, state and local governments, utilities, or other interested stakeholders. This absence of immediate public interest in new corridors on Federal land within these 39 states, combined with the relatively small amount of Federal land in these states (especially compared to the 11 western states), and the often single priority land use management purposes for these Federal lands (e.g., parks, wildlife refuges, and trails), resulted in the agencies' determination not to develop a proposed action to identify and designate Section 368(b) energy transportation corridors on Federal lands in the 39 states at that time.

In addition to the energy corridor authorizations in Section 368 of EPAct, Executive Order 13604 and two Presidential Memoranda (May 17 and June 7, 2013) direct Federal agencies to improve energy corridors and expedite siting of infrastructure projects, including natural gas pipelines. The Department has been making considerable strides in meeting those requirements as captured in the June 2012 interagency plan on implementing Executive Order 13604 and the May 2014 interagency plan regarding the Presidential Memorandum on Modernizing Infrastructure Permitting. Furthermore, the BLM, USFS and the Department of Energy anticipate completion of a corridor study in 2015 that will assess how efficiently and effectively existing corridors are being used. The BLM has a process in place to review those corridors and determine if additional corridors or corridor adjustments are needed.

Pipeline Authorizations

The BLM is working hard to do its part to expand the Nation's pipeline infrastructure and increase the capacity to transport energy resources when and where it is needed. As authorized by the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA, Section 28), the BLM issues right-of-way (ROW) grants for oil and natural gas gathering, distribution, and transmission pipelines and related facilities. The BLM may grant MLA ROWs on any public land, or on land administered by two or more Federal agencies, except land in the National Park System or land held in trust for Indian tribes. A designated corridor is a preferred location for the placement of ROWs and the BLM actively encourages use of designated ROW corridors to streamline the authorization process. This minimizes the proliferation of separate ROWs and promotes sharing of ROWs to the greatest extent possible, given considerations of engineering and technological compatibility, national security, and land use planning. Use of existing corridors and sharing of existing ROWs for pipelines protects the quality of natural resources and prevents unnecessary environmental damage to lands and resources. The BLM continues to work to identify ways to improve the overall siting and permitting process, and the President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget requests $5 million to develop an improved and updated assessment process for the development and siting of energy corridors and rights-of-way.

Since designation of the west-wide energy corridors in 2009, the BLM has participated in the approval of nine major pipeline expansion projects totaling nearly 2,000 miles of new oil and gas pipeline with nearly 1,050 of those miles crossing Federal lands. In the next 18 months, the BLM is expected to complete review and disposition of three more major pipeline projects totaling nearly 1,000 additional miles with nearly 450 of those miles across Federal lands. Work on these major oil and gas pipeline projects is in addition to the thousands of miles of smaller distribution pipeline projects that are approved every year to transport oil and gas from the production site to the larger gathering pipelines and the major transport pipeline facilities.

H.R. 2295 "NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY CORRIDORS"

H.R. 2295 amends the MLA to require the Secretary of the Interior to identify and designate National Energy Security Corridors for the construction of natural gas pipelines on Federal land. The bill requires the Secretary to designate at least 10 National Energy Security Corridors within 2 years in the eastern United States, and specifies that the designation of the corridors would not be considered "major Federal actions" under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and thereby waived from NEPA review. Under the bill, the Secretary would be directed to establish procedures to expedite and approve applications for ROWs for natural gas pipelines across the newly designated corridors. It also provides for certain deadlines associated with the authorizations, including an approval time of not more than 1 year after the date of receipt of a ROW application, and for the Secretary to report to Congress when the deadlines are not met. Finally, the bill amends the MLA to provide for the authorization of natural gas pipelines across units of the National Park System.

Analysis

While the Department supports the goal of the bill to provide for efficient transmission of important natural gas resources across Federal lands, it believes the legislation is unnecessary because many of the activities authorized by the bill are already within the scope of existing Department authorities. The Department opposes establishing a new system of corridors on top of those designated under Section 368(a) of EPAct and opposes the requirement to designate at least 10 new 368(b) corridors within 2 years in the eastern United States, which is too short a time frame to adequately coordinate with states, tribes, other Federal partners, and the public. The Department also questions the significant role given to the Department of the Interior in designating corridors in the eastern United States under H.R. 2295, where the Department manages very little multiple-use land and has a significantly different role than it does in the western United States.

Furthermore, the Department opposes the bill's provisions declaring that energy corridor designation and incorporation into a land use plan shall not be treated as major Federal actions under NEPA and that approvals are required. This NEPA waiver is unnecessary and counterproductive, as it would only complicate the deliberative process necessary for the appropriate consideration of specific authorization decisions. Designating corridors on Federal land does not create a contiguous corridor; rather intervening parcels of state and private land complicate corridor designation and are important considerations in both Federal and state permitting processes. The BLM routinely designates energy corridors as part of a land use plan or concurrently with the environmental review for a major infrastructure project. These are typically addressed with Environmental Impact Statement level analysis, which includes substantial agency, tribal, public, and industry input. The Department does not support limiting public input through the environmental review process under NEPA; it is a critical tool for engaging the public and for analyzing and mitigating for impacts to adjacent private lands and state-managed resources. These open, public processes help the land managing agencies consider impacts on the surrounding communities and the environment, as well as identify unknown or unforeseen issues, which is invaluable to sound public land management and appropriate routing for these corridors. Moreover, it is unclear that restricting the level of NEPA analysis required would result in significant time savings since close coordination with cooperating partners and the public would be necessary whether within or outside of a formal NEPA process. Additionally, designation of corridors without an appropriate level of NEPA analysis would not provide any time savings as BLM would be required to complete an appropriate NEPA analysis for each individual project proposed within a given corridor, an analysis that would be expedited were the corridor designation subject to a NEPA review. The Department is committed to providing full environmental review and public involvement opportunities required by NEPA for proposals for the use of the Nation's public lands.

Certain provisions of the bill also need clarification, including the bill's definition of Federal lands, and whether the designation of the new energy corridors is intended to be limited to natural gas transmission. The BLM authorizes multiple uses in its corridors to the extent practicable, in order to maximize operational efficiencies and minimize adverse environmental impacts and proliferation of separate ROW authorizations. The Department would prefer to have the flexibility for its corridors to accommodate a number of uses, such as electric transmission, fiber optics, and oil, gas and water pipelines. Certain deadlines of the bill are also a concern, such as its requirement to approve ROWs for pipeline projects within 1 year after receipt of an application. There are a number of reasons the BLM might not meet

the 1-year deadline, such as incomplete applications from a developer, and the need to conduct public outreach, tribal consultation, state and local government consultation and coordination, cultural resource surveys, or other analyses necessary to balance project approval with mitigation and protection of the natural and cultural resources of the public lands.

Pipelines in National Park Service Lands

Finally, the Department strongly opposes the bill's provisions that would authorize the Secretary to issue a ROW on NPS lands—reversing the longstanding prohibition on allowing such pipelines in our national parks (except where Congress adopts an explicit authorization for a particular location). In its 1973 amendments to the MLA, Congress determined that our national parks would not be subject to the general ROW provisions. This specific exemption in the MLA protects the integrity, resources, and values of the National Park System. The significant infrastructure associated with the clearing, grading, trenching, stringing, welding, coating and laying of pipeline as well as the transportation of oil and gas products via pipeline, which carries the risk of oil spills and gas explosions, is inconsistent with the conservation mandate set forth in the NPS Organic Act. H.R. 2295 would overturn longstanding and necessary protection of park system resources and values, visitor experience, and human health and safety, and would undermine the very purpose for which National Park System units were created.

We note that the exclusion of national parks from the MLA has not prevented the issuing of rights-of-way for pipelines through national park units. In fact, the Department has supported legislation authorizing rights-of-way for oil and gas pipelines on a park by park basis, when it has been appropriate to do so. Recent cases include legislation authorizing rights-of-way at Denali National Park, Glacier National Park, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Gateway National Recreation Area.

CONCLUSION

The BLM is working diligently to fulfill its role in securing America's energy future, coordinating closely with partners across the country to ensure that the development of energy resources occurs in the right places and that those projects are managed safely and responsibly.

The agency has a proven record of facilitating responsible siting of natural gas pipelines and is already moving forward with refining and implementing existing corridors established for that purpose. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on H.R. 2295.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY CHAIRMAN LAMBORN TO TIMOTHY SPISAK, SENIOR ADVISOR FOR MINERALS AND REALTY MANAGEMENT, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Mr. Spisak did not submit responses to the Committee by the appropriate deadline for inclusion in the printed record.

Question 1. As you mentioned in your testimony, "since designation of the westwide energy corridors in 2009, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has participated in the approval of nine major pipeline expansion projects totaling nearly 2,000 miles of new oil and gas pipeline with nearly 1,050 of those miles crossing Federal lands. In the next 18 months, the BLM is expected to complete review and disposition of three more major pipeline projects totaling nearly 1,000 additional miles with nearly 450 of those miles across Federal lands." In order for the subcommittee to better understand current pipeline infrastructure, could you please provide the following:

- The total number of miles of all pipelines crossing Federal lands. Please provide a breakdown of miles of pipeline by each agency (BLM, NPS, USFS, etc.).
- The total acreage of all pipeline right-of-ways on all Federal lands under the purview of your agency. Also, please breakdown that information by state.
- A map illustrating all pipelines that cross Federal lands.

Question 2. The U.S. Department of the Interior has the authority to issue permits and right-of-ways (ROW) for the construction of natural gas pipelines across Federal land, except for National Park Service land. Under the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA), the BLM has the responsibility of reviewing those ROW applications and must render a decision on the future of the project.

- What is the average time frame to process a ROW application from submission to approval or rejection?
- How many ROW applications were received by the BLM in each of the past 10 fiscal years? Of those applications how many were approved? How many of those applications were denied? What was the reason for their denial? Please breakdown based on type of ROW (ex. renewable, natural gas, electricity transmission).
- Please provide in detail a breakdown of all rentals and cost recovery fees and any other revenue collected from ROWs over the past 10 fiscal years. Please breakdown that information based on type of ROW.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you. The Chair now recognizes Mayor Parker to testify.

STATEMENT OF LINWOOD PARKER, MAYOR, TOWN OF FOUR OAKS, NORTH CAROLINA

Mr. PARKER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the subcommittee, I've come today to talk a little about the end benefit of the natural gas pipelines. Last night, as I spent the night in Washington, it was a little sleepless. All young people, myself included, have a dream of coming to Washington and speaking to the leaders, and being able to utter some words that might unite us in something that will help our community. That dream was realized when you invited me to speak. I only hope that the words that I speak today will enable you to make a wise decision, because the people are in need.

Our people need to be part of the manufacturing and building of products. We need to be competitive worldwide. In our community we have a business park and Becton Dickinson, an international medical device company which has the largest distribution site on the East Coast. But in Four Oaks we hope to be able to not only ship it, we hope to be able to make it and ship it. To be able to do that, we are going to need natural gas. Manufacturing requires natural gas.

I am aware, as a lady told me once about an issue at home that I was involved in, that all pancakes have two sides. One might be just browner than the other. So I don't come today to argue the right or wrong of the other side of the pancake. I come today to simply say I am encouraged from what I have heard this morning, that this is a bipartisan bill, and the fact that you are moving swiftly to reach a decision that can affect so many people across the country.

Let me tell you a little bit about my town. I am the mayor of the town, elected by my peers, just as you have been. My town is in eastern North Carolina. We are located on Interstate 95, halfway between New York City and Miami. We take pride in our southern heritage. We have local merchants and business owners in historic downtown. We have a strong sense of community, just like thousands of other small towns across our wonderful Nation.

I am here today, as the local mayor of these small towns, just one of those small towns, but I hope you will let me represent all of them. Four Oaks is located in Johnston County, in the eastern part of North Carolina. And it is important that you know a few things about eastern North Carolina, so you can better understand

why I am here today. Eastern North Carolina has over 1.4 million residents and added, on average, 15,000 residents per year since 2005. In 2013, the median household income was $40,469, compared to the national average of $52,250. Twenty percent of eastern North Carolina citizens were living in poverty, compared to 15 percent of the Nation's citizens. The number of new businesses started in the region has dropped 64 percent since 2005.

Now, I don't know the intricacies of the bill. What I do know is that this bill will help quicken the development of future energy infrastructure and lead to much-needed increase in industry in the towns, cities, states across the Nation. My town is made up of many honorable men and women, and they all have something in common. They want and they need to be able to provide better for their family, and they want to see a better life and better opportunity for their children.

In closing, I want to pass this on to you. I talked with one of my neighbors, a constituent, before I left. And he passed this on to me, and I will pass it on to you. He said, "When you get there, tell them we all we got." Now, I know that is not perfect English. But what he was saying is that we are all we've got. We are in this together. And we have to be part of the solution. I believe I am here, and I am hearing that we are going to be part of that solution that is going to create those jobs, those manufacturing jobs we need, because we all know that the most empowering thing in life, outside of our faith, is a paycheck on Friday. And I hope this will be the end result of these hearings.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Parker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LINWOOD PARKER, MAYOR, TOWN OF FOUR OAKS, NORTH CAROLINA

Good Morning. My name is Linwood Parker, and I am the mayor of Four Oaks, North Carolina. All of you are leaders, and what you do is important. Like you, I'm a leader but in my small town of Four Oaks.

Let me tell you a little bit about Four Oaks, North Carolina. We're located right on I-95 halfway between New York City and Miami. We take pride in our southern heritage, local merchants and business owners, and historic downtown. We have a strong sense of community, just like thousands of other small towns across our wonderful Nation. I'm here today as the local mayor of just one of those small towns, but I hope you'll let me represent all of them.

Four Oaks is located in Johnston County, in the eastern part of North Carolina. And, it's important that you know a few things about eastern North Carolina, so you can better understand why I'm here today. Eastern North Carolina has over 1.4 million residents, and has added, on average, 15,000 residents per year since 2005. In 2013, the median household income was $40,469, compared to the Nation's average of $52,250. Twenty percent of eastern North Carolina citizens were living in poverty, compared to 15 percent of the Nation's citizens. The number of new business starts in the region has dropped 64 percent since 2005.

Now, I don't know the intricacies of this bill. But, what I do know, is that this bill will help quicken the development of future energy infrastructure, and will lead to a much needed increase in industry in towns, cities, and states across the Nation. My town of Four Oaks is made up of truck drivers, restaurant workers, mill workers, auto mechanics, and many other honorable men and women, and they all have something in common. They want and need to be able to provide better for their families, and they want to see a better life with better opportunities for their children. It's the possibility of the American Dream, and they desperately want their children to be able to dream like we've been able to in decades past.

In order to create these opportunities, we desperately need infrastructure. Projects like the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, and the work that you're doing to safely expedite these projects, create a lifeline for communities like mine to grow and

prosper. A type of growth and prosperity that Four Oaks, eastern North Carolina, and towns across the Nation haven't seen in years.

The people of eastern North Carolina have an immense amount of pride in their towns, region, and heritage, but that pride has taken a beating in recent years with jobs harder and harder to come by, and quality of life continuing to diminish. And we're just one example of that. There are other Linwood Parkers across this Nation. There are other small towns in need. There are other regions of states and of the United States. We all desperately need a catalyst, and I believe that catalyst is natural gas pipeline infrastructure. And, in addition to providing much needed natural gas infrastructure, let's not forget that if we are going to continue to provide electricity to the Nation, we need natural gas.

For eastern North Carolina, that infrastructure will come from the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. The increased availability of natural gas supplies in North Carolina will mean more jobs, lower prices to heat and power homes and businesses, and cleaner air due to fewer emissions from generating power with natural gas. It will save North Carolina energy consumers over $130 million per year. It will create economic activity in excess of $82 million in North Carolina. It will bring over $1.1 million in property tax payments annually to Johnston County, where my town of Four Oaks is located.

What's more, at a time of economic restoration, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline will give access to natural gas to help our communities attract the companies and industries we desperately need to give the hope of a better future to our friends and families. I believe that increased access to clean, affordable, reliable, and domestically abundant natural gas will result in lower costs to families and help spur economic growth in underserved areas. This project will also bring much needed property tax revenue to the eight counties that it will run through, which will be helpful to create additional economic development and education opportunities for our local communities, including my town of Four Oaks.

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline is just one example of a project that can provide a wealth of opportunities in an area of our country that is desperate for them. But I'm not here today to focus solely on my small town or my state or this one project. I'm here as a voice for all small town mayors who are working tirelessly to bring hope and opportunities to the people they represent. The great people of the town of Four Oaks voted me into office, just like the great people of this Nation voted you into this office. Your work here is so important because you have a chance to create lifelong opportunities for communities like mine, and many, many others throughout the United States.

I thank you for your time today, and for your hard work and dedication to our wonderful country.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Moore to testify.

STATEMENT OF JIM MOORE, VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS, WILLIAMS GAS PIPELINES, HOUSTON, TEXAS

Mr. MOORE. Good morning. Chairman Lamborn, Ranking Member Lowenthal, and the rest of the subcommittee, I am privileged to appear before the subcommittee today to speak in favor of H.R. 2295, legislation to restore to the National Park Service the authority it was thought to have for decades: the power to grant natural gas pipeline rights-of-way to cross property owned or administered by the National Park Service.

I am Jim Moore, Vice President of Commercial Operations for eastern interstate pipelines at the Williams Companies, one of the larger natural gas infrastructure companies in the United States.

By virtue of our long history of building and operating interstate pipelines, we have had many occasions to work with the Interior Department and, specifically, the National Park Service. Segments of our pipelines touch national park property in at least three locations today. In two cases, those pipelines have coexisted with the

parks for decades. In the case of the third, located in the New York City area, we have just recently completed the project.

In addition, other pipeline companies have similar crossings on national park property. I certainly believe that the Interior Department is very capable about making decisions about pipelines crossing national park property. The National Park Service has a long history of carefully evaluating natural gas pipeline proposals before they are brought to Congress for approval. Clarifying that the Department of the Interior has the authority to approve natural gas pipeline crossings of National Park Service property will not only lead to a continuation of this thorough evaluation of such requests, but will, at the same time, eliminate the delay projects encounter while waiting for congressional action to approve those decisions.

To my knowledge, no pipeline company has sought legislation to allow park crossing without first conferring with the National Park Service, and Congress has not considered such legislation without asking the National Park Service for its input. The added step of congressional approval delays projects—in some cases for years—while the pipeline company, its customers, and the National Park Service await congressional action.

The case with which I am most familiar involved expanding natural gas service into New York City, specifically Brooklyn and Queens, and was largely needed to meet increased demand due to customers switching away from fuel oil to natural gas. My company, Williams, worked with our local distribution company customer to develop an infrastructure solution which would have minimal impact on residents of the city. The only practical route involved drilling under part of the Gateway National Recreation Area, which is managed as a national park, and locating a meter station in the park. That solution was widely supported by local officials, the governor of New York, and even some local park groups.

The cost of the project posed several unique challenges. Our discussions with the National Park Service were long and detailed, but they ultimately resulted in an agreement that both sides found acceptable. We originally started discussions with Members of Congress about the need for legislation to approve the crossing in 2009. A bill addressing the issue was introduced in 2011, and ultimately enacted at the end of 2012. During that time, agency work on our application for the project slowed considerably, we believe, due to the uncertainty around the timing of the necessary congressional action.

It is difficult to say with certainty exactly how much time the requirement for congressional approval of the agreement added to the project, but the project ultimately took 6 years to complete, almost 3 years more than planned. This type of delay and uncertainty makes it difficult and costly to add the necessary pipeline infrastructure to meet customer needs for clean-burning natural gas.

Williams works very hard on all of its projects to minimize any property and environmental impact, while ensuring adequate natural gas supply infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of individuals, business, and industry. We actively engage all parties to find the best way to do this, and I believe other pipeline companies do the same. In my opinion, the National Park Service has fully

demonstrated the capability to engage with pipeline companies on this issue, while protecting the property in their care, and we look forward to working with them in the future.

So, Mr. Chairman, we commend the committee for considering this important legislation to further improve the efficiency with which natural gas pipeline infrastructure is developed. Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to appear before this subcommittee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Moore follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JIM MOORE, VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS AT THE WILLIAMS COMPANIES

Good morning. Chairman Lamborn and Ranking Member Lowenthal, I am privileged to appear before the subcommittee today to speak in favor of H.R. 2295, legislation to restore to the National Park Service the authority it was thought to have for decades—the power to grant natural gas pipelines rights-of-way to cross property owned or administered by the National Park Service.

I am Jim Moore, Vice President of Commercial Operations for eastern interstate pipelines at the Williams Companies, one of the larger natural gas infrastructure companies in the United States. By virtue of our long history of building and operating interstate natural gas pipelines, we have had many occasions to work with the Interior Department and specifically the National Park Service. Segments of our pipelines touch national park property in at least three locations today. In two cases those pipelines have coexisted with the parks for decades. In the case of the third, located in the New York City area, we have just recently completed the project. In addition other pipeline companies have similar crossings of national park property.

I certainly believe that the Interior Department is very capable of making decisions about pipelines crossing national park land. The National Park Service has a long history of carefully evaluating natural gas pipeline proposals before they are brought to Congress for approval. Clarifying that the Department of Interior has the authority to approve natural gas pipeline crossings of National Park Service property will not only lead to a continuation of a thorough evaluation of such requests, but will at the same time eliminate the delay projects encounter while waiting for congressional action to approve that decision.

I believe it may help the subcommittee if I put this issue in some historical context. When the original statutes creating the national park system were passed in the early part of the last century, the National Park Service was given the authority to grant rights-of-way across park land for most forms of utility-type infrastructure, including power plants, electric lines, telephone lines, and water pipelines, among others. Natural gas pipelines as we know them today were not common at the time, but they certainly seem to fit into the intent of the original legislation. As new parks were created over the years, many of them already included pipelines, most if not all of which continue to operate to this day. In addition, the Interior Department over the years approved a number of pipeline crossings of parks using the authority in the organic park statute and to our knowledge, there was no objection to these authorizations.

I make this point because last year the committee held a hearing on this issue where the Administration testified that giving the Interior Department the authority to approve oil and gas pipelines was "inconsistent with the mandate set forth in the NPS Organic Act" and would "undermine the very purpose for which Nation Park System units were created."

However, the Act itself accommodated the permitting of infrastructure, some of it much more intrusive than underground natural gas pipelines.

The Administration and the National Parks Conservation Association also noted that when the Mineral Leasing Act was amended in 1973 one of those amendments was to exclude national park land from the land that could be leased for pipelines rights-of-way. This provision is cited as evidence by opponents of this legislation that Congress did not want the Interior Department making these decisions. Yet at the time the prohibition was put into the Mineral Leasing Act, the Interior Department believed it already had such authority under the Organic Act. Indeed, the 1973 Senate Committee report accompanying its bill, where this provision originated, noted that congressional action to approve pipelines would only be required to the extent such a project couldn't be permitted under the Organic park statute. If Congress truly disagreed with the Department making decisions about pipelines in parks, it seems that Congress would have prohibited the practice under both the

Mineral Leasing Act and the Organic park statute. It wasn't until 1988, 15 years later, that a solicitor at the Department decided that the Organic Act did not grant this authority.

All of this is to say that the notion of the Department of Interior evaluating and approving or disapproving natural gas pipelines on National Park Service property is not a new concept to be feared; rather it is an old concept that the legislation before the committee would reinstate.

Mr. Chairman, it is our experience that the National Park Service is a diligent defender of the land it administers. To my knowledge, no pipeline company has sought legislation to allow a park crossing without first conferring with the National Park Service, and Congress has not considered such legislation without asking the National Park Service for its input. After all, it would be pointless for Congress to consider such legislation if the Park Service had already decided to reject the requested crossing.

The added step of congressional approval delays projects, in some cases for years, while the pipeline company, its customers and the National Park Service await congressional action.

The case with which I am most familiar involved expanding natural gas service into New York City, specifically Brooklyn and Queens, and was largely needed to meet increased demand due to customers switching away from fuel oil to natural gas. My company, Williams, worked with our local distribution company customer to develop an infrastructure solution which would have minimal impact on residents of the city. The only practical route involved drilling under part of the Gateway National Recreation Area, which is managed as a national park, and locating a meter station in the park. That solution was widely supported by local officials, the governor of New York and even local park groups. Because the project posed several unique challenges, our discussions with the National Park Service were long and detailed but they ultimately resulted in an agreement that both sides found acceptable. We originally started discussions with Members of Congress about the need for legislation to approve the crossing in 2009. A bill addressing the issue was introduced in 2011 and ultimately enacted at the end of 2012. During that time agency work on our application for the project slowed considerably, we believe due to the uncertainty around the timing of the necessary congressional action. It's difficult to say with certainty exactly how much time the requirement for congressional approval of the agreement added to the project, but the project ultimately took 6 years to complete, at least 2 years more than planned. This type of delay and uncertainty makes it difficult and costly to add the necessary pipeline infrastructure to meet customer needs for clean burning natural gas.

Mr. Chairman, it is long overdue that Congress remove itself from this process. If the National Park Service had a poor track record in evaluating and allowing pipeline utilization of national park property that would be one thing, but it actually has an excellent record in that regard, including during the decades when it believed it possessed the authority to site these facilities.

Williams works very hard in all of its projects to minimize any property and environmental impact while ensuring adequate natural gas pipeline infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of individuals, business and industry. We actively engage all interested parties to find the best way to do this and I believe other pipeline companies do the same. In my opinion the National Park Service has fully demonstrated the capability to engage with pipeline companies on this issue while protecting the property in their care and we look forward to working with them in the future.

So Mr. Chairman we commend the committee for considering this important legislation to further improve the efficiency with which natural gas pipeline infrastructure is developed. Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to discuss this issue with the subcommittee today.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY RANKING MEMBER LOWENTHAL TO JIM MOORE, WILLIAMS GAS PIPELINES

Question 1. Mr. Moore, in your written testimony, you imply that the 1973 Senate Committee Report for the amendments to Section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act indicated that Congress was not trying to stop pipelines from being sited in national parks. Your testimony states that in the Report, the Senate committee "noted that congressional action to approve pipelines would only be required to the extent such a project couldn't be permitted under the Organic park statute." Your testimony then states, "If Congress truly disagreed with the Department making decisions

about pipelines in parks, it seems that Congress would have prohibited that practice under both the Mineral Leasing Act and the Organic park statute." It is not clear whether you are referring to the National Park Service Organic Act or the organic acts that create individual national parks. The Senate report, however, appears to be perfectly clear when it states, "It is not intended to grant rights-of-way through the National Park System under this bill." [S. Rept. 93–207 at 29] It further clearly states that the only three parks that have independent right-of-way authority are the Blue Ridge Parkway, the C and O Canal, and the Natchez Trace Parkway, and that for all other parks, "separate authority would be sought for each such right-of-way where none now exists." [ibid]

Given this, do you agree that the plain text of the Senate Report indicates that in 1973 Congress was aware of the existing authorities available for granting rights-of-way through the National Park System as a whole, and through the three individual parks that have their own right-of-way authorities, and that Congress did not intend in the 1973 amendments to the Mineral Leasing Act to provide general authority to permit rights-of-way for through the National Park System?"

Answer. During consideration of the 1973 amendments to the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA) the Senate proposed, and the House accepted, that the pipeline right-of way provisions of the MLA should not apply to oil and gas pipelines on "lands in the National Park System" and certain other categories of lands. The report states, just prior to the language quoted in your question, ". . . that rights-of-way across these excluded lands [including NPS lands] shall continue to be governed by existing statutory authority with respect to each category of lands." The Report language continues "To the extent there is inadequate authority under existing law . . . separate authority would be sought for each such right-of-way where none exists now." The report goes on to cite the three park statutes you quote in your question as being illustrative of where such authority exists, but I do not believe the report implies that they are the only such authority.

Supporting this view, a hearing was held on this issue in 1992 by this committee where the Interstate Natural Gas Association of America testified: "Until relatively recently, the NPS issued special use permits allowing natural gas pipelines to be installed across National Park Service lands on a case-by-case basis. A number of existing pipelines currently cross these lands. The NPS has never indicated this policy is the cause of any problems."

At the time of the 1973 amendments to the MLA it was accepted practice for the NPS to grant rights-of-way for natural gas pipelines using what it believed was authority granted to it under the National Park Service Organic Act of the early 1900s. In 1973 Congress would have been well aware of this practice and while Congress did not explicitly endorse this practice in the law or in the report language, neither did it say this practice was improper. It almost seems that Congress did not feel that the legality of pipeline permitting under the National Park Service Organic Act needed to be addressed in the MLA and so far as I know, the issue has never been addressed by the courts.

My answer to the first part of your question is that yes, I agree that the 1973 amendments to the MLA were not intended to give the Park Service new authority to permit pipelines but I would also maintain that neither did it intend to override the status quo, which included at that time an interpretation that the Park Service had the authority to issue rights-of-way under the original National Park Service Organic Act.

Question 2. Your written testimony states that a solicitor at the Department of the Interior determined in 1988 that the "Organic Act" did not grant the authority to the National Park Service to permit rights-of-way through national parks. Do you have documentary evidence from 1988 to support this statement? If so, please provide that evidence to the committee.

Answer. Attached is a letter from the Solicitor's office at the Department of Interior informing the Colonial Pipeline Company that its request for a right-of-way across National Park Service land is being refused on grounds that the NPS does not have authority to grant such a permit. I believe this letter is the first time the Department's revised interpretation of its authority pursuant to the National Park Service Organic Act was implemented. The change in policy was first reflected in the "General Management Plan and National Park Service Policy" document released a year or two before this letter was written.

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR
One Gateway Center — Suite 612
Newton Corner, MA 02158-2868

JUN 16 1988

ROW DEFI.

(617) 965-5100, ext. 253
FTS: 829-9253

IN REPLY REFER TO:

June 14, 1988

88-558

Gary L. Glancz
Colonial Pipeline Company
Lenox Towers
3390 Peachtree Road, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30326-1108

Re: Application for Pipeline Right of Way
Colonial National Historical Park - CPC Loc No. 906:159

Dear Mr. Glancz:

In response to your letter of May 23, 1988 to Mr. Richard Young of the National Park Service (NPS), please be advised that with the exception of National Defense Highways, the statutory for ~~the granting~~ of rights of way through areas of the National ~~Park System~~ is found at 16 U.S.C. §§5 and 79. (attached ~~hereto~~). If you will examine the same, you will see that said sections provide authority for the granting of a variety of specific types of rights-of-way, e.g., distribution of electric power, communications, water conduits, etc., as opposed to a general grant of authority for all types of rights-of-way. The term "pipes and pipe lines" used in 16 U.S.C. §79 is in the context of water conduits, not oil or natural gas pipelines. Accordingly, the NPS does not have any authority to grant a right-of-way for an oil or gas pipeline under 16 U.S.C. 5 or 79.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Very truly yours,

for James E. Epsten

ANTHONY R. CONTE
Regional Solicitor

cc: Superintendent, Colonial NHP

§ 5. Rights-of-way through parks or reservations for power and communications facilities

The head of the department having jurisdiction over the lands be, and he hereby is, authorized and empowered, under general regulations to be fixed by him, to grant an easement for rights-of-way, for a period not exceeding fifty years from the date of the issuance of such grant, over, across, and upon the public lands and reservations of the United States for electrical poles and lines for the transmission and distribution of electrical power, and for poles and lines for communication purposes, and for radio, television, and other forms of communication transmitting, relay, and receiving structures and facilities, to the extent of two hundred feet on each side of the center line of such lines and poles and not to exceed four hundred feet by four hundred feet for radio, television, and other forms of communication transmitting, relay, and receiving structures and facilities, to any citizen, association, or corporation of the United States, where it is intended by such to exercise the right-of-way herein granted for any one or more of the purposes herein named: *Provided*, That such right-of-way shall be allowed within or through any national park or any other reservation only upon the approval of the chief officer of the department under whose supervision or control such reservation falls, and upon a finding by him that the same is not incompatible with the public interest: *Provided further*, That all or any part of such right-of-way may be forfeited and annulled by declaration of the head of the department having jurisdiction over the lands for nonuse for a period of two years or for abandonment.

Any citizen, association, or corporation of the United States to whom there has been issued a permit, prior to March 4, 1911, for any of the purposes specified herein under any law existing at that date, may obtain the benefit of this section upon the same terms and conditions as shall be required of citizens, associations, or corporations making application under the provisions of this section subsequent to said date.

(Mar. 4, 1911, c. 238, 36 Stat. 1253; May 27, 1952, c. 338, 66 Stat. 95.)

§ 79. Rights-of-way for public utilities

The Secretary of the Interior is authorized and empowered, under general regulations to be fixed by him, to permit the use of rights of way through the public lands, forest and other reservations of the United States, and the Yosemite, Sequoia, and General Grant national parks, California, for electrical plants, poles, and lines for the generation and distribution of electrical power, and for telephone and telegraph purposes, and for canals, ditches, pipes and pipe lines, flumes, tunnels, or other water conduits, and for water plants, dams, and reservoirs used to promote irrigation or mining or quarrying, or the manufacturing or cutting of timber or lumber, or the supplying of water for domestic, public, or any other beneficial uses to the extent of the ground occupied by such canals, ditches, flumes, tunnels, reservoirs, or other water conduits or water plants, or electrical or other works permitted hereunder, and not to exceed fifty feet on each side of the marginal limits thereof, or not to exceed fifty feet on each side of the center line of such pipes and pipe lines, electrical, telegraph, and telephone lines and poles, by any citizen, association, or corporation of the United States, where it is intended by such to exercise the use permitted hereunder or any one or more of the purposes herein named: *Provided,* That such permits shall be allowed within or through any of said parks or any forest, military, Indian, or other reservation only upon the approval of the chief officer of the Department under whose supervision such park or reservation falls and upon a finding by him that the same is not incompatible with the public interest: *Provided further,* That all permits given hereunder for telegraph and tele-

phone purposes shall be subject to the provision of title 65 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, and amendments thereto, regulating rights of way for telegraph companies over the public domain: *And provided further,* That any permission given by the Secretary of the Interior under the provisions of this section may be revoked by him or his successor in his discretion, and shall not be held to confer any right, or easement, or interest in, to, or over any public land, reservation, or park.

(Feb. 15, 1901, c. 372, 31 Stat. 790.)

Repeals

Section repealed by Pub.L. 94–579, Title VII, § 706(a), Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2793, effective on and after Oct. 21, 1976, insofar as applicable to the issuance of rights-of-way over, upon, under, and through the public lands and lands in the National Forest System.

HISTORICAL AND STATUTORY NOTES

References in Text

Title 65 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, and amendments thereto, referred to in text, which consisted of sections 5263 to 5269 of the Revised Statutes, was classified to sections 1 to 6 and 8 of Title 47, Telegraphs, Telephones, and Radiotelegraphs, and was repealed by Act July 16, 1947, c. 256, § 1, 61 Stat. 327.

Codifications

Section, insofar as it relates to rights-of-way through public lands, forests, and reservations, and the Yosemite, Sequoia, and General Grant National Parks is also set out as section 959 of Title 43, Public Lands, and insofar as it related to rights-of-way through national forests was set out as section 522 of this title, which was omitted from the Code.

Section was formerly classified to section 419 of this title.

Savings Provisions

Repeal by Pub.L. 94–579, Title VII, § 706(a), Oct. 21, 1976 90 Stat. 2793, insofar as applicable to the issuance of rights-of-way, not to be construed as terminating any valid lease, permit, patent, etc., existing on Oct. 21, 1976, see note under section 1701 of Title 43, Public Lands.

General Grant National Park Abolished

Act of Mar. 4, 1940, c. 40, § 2, 54 Stat. 43, which is classified to section 80a of this title, abolished the General Grant National Park and added the lands to the Kings Canyon National Park as the General Grant grove section.

CROSS REFERENCES

Issuance of licenses for construction, operation, and maintenance of transmission lines, for development, transmission, and utilization of power, across public lands and reservations, see 16 USCA § 797.

Rights-of-way for electrical poles and lines, see 16 USCA § 5.

Rights-of-way over certain parks, reservations, and other lands—

Denali National Park, see 16 USCA § 349.

Grand Canyon National Park, see 16 USCA § 225.

Hawaii National Park, see 16 USCA § 393.

Rocky Mountain National Park, see 16 USCA § 193.

Sierra National Forest, see 16 USCA § 47.

Yosemite National Park, see 16 USCA § 46.

Rights-of-way through public lands, provisions of sections 1, 2 and 3 of this title not to affect or modify this section, see 16 USCA § 4.

LIBRARY REFERENCES

Administrative Law

Rights-of-way, see 36 C.F.R. § 14.1 et seq.

American Digest System

Survey and disposal of lands of United States; particular grants and donations, see Public Lands⊂=45.

Encyclopedias

Grants of lands of the United States in general; rights of way, see C.J.S. Public Lands §§ 68 to 70.
Survey and disposal of lands of United States; grants in aid of particular improvements, see C.J.S. Public Lands § 64.

WESTLAW ELECTRONIC RESEARCH

Public lands cases: 317k[add key number].
See, also, WESTLAW guide following the Explanation pages of this volume.

§ 79–1. Yosemite National Park; expansion of reservoir capacity

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal lands may be used for the expansion of the capacity of any reservoir which is located within the boundaries of Yosemite National Park unless Congress enacts specific statutory authorization after October 31, 1988 for such expansion.

(Pub.L. 100–563, § 6, Oct. 31, 1988, 102 Stat. 2830.)

LIBRARY REFERENCES

American Digest System

Forest reservations, preserves, or parks, see Woods and Forests ⊂=8.

Encyclopedias

Public forests, preserves, and reservations; national forests, see C.J.S. Woods and Forests § 11.

WESTLAW ELECTRONIC RESEARCH

Woods and forests cases: 411k[add key number].
See, also, WESTLAW guide following the Explanation pages of this volume.

SUBCHAPTER VII—REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK

§ 79a. Establishment; statement of purposes

In order to preserve significant examples of the primeval coastal redwood (Sequoia sempervirens) forests and the streams and seashores with which they are associated for purposes of public inspiration, enjoyment, and scientific study, there is hereby established a

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Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. McGarvey to testify.

STATEMENT OF SEAN MCGARVEY, PRESIDENT, NORTH AMERICA'S BUILDING TRADES UNIONS, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. MCGARVEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of the committee. On behalf of the 3 million skilled craft professionals in the United States and Canada that comprise the 14 national and international unions of North America's Building Trade Unions, I thank you for conducting this hearing, and I welcome the opportunity to testify today in support of the proposed National Energy Security Corridors Act.

Ensuring that our Federal permitting system has integrity and certainty is critical to ensuring that the workers that I represent are able to work. Further, good regulation protects our workers and communities, while not placing unnecessary burdens on business and job creators. This legislation will provide the necessary framework needed to create energy corridors on Federal lands to bring natural gas from well to the consumer. It would hold one agency accountable for the permit, while ensuring that other agencies not fall behind and create a bottleneck. America is now the global leader in oil and natural gas production, but our infrastructure to transport those resources to consumers, businesses, and refineries is being severely hampered, because of unnecessary regulatory hurdles.

To be sure, pipeline infrastructure has failed to keep pace with the increased production, which has caused several regions of the country to experience shortages and severe price spikes. New England is a perfect example to demonstrate how the lack of sufficient pipeline infrastructure has adverse effects on both businesses and consumers.

In 2000, only 15 percent of New England's electric energy production was from natural gas-fueled power plants. By 2015, that number is fast approaching 50 percent. Northeast gas transmission has not kept pace with this growth. As a result, there is simply not enough gas coming into the region to reliably and affordably power businesses and manufacturing plants. If there were a corridor, a single lead agency, as well as accountability, the needs of millions of residential gas customers could be met without excessive delays. Investment in capital construction spending is not only an economic stimulus, but it provides insightful data on how shale-driven gas production is reshaping major sectors of our economy, including the construction industry.

Last fall, a study conducted by the University of Illinois concluded that natural gas development in the Marcellus region was directly responsible for over 72 million man-hours of work in local construction markets during the years 2008 to 2014. Those 72 million man-hours of construction work translated into the creation of roughly 45,000 jobs.

Today, in just about every region of this Nation, we are experiencing a shortage of pipeline capacity to support increased gas electric generation. Fortunately, we are not experiencing a shortage of companies willing to invest the necessary capital to construct those projects. What we are experiencing, however, are significant regu-

latory delays that are preventing these investments from moving forward.

Currently, the United States ranks 41st in the world in dealing with construction permits, a key World Bank metric measuring how easy it is to actually build something. That is why North America's Building Trade Unions commend Congressman Tom MacArthur for his work to craft a legislative proposal that would designate the National Energy Security Corridors for the construction of natural gas pipelines on Federal land.

When it comes to construction of our Nation's energy infrastructure, North America's Building Trade Unions are at the center of this work. The success of our unions is predicated on the recruitment, development, and training of the safest, most highly trained and productive skilled craft workforce found anywhere in the world. It may surprise members of this panel to learn that our rank-and-file members, in conjunction with our signatory contractors, collectively and jointly fund, to the tune of roughly $1 billion a year, a nationwide network of 1,600 local joint labor-management apprenticeship training programs, or JATCs, as we call them.

All these investments are private investments from our rank-and-file members and our contractors. There is no taxpayer money involved. In order for this training infrastructure to prosper and succeed, we need both public and private investments in capital construction projects in order to create those structured career-training opportunities. With the passage of this and other permitting reform efforts, we can allow the billions of dollars in projected pipeline investments to move forward in an expedited fashion, and our unions and contractors can utilize our market-driven, world-class training infrastructure to provide structured career training pathways.

Mr. Chairman and members of this subcommittee, let me be clear. My members want to get to work on these critical projects, and our unions and our contractor partners want to provide job-training opportunities for your constituents. North America's Building Trade Unions stand ready to work with this subcommittee, as well as the full Natural Resources Committee and the entire U.S. Congress to pass the National Energy Security Corridors Act, as well as additional and innovative laws, regulations, and mechanisms that will expedite the approval of critical energy infrastructure projects. Our training facilities are built, our workers are standing by, and our unions are ready to assist the American energy infrastructure revolution.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to express these views here today, and I look forward to any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McGarvey follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SEAN MCGARVEY, PRESIDENT, NORTH AMERICA'S BUILDING TRADES UNIONS

On behalf of the 3 million skilled craft professionals in the United States and Canada that comprise the 14 national and international unions of North America's Building Trades Unions, I thank you for conducting this hearing and I welcome the opportunity to testify today in support of the proposed National Energy Security Corridors Act.

Ensuring that our Federal permitting system has integrity and certainty is critical to ensuring that the workers I represent are able to work. Further, good regula-

tion protects our workers and communities while not placing unnecessary burdens on business and job creators. This legislation will provide the necessary framework needed to create energy corridors on Federal lands to bring natural gas from the well to the consumer. It would also hold agencies accountable and makes sure they do not fall behind and create a bottleneck.

America is facing a number of infrastructure challenges, including the need to construct more natural gas pipelines. In order to meet increased demand as domestic natural gas production continues to increase and continues to gain a greater market share of the Nation's electricity portfolio, greater capacity in our natural gas pipeline infrastructure is desperately needed.

Seemingly overnight, America is now the global leader in oil and natural gas production. But the infrastructure needed to transport those resources for domestic use by consumers and businesses, as well as for refinement into other manufactured products, is being severely hampered because of unnecessary regulatory hurdles.

To be sure, pipeline infrastructure has failed to keep pace with increased production, which has caused several regions of the country to experience shortages and severe price spikes.

New England is a perfect example to demonstrate how the lack of sufficient pipeline infrastructure can had adverse effects on both businesses and consumers.

In 2000, only 15 percent of New England's electric energy production was from power plants that were fueled by natural gas. By 2015, that number was fast approaching 50 percent. Unfortunately, pipeline capacity for gas transmission into New England has not kept pace.

As a result, there is simply not enough gas coming into the region to reliably or affordably power businesses and manufacturing plants, as well as meeting the needs of millions of residential gas customers.

As the region's older, dirtier plants continue to retire and new, cleaner gas-fired plants replace them, the situation is primed to get worse. In fact, about 63 percent of the region's 11,000 megawatts of proposed new generation will be gas-fired.

Incredibly, I have read news accounts where some local gas companies already have been forced to turn away new customers because they won't have enough gas in a few years to serve them.

Driven by growth in U.S. natural gas, natural gas liquids, and crude oil, the American Petroleum Institute has estimated that capital spending in oil and gas midstream and downstream infrastructure has increased by roughly $100 billion since 2010.

Investments in building, maintaining and updating the oil and natural gas industry's transportation and storage infrastructure could contribute up to $120 billion to the economy per year. And investment in the infrastructure that moves and transforms oil and gas into everyday products could support as many as 1.15 million jobs on an average annual basis, including and especially over 800,000 jobs in pipeline construction alone. And like all manner of infrastructure investments, there is a significant economic multiplier associated with energy infrastructure investments.

Capital investments in energy infrastructure lead to more revenue and output among supplier industries, such as steel, machinery and engineering services. This capital investment triggers an estimated $45 billion per year throughout the extended supply chain. Investment in capital construction spending is not only an economic stimulus, but it provides insightful data on how shale driven gas production is reshaping major sectors of our economy—including the construction industry.

Last fall a study conducted by the University of Illinois concluded that natural gas development in the Marcellus region was directly responsible for over 72 million man-hours of work in local construction markets during the years 2008 to 2014. It is worth noting that this was a period when the U.S. construction industry was mired in a Depression where, unfortunately, unemployment rates in some markets of the Nation reached 60 percent, and in some cases exceeded 70 percent.

Those 72 million man-hours of construction work translate into the creation of roughly 45,000 jobs. The production of natural gas spared small towns across the region from the economic downturn felt throughout much of the rest of the country. This would never have materialized if not for the production of natural gas in the Marcellus region and the energy infrastructure that needed to be built to deliver that gas to market.

Today in just about every region of the Nation, we are experiencing a shortage of pipeline capacity to support increased gas-electric generation. Fortunately, we are not experiencing a shortage of companies willing to invest the necessary capital to construct those projects.

What we are experiencing, however, are significant regulatory delays that are preventing these investments from moving forward. Currently, the United States ranks

41st in the world in "Dealing with Construction Permits," a key World Bank metric measuring how easy it is to actually build something.

An industry or company which seeks to undertake capital projects often must run the gauntlet of a dozen separate agency reviews and approvals, sometimes resulting in years of delays. Excessive delay in permit processing often results from overlapping agency authority, where no single agency is in a position to guide a company through the permitting process and any one agency can act as a bottleneck. These issues directly impact the construction of pipelines on Federal lands.

That is why North America's Building Trades Unions commends Congressman Tom McArthur for his work to craft a legislative proposal that would designate "National Energy Security Corridors" for the construction of natural gas pipelines on Federal land.

Through the regulatory processes that these projects must undergo, as well as the enhancement of efficiencies made possible through this effort, we can remove obstacles that lead to the creation of tens of thousands of good, solid, Middle Class American jobs; not to mention tens of thousands of career training opportunities in the skilled trades.

When it comes to the construction of our Nation's energy infrastructure, North America's Building Trades Unions are at the center of this work. The success of our unions is predicated on the recruitment, development, and training of the safest, most highly trained and productive skilled craft workforce found anywhere in the world.

It may surprise many members on this panel to learn that our rank and file members, in conjunction with our signatory contractors, collectively and jointly fund, to the tune of roughly $1 billion dollars every year, a nationwide network of 1,600 local joint labor-management apprenticeship training programs, or JATCs as we call them. All of these investments are private investments from our rank and file members and our contractors. There is no taxpayer money involved in this system!

Further our "earn while you learn" training model—where our apprentices are paid wages and benefits as they proceed through a 4- or 5-year apprenticeship—is also unique in that in many instances our craft training programs are also accredited to a community college. So, upon graduation to journeyperson status, many of our apprentices also graduate with a 2-year Associates Degree.

But in order for this training infrastructure to prosper and succeed, we need both public and private investments in capital construction projects in order to create these structured career-training opportunities.

With the passage of this and other permitting reform efforts we can allow the billions of dollars in projected pipeline investments to move forward in an expedited fashion, and our unions and contractors can utilize our market-driven, world-class, training infrastructure to provide structured career training pathways.

North America's Building Trades Unions believe that government must assume the role of an advocate for economic development, and an advocate for American workers and American jobs. My members want to get to work on these critical projects. And our unions and our contractor partners want to provide job training opportunities for your constituents.

And that means getting tough on the Federal permitting process charged with approving projects that put Americans to work and, in the case of the pipeline trades, beginning to move dirt and construct the pipelines needed to bring our domestic energy resources to market.

North America's Building Trades Unions stand ready to work with this subcommittee, as well as the full Natural Resources Committee and the entire U.S. Congress to pass the National Energy Corridors Act, as well as additional and innovative laws, regulations and mechanisms that will expedite the approval of critical energy infrastructure projects.

Our training facilities are built, our workers are standing by, and our unions are ready to assist in an American energy infrastructure revolution.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to express these views here today. I look forward to any questions you may have.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Buppert to testify.

STATEMENT OF GREGORY BUPPERT, SENIOR ATTORNEY, SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

Mr. BUPPERT. Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and members of the committee. My name is Greg Buppert. I am a lawyer with the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) in Charlottesville, Virginia. I appreciate the chance to address this subcommittee about the process for locating interstate natural gas pipelines.

Right now this is an issue of critical importance to communities in Virginia, where I live and work. The transmission of natural gas from the Marcellus Shale is a new challenge for Virginia. We are looking for solutions. SELC supports a regional planning process that draws on input from affected communities for locating natural gas pipelines.

Unfortunately, this legislation doesn't provide that opportunity. Instead, it would cut the public out of the process, it would lead to more conflicts, and pose greater burdens on private property and local communities.

In the last year, companies proposed three natural gas pipelines across western Virginia. These pipelines, if they were built, would impact some of our states' most iconic landscapes, like the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Shenandoah Valley. They would cross many acres of public and private lands, and they have encountered broad opposition.

The principal reason for the public's concern is that these projects are not innocuous undertakings. Take the Atlantic Coast pipeline—during construction, this pipeline will impact almost 13,000 acres in three states. Any project at this scale would be disruptive. But then this will not be just any project. Much of the route will be built on private land acquired under the threat of eminent domain.

Many landowners are concerned about the springs and wells on their property that provide their drinking water. One landowner in Lovingston told FERC that the pipeline would pass through four springs and one well, every single water source on his property. Larger communities are also concerned about water. Augusta County, for example, depends on high-yield wells for its municipal water, and the county's experts concluded that blasting for the pipeline threatened this water supply.

Other landowners are concerned about the investments they have made in their property. One has spent three decades managing his forest for hardwood timber. Another has built an inn near the Blue Ridge Parkway. The pipelines would affect both.

The point of these examples is that pipeline construction does not happen in a vacuum. These projects will have real impacts that must be understood before a route is approved. The Atlantic Coast pipeline and the Mountain Valley pipeline projects were announced last summer. Each company rejected a route similar to the others as too environmentally harmful for their project.

For the public, there is little belief that these companies have anything other than their own self-interest at heart. What we need in Virginia right now is a regional plan. We need to know whether the demand for natural gas justifies new pipeline infrastructure in

our state. And, if a new pipeline is needed, we need to identify a route that is the most protective of private property, local communities, and the environment of the entire region. This approach only makes sense.

We can agree, I think, that responsible, deliberate planning is how we should build large-scale infrastructure that impacts thousands of acres. We should avoid unnecessary construction by answering the question: Do we need a new pipeline? And, if the answer is yes, we need to find the best and least harmful way to do it.

The designation of pipeline corridors on Federal lands is one possible outcome of a regional planning effort. But this cannot and should not be done without public involvement. Nor should there be an arbitrary, mandatory requirement that 10 such corridors be designated in the East. In Virginia, and elsewhere in the Southeast, our public lands are intertwined with our communities. Shenandoah National Park and our national forests bolster our economy. They provide abundant clean water to our towns and our businesses, and they draw millions of visitors. A corridor cannot be sited across a national park or a national forest without immediate direct impacts to the adjacent private properties and the local economy.

The proposed Act does not provide the planning tool that we need. It puts a finger on the scale in favor of pipeline construction over other uses of the public lands, including our national parks, all the while cutting the public out of the siting process. In order to get this right in Virginia, and everywhere else, and minimize the impacts of natural gas pipelines, we need public involvement. Short-circuiting that process will only lead to more conflicts and place greater burdens on private property and local communities.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Buppert follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GREG BUPPERT, SENIOR ATTORNEY, SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER

I. Introduction

Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and members of the committee. I appreciate the chance to address this subcommittee about the process for permitting and locating interstate natural gas pipelines. Right now, this is an issue of critical importance to communities throughout Virginia where I live and work.

I would like to bring two points to your attention during my testimony this morning:

- First, the development of large-scale interstate pipelines that cross Federal lands in Virginia will have significant impacts on private property and local communities.
- Second, the only responsible way to locate pipeline infrastructure is a deliberate planning process that draws heavily on input from the affected communities.

Unfortunately the proposed National Energy Security Corridors Act does not provide that opportunity. Instead, the legislation would cut the voice of the public out of the siting process, leading to more conflicts and placing greater burdens on private property and local communities.

II. Proposed pipelines that cross Federal lands in Virginia will have significant impacts for private property and local communities

In the last year, companies proposed three large-diameter gas lines across western Virginia. These pipelines, if they are built, would impact some of our state's

most iconic landscapes: the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Allegheny Mountains, the Shenandoah Valley, and the New River Valley. They would traverse public lands on the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Appalachian Trail, and national forests. And they would cross many acres of private lands.

The community groups that we work with are deeply involved in two of these projects, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and the Mountain Valley Pipeline, which are seeking approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Both of these projects have encountered broad opposition in the counties that they will cross.

One reason for the public's concern is that these projects will not be innocuous undertakings. Take the Atlantic Coast Pipeline for example. During construction, this pipeline will impact almost 13,000 acres in three states. Any project at this scale would be disruptive. But then this will not be just any project. Much of the route and the routes of the other pipelines will be built on private lands acquired under the threat of eminent domain.

For months, the public has submitted comments to FERC on these two projects. It would be impossible for me to describe all the concerns that have been raised, but I would like to offer several examples.

Landowners whose property is crossed will be the most impacted. In their comments to FERC, landowners have said that they expect their property values will fall or that they may not be able to sell their properties at all. They expect to be unable to obtain insurance at reasonable rates and to have trouble refinancing their homes and farms.

Many landowners are concerned about the springs and wells on their properties that they use for drinking water. One landowner in Lovingston, Virginia, told FERC that the pipeline would pass through four springs and one well—every water source—on his property. Larger communities are also concerned about water. Augusta County, Virginia, for example, depends on high-yield limestone wells for its municipal water, and the county's experts concluded that blasting and other pipeline construction posed a risk for these wells.

The pipelines will cross many historic properties and archeological sites. These include properties like the Oak Lawn Farm in Monroe County, West Virginia, which the same family has farmed for over 100 years and Monacan Native American sites along the James River in Nelson County, Virginia.

Other landowners have made an investment in decades of deliberate management of their forests for timber which will be cleared for the pipeline. And businesses along the route, like the Fenton Inn in the Blue Ridge Mountains, are concerned about their ability to attract tourists during and after construction.

Pipeline construction does not happen in a vacuum. These projects will have real impacts that must be understood before a route is approved. I have included a sample of comment letters on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and the Mountain Valley Pipeline as an attachment to this testimony.

III. Virginia needs a regional planning process that fully involves the public

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline, the Mountain Valley Pipeline, and several other projects were announced in the summer and late-summer of 2014. But of course, they were in development long before then. As local communities scrambled to understand the projects, where they would go, and what the impacts would be, a theme emerged. It became apparent that there was not a common plan for pipeline infrastructure through our region. Instead of a responsible, coordinated planning effort, Virginians are faced with an ad hoc but very large-scale construction program driven by the needs of the companies.

Reports to FERC from the Mountain Valley Pipeline and the Atlantic Coast Pipeline brought this issue into focus. Each company rejected the other's route as too environmentally harmful for their project. Mountain Valley said the Atlantic Coast route would cross more public lands and more streams and rivers. Atlantic Coast said the Mountain Valley route would be longer and cross more forest lands. Which is it? For the public, there is little belief that these companies have anything other than their own self-interest at heart.

What we need in Virginia right now is a regional plan. We need to know whether the demand for natural gas justifies new pipeline infrastructure in our state. And if a new pipeline is needed, we need to identify a route that is the most protective of private property, local communities, and the environment of the entire region.

This approach only makes sense. We can agree, I think, that responsible, deliberate planning is how we should build large-scale infrastructure that impacts thousands of acres of private and public lands. We should avoid unnecessary construction by answering the question: Do we need a new pipeline? And if the answer is yes, we need to find the best and least harmful way to do it.

IV. The draft National Energy Security Corridors Act is not the responsible planning tool that we need

The designation of pipeline corridors on Federal lands is one possible outcome of a regional planning effort. But this cannot and should not be done without public involvement. Nor should there be an arbitrary, mandatory requirement that 10 such corridors be designated in the East.

In Virginia and elsewhere in the Southeast, our public lands are intertwined with our communities. Shenandoah National Park is a critical engine for the economy of the region, and the proposed legislation would weaken the protections for this land. A corridor cannot be sited across a national park or national forest without immediate direct impacts to the adjacent private properties and local economies.

And our public lands themselves provide important benefits. For example, communities like Staunton, Virginia, and others in the Shenandoah Valley rely on abundant clean water from the George Washington National Forest. In fact, many of the national forests of the Southeast were created specifically for watershed protection.

The proposed act does not provide the planning tool that we need. It puts a finger on the scale in favor of pipeline construction over other uses of public lands, including our national parks. It cuts the voices of the communities out of the siting process, working with Federal, state, and local governments along with industry but specifically excluding any other public input. In effect, a decision to locate a pipeline corridor would ensure that the adjacent landowners and communities would bear the brunt of the project, all without ever having an opportunity to express their concerns.

It is simply impossible for a pipeline company or a Federal agency to have detailed information of the kind provided to FERC in comments on the proposed Virginia pipelines. And without that input, the companies and the agencies cannot fully understand the consequences of a decision to locate a pipeline corridor.

V. Conclusion

The deck is already stacked against the public when it comes to pipeline siting. Companies are heavily invested in their projects before public input is solicited. And FERC reviews each proposed project in isolation, never considering a regional plan to ensure the most responsible, least harmful routes are identified. We need to improve this process, not streamline it to the detriment of the public.

In order to get this right in Virginia and everywhere else and minimize the impacts of natural gas pipelines, we need public involvement. Short-circuiting that process will only lead to more conflicts and place greater burdens on private property and local communities.

Attachments

The following documents were submitted with Mr. Buppert's prepared statement for the record. They are being retained in the Committee's official files:

Letter from Southern Environmental Law Center to Tom Speaks, USDA Forest Service regarding Atlantic Coast Pipeline Survey Comments

Letters regarding concerns about the Atlantic Coast Pipeline from:

—Fenton Inn, Roseland, VA

—Richard G. Averitt, Nellysford, VA landowner

—Rockfish Valley Foundation, Nellysford, VA

—Monacan Indian Nation, Madison Heights, VA

—Residents of the Shannon Farm Community, Nelson County, VA

Letters regarding concerns about the Mountain Valley Pipeline from:

—Monroe County Historic Landmarks Commission, Union, WV

—Marvin Bryant, Chatham, VA landowner

—Jack W. and Kathy P. Finney, Blacksburg, VA landowners

—Carolyn Reilly, Rocky Mount, VA landowner

Mr. LAMBORN. All right, and thank you. We will now begin our rounds of questions. I have to leave in a little bit because of a conflict. I will give the gavel at that point to Representative Cook. But first I want to ask my question.

The concept behind National Energy Security Corridors is not new. In fact, Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 aimed to bring many Federal agencies together in order to establish energy corridors throughout our Nation for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines, and electricity transmission. That was a decade ago, but we have made little progress since then. Even President Obama recognized that something should be done. A memo he issued in June 2013 said—and I quote—"An important avenue to improve these processes is the designation of energy right-of-way corridors on Federal lands."

I am going to ask both Mr. Moore and Mr. McGarvey this question on technology and improvements in our pipeline infrastructure. How has technology improved in recent years to reduce or eliminate the possibility of natural gas leaks, and to reduce the footprint?

Mr. MOORE. Well, there have been a number of things. For one, we have, as have other pipelines, gone through an extensive process over the last 7 years of testing, checking all of our pipelines, smart-pigging our pipelines, to make sure that there are no issues with existing pipelines that we have.

We have spent a significant amount of money. For Transco, the pipeline that I am familiar with, we smart-pigged over 90 percent of our pipelines. In fact, all of our pipelines that are in high-consequence areas; and we will be doing that every 7 years.

As far as additional technology for pipelines, there are a number of things. Horizontal directional drills are in use widely now on many of our projects, where we can drill under sensitive properties without having to affect the surface at all. There are other direct pipe technologies that we have utilized to minimize the impact on streams and wetlands, and we do that extensively on our projects, as well.

So, there have been a number of improvements that we continue to develop. We work closely, through our permitting process, with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Of course, we are regulated by the Department of Transportation. We follow all those rules. We have taken significant steps to improve the safety and reliability of our natural gas pipelines.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you. Mr. McGarvey, do you have anything to add to that, like on materials, use of newer and better materials?

Mr. MCGARVEY. I would just say, Mr. Chairman, that through our training infrastructure that I described, we can work with manufacturers and owners on the latest technology development, and train the workforce to the requirements of that new technology. So we are constantly retraining our workforce as technology advances. That is why, arguably, we have the safest, most productive craft workforce in the world who are putting these pipelines across the country.

Mr. LAMBORN. OK, thank you.

Mr. Spisak, I am going to make a digression here for a second. People need to realize the National Park Service is not just the 50 to 60 iconic national parks, like the Grand Canyon. There are 400 units of the National Park System. The Appalachian Trail is one of those. It goes 2,000 miles, and 1,000 miles of that is on Federal

lands. And, of course, that is a barrier that has to be crossed by many of these pipelines.

How would you propose to do that, if you can't go under the Appalachian Trail?

Mr. SPISAK. As I mentioned in my oral testimony, I am accompanied by Ray Sauvajot, an Associate Director with the Park Service. He is available to answer your question, or I will be glad to take your question back to answer for the record.

Mr. LAMBORN. Well, we will have to stick with you, because our invitation went to you, so we can't——

Mr. SPISAK. Understood.

Mr. LAMBORN [continuing]. Bring other people to testify, although they are always free to confer with you, if you would like that. Would that be of help to you, to just confer with you privately, and then you answer the question?

Mr. SPISAK. We can try that. As I understand, the Appalachian Trail is not one long Federal park, it is subdivided, and crosses various jurisdictions, including states and privately owned. So it is not a long, single barrier that you might think, if you think of it as a single trail.

Mr. LAMBORN. OK. Thank you for that answer. It does illuminate somewhat the situation, although I still have to say you are still left with 1,000 miles in total. And, admittedly, it is not all in one, unbroken stretch.

Mr. SPISAK. Understood.

Mr. LAMBORN. But that can present an obstacle that, until we pass this bill, it would take an Act of Congress to get around. That can take years, in addition to the permitting process, and the NEPA analysis, and everything else that goes into a pipeline.

Mr. SPISAK. Understood.

Mr. LAMBORN. So, I just think we need to pass legislation like this, and I hope we can work in a bipartisan manner to do that. I hope we can get your agency on board and work with you. I know Representative MacArthur is going to be working with the Ranking Member and myself and the agencies out there. Let's actually get this done—the working families of our country deserve not to have natural gas that costs 10 times what it does in other parts of the country.

OK. At this point I will recognize the Ranking Member, and I will give the gavel to Representative Cook.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I do agree with you. I think that, what I am hearing today, there is a lot of common ground. We are all on the same page in supporting natural gas pipelines. The question is what is the best way to move forward, and I commit myself to working with you and the author to work on that.

My first questions have to do with Mr. McGarvey and Mayor Parker. It seems like both of you support action that would accelerate the permitting of new pipelines. So my question to you is, would you be open to supporting other proposals that accomplish the same goals of accelerated permitting, besides the language in this bill?

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Ranking Member, we are always open to conversation, and anything that is going to expedite the permitting

process. I can tell you, and you are very well aware, but I am directly impacted because of the people that I represent.

We just went through what lots of folks in this town called a dramatic recession. For us, in the construction industry, it was a depression. There were many projects that were held up through the permitting process during that 5-year stretch that people would have kept their homes and their health care if they would have went forward. So we are open to anything.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Right, thank you. Also, Mayor Parker, would you be open to looking at other ways that accomplish the same goals of expedited permitting?

Mr. PARKER. Yes, sir, Mr. Ranking Member. I, much like everyone in my community and the people across the Nation, would just like the result of making sure that we had the energy source that will enable us to be competitive, and to provide the jobs for our people.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you, Mayor.

Mr. Buppert, it is my understanding that you are not opposed to new pipelines, or even corridors on Federal land. You have said that there are 51 natural gas pipelines that already cross the Appalachian Trail, and so it is not as if there are none that cross it at this moment. But you believe, also, that this bill is just not the best way to go forward. Is that correct?

Mr. BUPPERT. That is right. I think corridors across Federal land make sense, but they have to be designed in an inclusive process that draws heavily on input from the public. What this bill does is it cuts the public out of that process.

The siting of the corridors itself are exempt from NEPA. And then in the bill itself, there is what appears to be a mandatory approval once a pipeline application is submitted. Any NEPA review, if there is any, would be meaningless at that point.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Right.

Mr. BUPPERT. There is a right way to do this. We want to find the routes that are the least impactful and least——

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Well, I am going to offer something now, and let's get some comment on it. Because I think what we have is a proposal, and we want to see whether we can improve upon that proposal. So I want to highlight some of the recommendations from the Department of Energy's Quadrennial Energy Review, or its QER, which I mentioned in my opening statement. That report proposes establishing a permitting improvement center to ensure better coordination between agencies, and to speed up permitting. Would any of you be supportive of that? And I ask all the members of the panel.

First I will start with Mr. Buppert. Would you be supportive of the Department of Energy's report that talks about creating this improvement center to speed up permits?

Mr. BUPPERT. Well, I am not in a position to endorse any specific language. But the Department of Energy's proposal seems like a step in the right direction. Specifically, it is attempting to improve expediency without sacrificing public input.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Spisak, can you respond to that, also?

Mr. SPISAK. Yes. I believe the Department supports the interagency efforts for improving permitting processes. This builds off

the multi-departmental rapid response team approach that we have been using over the last several years, which focuses agency resources on improving coordination and involving timely permitting challenges.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. I want to follow up on that. Another recommendation was to co-locate infrastructure, environmental review, and permitting staff, which sounds a lot to me like the Section 365 oil and gas pilot permitting offices.

Does Interior believe that that kind of strategy can be successful in reducing permitting times?

Mr. SPISAK. We did have a positive response associated with the pilot office Section 365 offices. We found that that was very helpful in dealing with the challenges of permitting oil and gas with the environmental reviews, and it would——

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Then my last question would be to Mr. Buppert. Would you be supportive of these QER recommendations?

Mr. BUPPERT. Well, like I said, those recommendations seem like a step in the right direction, an attempt to improve expediency without sacrificing public input.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. So, I would just like to encourage my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that there may be something here that we can work to strengthen this kind of bill.

I would like to ask unanimous consent to enter two letters for the record, one from the National Parks Conservation Association, Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, and Park Rangers for Our Lands, that letter in opposition to the bill, as presently drafted; and one from the Wilderness Society, Environmental Defense Fund, and NRDC, also in opposition, as presently drafted. We are trying to figure out how do we make this better and stronger. I yield back.

Mr. COOK [presiding]. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. Thompson.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Chairman. First of all, thank you to Congressman MacArthur for the underlying bill that we are talking about. Gentlemen, thank you for coming and lending your expertise to this topic today. I hail from Pennsylvania, from the Marcellus area—actually, a little bit of Utica now. And the benefits of natural gas have just been amazing. We have seen the cost for all, especially for the people living paycheck to paycheck, the ones who are really struggling in life, when they have access to natural gas, there are lower heating costs, lower costs to be able to cool your homes, to cook, and an increase in manufacturing.

We have seen the greenhouse gas levels go down. Many of my counties were in double-digit unemployment. Today they are under 6 percent. Two-hundred-and-fifty thousand jobs, estimated, have been created in Pennsylvania as a result of the Marcellus. In the past 7 years there has been $2 billion of taxes paid to the Pennsylvania coffers, the treasury, from the natural gas industry. And, quite frankly, probably more important than anything else, from a Federal perspective, the energy and national security that it has helped support.

Mayor, thank you for being here.

Mr. PARKER. Yes, sir.

Mr. THOMPSON. I know you are from a small town. I represent 24 percent of the land mass of Pennsylvania, which is all small towns. So, I was curious to see from your perspective, what opportunities are possible, when natural gas is a part of the infrastructure package that you can offer to attract or even create home-grown manufacturing?

Mr. PARKER. Congressman, that is a great question. The truth of it is probably the reverse. What I mean by that is this: without it, there are no opportunities. That is just the pure truth of it. Without natural gas, and the infrastructure that will bring it, we absolutely, in eastern North Carolina and across this Nation where we don't have it, don't have opportunity. We can't compete.

I visualize it much as the debate that must have went on in these halls when the railroad went across the country. Most of the towns in our Nation—not just in my county—are built because they were either on the river, or the railroad went through. Every town in my county, other than Smithfield, that was on the river, was built because of the train. Those same debates that we hear now about where it went were held then. But the truth of it is, it made our economy grow, our Nation to be connected, and our people to have work.

So I say to you that without what is required—and how we get there is up to you. I am sure that you all are going to work it out in the right manner. But the truth of it, when you have reached my age of 67, the most precious commodity that we have is time. A year ago, I happened to be at the local gas station fueling up early one morning. I looked across at another young man that was going off to work. He bought $2 worth of gas, half a gallon. That is all he could afford to get him to work so he could come back home.

There are people in this Nation, in my community, my county, my state, who need the help to create jobs. I own a barbecue restaurant, and I can tell you this year as the price of gas came down, my sales went up because people liked my product. But they can't buy it if they don't have money. And it made a difference. So your question is right on. There are no opportunities without it. Thank you, sir.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Mayor.

Mr. Moore, with your company, you have been able to come to the table with the National Park Service and the Governor, and work through issues. Could you talk about that briefly—about, if this legislation is successful, how you would have the authority to come to the table as different stakeholders and work through the issues without the bureaucracy and the challenge of having to get that Act of Congress for each project?

Mr. MOORE. Yes, sir. Thank you. That is correct. We work with the National Park Service routinely, and we have worked very well with them. They seem to be responsive to the same issues that we are concerned about. We want to build in places where it is constructable. We want to construct our pipeline in areas where it is environmentally responsible, the same thing the National Park Service is interested in. So we work with them closely on our projects.

The issue we have encountered, the primary issue, has been the delay when it requires an Act of Congress. In the case of the Rockaway Project in New York that I mentioned in my testimony, we spent 3 extra years to go through that process. I won't attribute all of that to the Act of Congress; probably 2 years of it to that. And we had already been in extensive discussions with the National Park Service on that issue, and we thought we had a solution that was workable. We ultimately got the Act of Congress, but again, it was an extreme delay for us and for our customer.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you.

Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. COOK. I thought I saw Dr. Ruiz, I didn't see him. Dr. Benishek. We've got too many doctors in the place here.

Dr. BENISHEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to be here. Thank you, gentlemen, for being here this morning.

Mr. Mayor, I really appreciate your comments, and the heartfelt feelings behind them, too.

I would just like to know a little bit more about the process. What exactly is the process that you have to go through to approve a national gas pipeline across National Park Service lands? Mr. Moore, can you answer that question?

Mr. MOORE. Our process for a typical project is, once we have reached agreement with our customer, we have in mind what the project will look like, we are regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. We go through a pre-filing process, where we are required to engage all stakeholders, mainly discussing environmental impacts, discussing the routing of the pipeline and what alternatives there are to the routing of the pipeline.

In the case of the Rockaway Project, as we were going through that process, one of the things we knew we had to have was going to be access to national park property. And we obviously engaged the National Park Service during that process, and came up with a solution we thought would work for both sides.

But, before we could file for our FERC certificate, we had to get the Act of Congress, which was about a 2-year process. Once we got the Act of Congress, we filed our FERC certificate, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission reviews everything. They make the determination, ultimately, as to whether we can or can't build the project. So, in this case, they gave us a certificate to proceed. We constructed the project and placed it in service last week.

Dr. BENISHEK. But the whole process takes just years and years.

Mr. MOORE. The normal process for a project, the time frame is 3 to 4 years. And, again, in this one specific example I cited, it was 6.

Dr. BENISHEK. Yes, so that adds quite a bit of time to the process.

Mr. MOORE. Yes, sir, and maybe even more important was the uncertainty as to whether we would actually get——

Dr. BENISHEK. Right.

Mr. MOORE [continuing]. Approval by Congress to proceed.

Dr. BENISHEK. Right, right. Does this happen all the time, all across the country? Is this happening more and more? How frequently is this becoming an issue now?

Mr. MOORE. I am not an expert on how many times it has happened. In the case of my company, which is Transcontinental Gas Pipeline, a subsidiary of the Williams Companies, we have three locations where we cross park property. We have a crossing of the Appalachian Trail——

Dr. BENISHEK. Mr. McGarvey, do you have any information on that, how many times this becomes an issue across the country that affects your workers?

Mr. MCGARVEY. I don't have data, but I can tell you that it is not just a pipeline, it is any construction project. The amount of time and the outlay of capital, like Mr. Moore said, with the uncertainty for people that are investing that capital really stagnates and stymies development of not just natural gas pipelines, but all kinds of construction projects, because of the permitting process.

Dr. BENISHEK. I just want to relate to you the fact, and Mr. Parker mentioned it, too, when the natural gas pipeline came through my community, when I was a kid, my family had a hotel and bar. The construction crew that came through there and spent the summer in the area, that was a huge boon to our entire community, from the hotel rooms and all that. The increased opportunity we have here in this country to help small towns across America by having these pipelines, not only by the production of the gas, but having the economic boom of the construction, that is just huge for America. And I hope we can solve the differences that we have and streamline this process, so that the resource that is so valuable to Americans is quickly developed in less than 6 years at a time.

So I yield back the remainder of my time. Thank you.

Mr. COOK. Thank you. The Chair recognizes Mr. Graves.

Mr. GRAVES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Spisak, do you view this legislation as requiring the Secretary of the Interior to grant right-of-ways on all public lands?

Mr. SPISAK. We looked at that, and it was unclear entirely whether that was the case or not. I think it talks of not doing the NEPA analysis on major Federal actions, so it is not entirely clear, and it could be construed that way, yes.

Mr. GRAVES. But while it doesn't require a NEPA analysis to designate the corridors, the actual pipeline project, as I would assume, would actually require a NEPA analysis. The actual construction project would require NEPA.

Mr. SPISAK. That is how we interpret it, although the NEPA analysis associated with that would not benefit from the higher-level NEPA that would go through the corridor designation, and it might take longer to do some of that.

Mr. GRAVES. OK. So, perhaps there could be discussion about where NEPA appropriately fits in this, whether it is in the front end, or during the construction process. Is that——

Mr. SPISAK. Yes.

Mr. GRAVES. OK. But, putting that aside, I am struggling with your comment in your testimony where you twice definitively say that the National Park Service land should be exempt from any type of right-of-way designation. Can you help me understand that?

Mr. SPISAK. I can speak to the BLM issues. And I think it would be better served for the Park Service to answer that.

Mr. GRAVES. You are not suggesting that you didn't write this testimony, are you?

Mr. SPISAK. I am sorry, what?

Mr. GRAVES. I said you are not suggesting that you didn't write this testimony, are you?

Mr. SPISAK. I——

Mr. GRAVES. Don't answer that.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GRAVES. I am just struggling here, and here is why. I know you don't work for the EPA, but, as I am sure you are aware, the EPA is using various authorities now to significantly influence our national energy portfolio, primarily some of the clean air regulations affecting the use of coal. And in doing so, coal is now the largest feed stock or fuel source for electricity generation in the United States. However, new power plants that are coming online, the largest source by far is natural gas, as a generation source.

So, if you are going to come in one hand and you are going to squeeze a certain stock or fuel source, you have to ensure that you are carrying out efforts to facilitate the use of these other fuels to prevent us from having electricity generation issues in the United States. And it seems like the Administration is totally missing that. They are squeezing coal, on the one hand, and they are not doing anything to facilitate the transportation of natural gas on the other, which if I remember right, 90 percent of all new electricity generation facilities are based upon natural gas. And it seems that there is an extraordinary disconnect there.

Mr. SPISAK. Well, we do say in the testimony, and I have said in my oral statement, that we support the goals of what you are trying to do. And I think we can work through that, as we talk through——

Mr. GRAVES. Do you see the bigger picture here, though——

Mr. SPISAK. I understand exactly what you're saying, sure——

Mr. GRAVES [continuing]. That we are concerned about? I think that is a big deal.

Now, two other things. One, I think in every hearing, Mr. Chairman, I am going to mention south Louisiana. You look at the title of this bill, and it pertains to national energy corridors. We have a road in south Louisiana known as LA–1. LA–1 facilitates, depending on how you do the math, and I usually estimate upward, it handles anywhere from one-quarter to one-third of all the oil and gas consumed in this Nation. It services approximately 75 percent of all the offshore fields in the Gulf of Mexico.

You state in your testimony that under the Mineral Leasing Act, one-half of the revenues from production of energy resources on Federal lands go toward those states. Are you familiar with the offshore revenue sharing?

Mr. SPISAK. I am aware of it, but I am more familiar with the onshore, where it is roughly one-half.

Mr. GRAVES. And I believe——

Mr. SPISAK. Offshore is a little bit different.

Mr. GRAVES. So it is 50 percent goes to the states with no strings attached, whatsoever?

Mr. SPISAK. Onshore.

Mr. GRAVES. For onshore. An additional 40 percent goes in the reclamation fund, used for water projects in 17 western states. For offshore, this year, as I recall, I believe we received .4 percent. Not 50 percent, not effectively 90 percent, but .4 percent.

Here you have a roadway that is by far the most important energy road in the Nation, and to see the fact that this road is very vulnerable, and that we are not reinvesting dollars in it to ensure the resiliency of our national energy infrastructure, is problematic. And the disparity between royalty treatments, or energy revenue treatments for onshore and offshore simply can't be defended. I would urge you to take that back to your agency, and the next time you write testimony, perhaps you could make some reference there. Thank you.

Mr. SPISAK. Thank you.

Mr. COOK. Thank you, Mr. Graves. The Chair would like to recognize the new member to the committee. And if he is going to last these long committees, be careful, you will end up as the Chair.

[Laughter.]

Mr. COOK. His name is Mr. Hice, and it is my pleasure to introduce you. You are recognized.

Dr. HICE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a great honor to be here, and I thank you very much. And thank you, each of you, for being here with us today.

Mr. McGarvey, Mr. Moore, I would like to direct some questions and some thoughts specifically to you, and somewhat piggy-back on what Mr. Graves was talking about.

Recently, the governor of Texas signed a law making fracking bans illegal. I believe this was done because, overwhelmingly, the evidence points to the fact that hydraulic fracturing is being done safely. But then you have other states, such as New York, relying on natural gas where they have banned the practice of hydraulic fracturing.

Both of you, in your testimonies, pointed out that about 63 percent of New England's 11,000 megawatts of proposed new generation rely upon natural gas. So we know the production is not going to come there from New York. So where is New England going to get natural gas from?

Mr. MOORE. Our company has proposed a pipeline from northern Pennsylvania to Wright, New York, which doesn't get all the way to New England, but it does interconnect with the Tennessee Gas Pipeline in Iroquois, so that gas can make it to New England markets to some degree.

So, the projects we have been developing have been out of northern Pennsylvania. That has been the supply source for the projects we are developing to move gas toward the New England region. I know there are other pipeline proposals by other companies, as well, to build infrastructure further north into New England. But it is certainly a constraint, and there are a number of pipelines trying to address that today.

Dr. HICE. All right. So you have a number of different companies trying to get the pipelines to various parts of New England. We are talking lots of pipeline, a lot of miles, a lot involved in all of this to meet the demand, obviously, of that population. Are we going to

need an Act of Congress every time one of these pipelines goes across Federal land?

Mr. MOORE. I guess today we do. In our Constitution Project we didn't cross Federal land, so we didn't have to encounter that. I am not aware of whether the other projects that are being proposed will encounter that or not. We have a project under development now that will potentially cross the Appalachian Trail. We were looking at a number of alternatives, so it is not clear.

Dr. HICE. Right. The Appalachian Trail goes all the way from Georgia to Maine. So, again, are we going to need an Act of Congress every time we go across Federal land?

Mr. MOORE. Today we do.

Dr. HICE. All right. We will. Can you explain how delays in the process of getting permits impacts the labor force of a project?

Mr. MCGARVEY. The local labor force looks forward to these opportunities to work in the region where they are domiciled. And when there are proposed projects, and when they are held up by the permitting process, they are forced to leave the local area and pursue the work opportunities to apply their craft where they can, whether it is in another state or another region of the country. Sometimes there just isn't work in those other places to move to, and the impact on the labor force is that it depresses enthusiasm for being in the construction industry, because of the intermittent nature of the work. And it is a different situation when it is the economy, and the economy's hand that is dealing that intermittent nature of the work, as it is to bureaucrats who are deciding on a process of permitting to actually get a construction project built.

So, it hurts us on the recruitment side sometimes. It hurts the image of construction as an intermittent industry. And, most importantly for the people I represent, it hurts their economic standard for their families, because there is private capital, ready to go on a piece of infrastructure that makes sense and is needed, and they can't apply their craft because it is going through this long, drawn-out permitting process. So it depresses the industry.

Dr. HICE. So there is a significant problem that is created by the delayed permitting process from local economies and all these that you have just described. It is problematic.

Mr. MCGARVEY. Congressman, it is probably the single biggest problem in the construction industry that we face, this menagerie of permitting processes for all sectors in all industries across the United States.

Dr. HICE. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I yield. Thank you, sir.

Mr. COOK. Thank you very much. And our last question will be from the individual who started all this.

A great hearing, Mr. MacArthur. You are recognized.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Mayor, I want to thank you. I was a businessman and a local mayor, as well. I am new here. And I appreciate your reminding us that the things we do have a real impact on real people. And what we do can affect job creation and prosperity of people, families, and communities. I think it is important that we remember that, among other things.

Mr. Spisak, I had a question for you. The kinds of corridors that I am proposing, do they currently exist, both identified and designated in the 11 contiguous western states?

Mr. SPISAK. Yes, as part of the Energy Policy Act we designated those corridors on Federal lands.

Mr. MACARTHUR. OK, which is precisely what I am proposing here, that we just do it in the eastern United States, as we have done in the western United States.

Are you aware of any reason why eastern states would pay up to 10 times what western states pay for natural gas, other than the lack of efficient distribution from West to East?

Mr. SPISAK. I would know of no other reason.

Mr. MACARTHUR. That makes two of us. In fact, I think it probably makes 40 or 50 of us in this room.

So, the western states have the exact sort of corridors that I am proposing already, and the world hasn't come to an end. And eastern states are paying 10 times more for natural gas, and it affects real people in real communities. It affects real workers, 3 million in these unions.

And I understand change can be difficult for people, but this is simple, common-sense change. We are not reinventing the wheel here. We are simply asking, in the eastern United States, for what already happens in the western United States.

And, last, if I might turn to President McGarvey, you talked a little about your 14 building trade unions and the 3 million members you represent. Could you elaborate? Because you talked about the job creation in building the pipelines, but you started to talk about the jobs that flowed downstream, once those pipelines are in place. I just wanted to ask you maybe two things.

One, is there anything more important for your unions than seeing your members at work?

Mr. MCGARVEY. No, that is the sole purpose for which we exist. Once you get past collective bargaining in the construction industry, in the building trades, is to provide the work opportunities and the positive economic trajectory for the members that we represent.

And when it comes to the energy sector, and the untapped potential in this country for our unions, about 50 percent of the work that those 3 million folks do is in the energy sector. I can tell you that within 40 miles of this building, there is approximately $6 billion worth of construction work going on, from a Cove Point project that Dominion is doing on gas transfer terminal to two gas-fired power plants—$6 billion worth of construction within 40 miles of this building. It is just phenomenal. Ten years ago, nobody would have believed it, thought it, or dreamt it.

Well, it takes real people to build those facilities. And, through our training programs, we are able to help communities of color, women, and veterans, through a pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program, learn the skill sets while they are working on private capital-invested projects that then move those folks and keep those folks in the middle class, not for one, but for two generations, according to our studies, because of the skill sets they learn.

So, the potential is enormous, we just need to get at it. The quicker we can get things into the ground, the more people that we

can help, the lowering of the income inequity in the country, and making sure that folks have the opportunities that they need.

Mr. MACARTHUR. I appreciate that.

And, Mr. Chairman, just last, I recognize anything dealing with the environment is highly charged, right out of the gate. I know that. I represent probably the most environmentally sensitive area in New Jersey. It includes the Pinelands, it includes the whole of the shore area. So I understand that emotions can run hot.

I just want to repeat. This bill accomplishes what we are already doing in the western United States, and I think it does it to great effect for people that need jobs—women, veterans, people that are impoverished today. It helps communities, it helps energy independence. And I appreciate each of your testimonies. I know you have different perspectives, but I appreciate you sharing them with us. I yield back.

Mr. COOK. Thank you. The Chair recognizes Mr. Mooney.

Mr. MOONEY. I have no questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. COOK. Thank you very much. I want to thank the witnesses for their valuable testimony, and the Members for their questions.

Members of the committee may have some additional questions for the witnesses, and we will ask you to respond to these in writing. Under Committee Rule 4(h), the hearing record will be held open for 10 business days for these responses.

And, once again, I want to thank the witnesses. I know many of you have come a long way. It is good to hear some folks from North Carolina. I felt like I was back in Camp Lejeune again. And I actually could understand what you were saying.

So once again, thank you for your patience.

If there is no further business, without objection, this committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[ADDITIONAL MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD]

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–1802

May 20, 2015

Hon. DOUG LAMBORN, *Chairman*,
House Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources,
1324 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515.

Hon. ALAN LOWENTHAL, *Ranking Member*,
House Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources,
1329 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515.

DEAR CHAIRMAN LAMBORN AND RANKING MEMBER LOWENTHAL:

I write to express my support for H.R. 2295, the "National Energy Security Corridors Act." Since 2008, the U.S. has become the world's number 1 producer of oil and gas. Advances in hydraulic fracturing techniques have unlocked vast supplies of previously unrecoverable gas in shale formations across the nation. Unfortunately, our nation's energy transmission infrastructures have not kept pace with

changes in the volumes and geography of oil and gas production. This is particularly true of the infrastructure for transporting natural gas.

Over the last decade, there has been a growing awareness of the gap between the times typically needed to permit new production of sources of energy and the much longer times needed for infrastructure. This discrepancy in permitting time frames makes it more challenging to plan, site, permit, finance, and construct energy infrastructure projects. H.R. 2295 would streamline the process by allowing the Department of the Interior to review and approve natural gas pipeline rights of way on lands administered by the National Park Service without first seeking project-specific authorization from Congress, as is now required by law.

My home state of Louisiana is third among all states in natural gas production. Louisiana residents pay the lowest average cost for electricity of any state in the country. This is due in part not only to our abundant natural gas supply, but also our natural gas pipeline network. My constituents experience the very real benefits of natural gas abundance every day. By streamlining the natural gas pipeline siting and permitting process, we can connect our increasingly abundant supply with constantly increasing demand and ensure that all Americans can experience these benefits as well.

Sincerely,

CEDRIC L. RICHMOND,
Member of Congress.

[LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD RETAINED IN THE COMMITTEE'S OFFICIAL FILES]

In Support of H.R. 2295

—America's Natural Gas Alliance, May 19, 2015 Letter

—Interstate Natural Gas Association of America, May 19, 2015 Letter

In Opposition of H.R. 2295

—Appalachian Trail Conservancy, May 29, 2015 Statement

—National Parks Conservation Association, Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, and Park Rangers for Our Lands, May 19, 2015 Letter

—The Wilderness Society, Environmental Defense Fund, and Natural Resources Defense Council, May 19, 2015 Letter

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