

September 29, 2015

The Honorable Norman Bay

Chairman

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

888 First Street, NE

Washington, DC 20426

Dear Chairman Norman Bay,

Thank you for hosting this scoping meeting in my district today. I am grateful for all the efforts that you and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) have made over the course of the Preliminary Filing for the Northeast Energy Direct (NED) Pipeline.

The siting for the current preferred route of the NED Pipeline has been a complicated process and the project has raised a number of concerns among the impacted communities here in New Hampshire. I am an advocate for smart energy policies that protect the public, preserve our environment, and lower electricity costs. I have made it a point to visit a number of the sites associated with the route and to speak with town officials and impacted residents. It is with these experiences in mind that I write to you.

As the only agency with direct oversight over the siting of natural gas pipelines, FERC has a critical process ahead of it. I have appreciated the opportunity to give greater voice to the thoughts of my constituents. As FERC's preliminary filing period continues and the official filing begins, I would ask that you respond to the concerns that many of my constituents have raised.

It is the natural beauty and pristine character of our state that provides us with the New Hampshire advantage. It is important that any project being proposed in our state protect that character. I share the concerns of my constituents about the environmental impact that this project may have on existing conservation lands, high priority habitats, and drinking water aquifers. I ask that you take particular care in studying the impact of wetland and river crossings, private wells and aquifers, and habitats of high concern. It is my goal to ensure that the public interest is upheld in this process.

It is with the public in mind that I request that you consider the impacts that this project could have on public safety, both because of its proximity to schools—particularly Temple Elementary school's proximity to the compressor station, and because of the very limited ability of these small, volunteer run, rural communities to handle any potential events relating to the pipeline. I ask that this reality be addressed openly and transparently.

My goal, similar to yours, is to ensure that we encourage smart energy policies that protect our environment, preserve our way of life, and lower electricity prices. I am acutely aware of the regional need for electricity and the plethora of energy projects that are being proposed to meet that need. Given the regional nature of our electric market and the complicated changes that are underway across the region, both with new projects being proposed and with older power sources leaving the grid, I believe that FERC can only properly perform its duties by assessing these projects as a whole, instead of in silos. All options and alternatives must be considered as we look at these proposals and fit them to the needs of our region. Whereas New England is on a regional grid, it stands to reason that we should site projects that impact the grid as a region.

Given the magnitude of this project and all the projects being proposed in the northeast, I can appreciate the task that your agency has ahead of it. Please know that the record number of comments that this project is receiving is a direct reflection of the time, energy, and thoughtfulness that my constituents have put into this process. I am certain that you will take the same time, energy, and thoughtfulness as you review and incorporate these concerns into your work moving forward. It is imperative that this process be as respectful to the public as possible, and I will continue efforts to ensure that happens.

I look forward to your responses and continuing this dialogue as I seek to advocate on behalf of my constituents. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ann McLane Kuster

Member of Congress

<http://kuster.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/kuster-sends-letter-to-ferc-calling-for-review-of-all-energy-projects-in>