

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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IN RE: REGIONAL ENERGY ACCESS EXPANSION PIPELINE

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BEFORE: COLLEEN CONNOLLY, Chair
Glenda Davidson, Member
Kevin White, Member
Katie Seymore, Member
Rebecca Albert, Member
Darek Jagiela, Member

HEARING: Wednesday, October 5, 2022
7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Web Ex

Reporter: Kathryn Witherow

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25Also Present:

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Fred Gaffney	Marion 'Bubba' Davis
Kevin Sunday	Jason Hayes
Stephanie Wissman	Christine Digiulio
Allison McLeod	Barbara Brandom
Keith Safford	Thermon Spence
Matt Zupon	Mark Orosz
Lamora Dorrell	Edward Stelacio
John Healy	Christine Shelly
Dan Felix	
Robin Mann	
Charles Thomas	
Frank Sworden	
John Roth	
Jason Eby	
James Cupit	
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NONE OFFERED

P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIR: Okay, everyone. It is 7:00 p.m. and we are going to begin this virtual public hearing.

Good evening. My name is Colleen Connolly. I am the Community Relations Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Northeast Regional Office in Wilkes-Barre and the moderator for tonight's virtual public hearing.

This hearing is regarding the Regional Energy Access Expansion Pipeline Project. I want to thank everyone for turning out tonight online. Part of the process of our work at DEP is hearing from the public and understanding their concerns.

Tonight we are here to take testimony regarding three permit applications by Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company, LLC, Transco, permit applications for the proposed 22-mile Regional Energy Access Expansion Pipeline Project, which will extend through seven counties in northeast and southeast Pennsylvania.

PA DEP's Regional Permit Coordination Office, or RPCO, is currently reviewing three permit

1 applications by Transco for the pipeline project.
2 The first one is a Chapter 102 Erosion Control
3 Permit Application for each earth disturbance
4 activities located in Monroe, Luzerne, Northampton,
5 Bucks and Chester Counties. And two Chapter 105 Dam
6 Safety and Waterway Management Permit Applications
7 for water obstructions and encroachments located in
8 Luzerne County and Monroe County. The project does
9 extend through Delaware and York Counties but that
10 project - that part of the project does not require
11 earth disturbance in those counties.

12 We will not be answering any questions
13 at this virtual public hearing tonight. We are here
14 to take testimony only regarding the three permit
15 applications. Before the permits can be issued the
16 public has an opportunity to comment. That's what
17 this virtual public hearing is about. The
18 Department received request for a public hearing
19 which will allow the public to provide oral
20 testimony and comments on the permit applications in
21 addition to being able to provide written comments
22 during the comment period.

23 We have several DEP staffers attending
24 and listening in on the virtual public hearing
25 tonight, is Kevin White the project coordinator from

1 DEP's RPCO officer and Rebecca Allen who is also the
2 permit reviewer in DEP's RPCO office.

3 We have a few ground rules to go over.
4 As I stated the hearing is for testimony only. We
5 will not be answering any questions. There will be
6 no presentations, although you can submit material
7 for the record as part of written comments. Each
8 person will be allotted three minutes to offer
9 testimony. The facilitator, myself, will keep the
10 time and you'll get given a 30-second cue to wrap
11 up. Meeting facilitator will first call on people
12 to speak who have signed in previously in the order
13 they were received. At this time it's open for the
14 public. People can offer testimony who have not
15 previously testified who are logged on.

16 If you do offer testimony, when your
17 name is called, the facilitator Darek will open your
18 microphone. You can say and spell your name and
19 give testimony. Please speak loudly and clearly
20 into the microphone so everyone can hear you.
21 Please don't speak out of turn, although that's not
22 possible if Darek controls your microphone. Please
23 limit your testimony to the three permit
24 applications that we are having the hearing about
25 tonight. You'll be given one opportunity to offer

1 testimony and you can't donate or offer your time to
2 another speaker. Once you have finished - finished
3 your comments or testimony your microphone will be
4 muted once again.

5 With that said let's begin the
6 hearing. I believe Darek has the names of the
7 speakers. I do actually. Okay.

8 Darek, if you're ready? Darek is out
9 host tonight, if you will, and we - the logistics of
10 this hearing. Darek, our first speaker is Jessica
11 O'Neil.

12 Jessica?

13 MS. O'NEIL: Yes, I'm -.

14 CHAIR: Hi, Jessica.

15 MS. O'NEIL: Hi.

16 CHAIR: The stenographer's ready. When
17 you're ready you can offer your testimony.

18 MS. O'NEIL: Thank you very much.

19 I'm Jessica O'Neil. I'm a senior
20 attorney with Citizens For Pennsylvania's Future.

21 Pennsylvania - excuse me, Penn Future
22 is a statewide environmental advocacy organization
23 with an office in Monroe County and members in
24 Monroe, Luzerne and counties across the state. We
25 work to protect the streams and creeks of the Pocono

1 Mountain region from negative impacts from frack gas
2 industrial development.

3 On behalf of Penn Future I urge the
4 DEP to deny Transco's application to cut through the
5 Poconos again to build additional pipeline lengths.
6 First, the pending application inappropriately
7 minimized the cuts that they are proposing to make
8 here in Monroe and Luzerne Counties, across some of
9 our state's most ecologically significant waterways.

10 Transco defines many actions that will
11 have outside impacts as temporary. A temporary but
12 significant sedimentation and habitat disruption to
13 a stream can impact the macroinvertebrates and
14 therefore the trout who rely on those
15 macroinvertebrates for multiple seasons, not just
16 the one season defined here. These were talking
17 about such sensitive organisms.

18 This is why exceptional value and high
19 quality streams need to have extra protections to
20 protect their water quality. This is especially
21 true when temporary impacts from construction are
22 repeated over time, such as when new pipeline loops
23 are added in similar locations to old ones, which is
24 what we see with the applications here. Such
25 impacts tend to become more like permanent impacts

1 but can fall through the cracks when it comes to
2 oversight. These multiple small cuts to special
3 protection waters can add up to impacts that
4 substantially degrade these valuable resources.

5 Moreover, there will be admitted impacts
6 from their 25-foot wide permanent right-of-way,
7 which is 25 feet of permanently disturbed land on
8 top of their existing right-of-way that already cuts
9 across the land.

10 Next, with regard to wildlife, Transco's
11 Chapter 105 applications assert that it will protect
12 bat species in the project area through seasonal
13 restrictions on tree felling, but then they define
14 ground disturbance which is permitted during those
15 seasonal restrictions to include tree felling. As a
16 result, if the application is granted as it was
17 written Transco would be allowed to cut down
18 adjacent forests at any time of year in a mostly
19 forested landscape that has bat species present.
20 This is the opposite of protected and should be
21 revised.

22 Additionally, Penn Future continues to
23 call attention to the abhorrent record of pipeline
24 construction in the Commonwealth. This industry has
25 betrayed the public trust with problem after problem

1 in how it constructs and operates its web of frack
2 gas transport. We can look to the statewide grand
3 jury's report on the fracking industry as well as
4 the Attorney General's action filed against Sunoco
5 in connection with Mariner East pipeline as problems
6 that are endemic to the industry as a whole and not
7 limited to particular actors.

8 Moreover, the Department has not
9 demonstrated that it can protect our environment
10 from this industry either through punitive measures
11 like fines or through permitting processes like this
12 one that do not provide sufficient protective
13 safeguards or accountability mechanisms.

14 Finally, the climate implications of
15 the additional gas that this pipeline will transport
16 cannot and should not be ignored. The burning of
17 this additional gas will put additional greenhouse
18 gases into our atmosphere continuing to add onto the
19 climate emergency. It is not okay to turn a blind
20 eye to the climate consequences of building
21 additional fossil fuel infrastructure.

22 Thank you very much for the
23 opportunity to speak. I encourage you to deny these
24 applications. Thank you.

25 CHAIR: Okay, Jessica. Thank you very

1 much. I did just get a note from one of our DEP
2 staffers that they - they can't hear anything. I'm
3 hearing the speaker no problem.

4 Kathryn, our stenographer, can you
5 hear. Or - yeah, Kathryn.

6 COURT REPORTER: Yes. I'm able to
7 hear.

8 CHAIR: Okay. Again, I remind people,
9 especially our panelists, to make sure - make sure
10 which audio you'd like to use to hear speakers. The
11 stenographer can and if I can hear I'm going to move
12 on now.

13 Our second speaker is Fred Gaffney.
14 Fred, if you're ready.

15 MR. GAFFNEY: Good evening. Can you
16 hear me?

17 CHAIR: Hi, Fred. Yep, I can hear
18 you. And the stenographer's ready. Go ahead.

19 Just say and spell your -.

20 MR. GAFFNEY: My name -.

21 CHAIR: Fred, just say and spell your
22 name. Thank you.

23 MR. GAFFNEY: My name is Fred Gaffney,
24 F-R-E-D G-A-F-F-N-E-Y, and I am the president of the
25 Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce based in

1 Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania.

2 Representing over 400 organizations
3 throughout Columbia and Montour Counties and beyond
4 in Pennsylvania Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce
5 works to strengthen the region's economy by
6 supporting existing employers as well as encouraging
7 new business development.

8 We researched the Regional Energy
9 Access Project which would expand the company's
10 existing pipeline infrastructure to provide greater
11 access to natural gas in the northeast region. Now
12 more than ever maximizing our vast energy resources
13 in the United States is critical to the
14 stabilization and growth of our nation's economy.

15 Construction alone will generate an
16 economic benefit in the region. Williams projects
17 that the project will generate \$295 million in labor
18 compensation, \$357 million in GDP contribution.
19 Approximately 6,396 local union jobs will be
20 supported. Regional Energy Access will inject an
21 expected \$17 million state tax revenue and over \$6.6
22 million in local tax revenue. Businesses and other
23 potential users in the region will benefit from
24 improved access to natural gas well into the future.

25 In support of the expansion of

1 Pennsylvania's natural gas pipeline infrastructure
2 the chamber's board of directors has adopted the
3 following resolution. Whereas Pennsylvania's
4 natural gas industry is a major economic driver in
5 the Commonwealth through job creation directly
6 related to gas extraction and transportation, other
7 utility costs and revenues and whereas
8 Pennsylvania's natural gas reserves are projected to
9 be able to serve current and future demands in the
10 Commonwealth with significant surplus for export for
11 decades.

12 And whereas the current
13 infrastructure within Pennsylvania is insufficient
14 for the safe and economical transportation and
15 distribution of Pennsylvania's natural gas supply to
16 all markets, including residences and business
17 within the Commonwealth and whereas state and
18 federal regulatory agencies proclaim modern
19 pipelines to be the safest method of transporting
20 natural gas, now therefore, be it resolved that the
21 board of directors of the Columbia Montour Chamber
22 of Commerce supports the expansion of Pennsylvania's
23 natural gas transportation and distribution pipeline
24 infrastructure through a responsible collaboration
25 with the property owners for the benefit of the

1 citizenry and the economy of the Commonwealth.

2 Additionally, Williams has
3 demonstrated that they can undertake projects safely
4 with concern for property owners, residences and
5 communities during previous projects in our region
6 including the Atlantic Sunrise Project, company-held
7 public outreach sessions and supported dozens of
8 community organizations and conversation projects in
9 our area. Their representatives have been proactive
10 in communicating and responsive to inquiries. We
11 are confident in their ability to responsibly
12 undertake the Regional Energy Access Project.

13 Thank you for the opportunity to
14 provide comments in this matter.

15 CHAIR: Okay, Fred. Thank you very
16 much.

17 Our next speaker is Kevin Sunday.
18 Kevin, if you can hear me you have the microphone.

19 MR. SUNDAY: Good evening, everyone.
20 Can you hear me?

21 CHAIR: Yeah, you're good, Kevin.

22 MR. SUNDAY: All right. Thank you.

23 My name's Kevin Sunday, K-E-V-I-N S-U-
24 N-D-A-Y, director of Government Affairs with the
25 Pennsylvania of Chamber. We're the largest broad-

1 based business advocacy organization in the
2 Commonwealth representing more than 9,000 member
3 companies of all sizes and industrial sectors. I
4 want to thank DEP staff and leadership for holding
5 this hearing and considering the views of
6 stakeholders and the public, including our
7 organization.

8 PA Chamber is proud to support the
9 project, which will be a nearly \$800 million
10 investment into the region and supporting thousands
11 of jobs, many of them in the skill trades, and
12 support millions in additional state and local tax
13 revenue and support important environmental,
14 economic and energy goals. And we encourage DEP to
15 approve these permit applications under Chapters 102
16 and 105.

17 This project will help ease supply
18 constraints affecting customers in Pennsylvania, New
19 Jersey and Maryland, providing gas supply to serve
20 about - about three million homes. It will also
21 support additional use to domestic energy in a
22 manner that further lowers emissions in the region.
23 The progress that we've made, in large part thanks
24 to natural gas and private sector deployments, of
25 billions in capital for low and zero carbon

1 technologies, which has resulted in significant
2 progress in NAAQS emissions, including NOx and VOCs.

3 And the DEP is aware the I-95 corridor
4 remains a challenge for ambient concentrations of
5 NOx. And further improvements through the use of
6 cleaner burning fuels like gas in homes, businesses
7 and power generation in the Mid-Atlantic will
8 further improve air quality in this region. An
9 increased energy infrastructure done in the manner
10 such as proposed by Transco, including using
11 renewable and distributed energy technologies to
12 power that infrastructure will help ensure fuel
13 security during the winter months.

14 And as FERC approved in its
15 environmental impact statement for the project, this
16 project will be constructed in the manner with
17 environmental groundwater and air quality impacts
18 that are left insignificant. And we understand this
19 project and the operation of its facilities does not
20 create disproportionately high and adverse impacts
21 including socio and economic impacts on
22 environmental justice communities.

23 And it's also our understanding this
24 project's been designed in a manner to in the future
25 adapt to renewables and deployment of green hydrogen

1 and renewable and natural gas lending. It's our
2 understanding as well this project's being proposed
3 in a way that maximizes use of existing right-of-
4 ways that meets or exceeds all relevant regulatory
5 criteria under DEP's stringent Chapter 102 and 105
6 regulations. More broadly, it will support
7 important economic environmental and energy security
8 goals.

9 So as we will do in written comments
10 submitted to the docket to supplement these remarks,
11 we encourage DEP to grant these permits and again
12 thank Staff for their work in holding this hearing.
13 Thank you.

14 CHAIR: Okay, Kevin. Thank you very
15 much for your testimony.

16 Next person to speak on the list is
17 Stephanie Wissman. Stephanie, can you hear me?

18 MS. WISSMAN: Yes, I can. Can you
19 hear me?

20 CHAIR: Yes, we can. Go ahead.

21 MS. WISSMAN: Very good. Good
22 evening. My name is Stephanie Wissman and I'm the
23 executive director of API Pennsylvania.

24 API Pennsylvania is a division of the
25 American Petroleum Institute, which represents all

1 segments of America's natural gas and oil industry.
2 Our approximately 600 members produce, process and
3 distribute most of the nation's energy. The
4 industry also supports more than ten million US jobs
5 and is backed by a growing grassroots movement of
6 millions of Americans.

7 I am here tonight to testify to the
8 importance of pipeline infrastructure construction
9 and expansion in Pennsylvania, the need to continue
10 to develop and utilize American-produced energy
11 safely and to offer our support for the issuance of
12 the Chapter 102 and 105 permit applications for the
13 Transco Regional Energy Access Expansion Project.

14 Regulatory certainty is needed when
15 applicants meet the regulatory criteria for permit
16 issuance. Pipelines are the safe connection between
17 consumers and America's abundant reliable cleaner
18 energy. Additional infrastructure is needed so that
19 no matter where people live they can be better
20 served, expanding the benefit of domestic energy
21 abundance.

22 At API we establish and maintain over
23 700 industry standards and recommended practices and
24 disseminate best practices across the industry. For
25 more than 100 years we have taken the natural gas

1 and oil industries collective wisdom on everything
2 from drill bits to environmental protection to
3 embrace proven sound engineering and operating
4 practices and safe interchangeable equipment and
5 materials. We believe safety and the protection of
6 our communities and the environment go hand-in-hand
7 with industry operations.

8 Recognizing that we as an industry
9 must continue to be committed to the good
10 stewardship of our environment, we have set our goal
11 at zero incidents. State and federal regulators who
12 have incorporated our standards into their
13 regulatory structures have recognized our balanced
14 approach. We see the same balanced approach
15 reflected in the Regional Energy Access Expansion
16 Project. Williams is committed to maintaining the
17 highest standards of safety. Pipelines are the
18 safest, most reliable and most efficient manner of
19 transporting energy products. They transport the
20 energy that people depend on every day to heat
21 homes, generate electricity, cook food and much
22 more. Pipelines are a vital and efficient part of
23 the United State energy infrastructure.

24 The Williams Regional Energy Access
25 Project has been designed to minimize environmental

1 impacts by maximizing the use of existing Transco
2 infrastructure and rights-of-way. Williams is
3 putting in place mitigation efforts to offset any
4 long-term or permanent impacts to aquatic resources
5 such wetlands or bodies of water so that the project
6 should not result in a net loss of natural
7 resources, functions and values.

8 In addition to providing a central
9 energy infrastructure to the region the Regional
10 Energy Access Project will provide valuable economic
11 stimulus generating high quality employment with
12 substantial direct, indirect and induced economic
13 activity. A strong economy, affordable and reliable
14 energy, safe communities and environmental
15 stewardship are not values that are mutually
16 exclusive of each other. For these reasons API
17 supports this project's approval. Thank you.

18 CHAIR: I'm sorry. I apologize. I -
19 I muted myself. I understand from our host that the
20 next speakers Rich and Gregory Hunt - Hutt are -
21 Rich Nataleni and Gregory and Donna Hutt are not on
22 right now.

23 Our next speaker is Allison McLeod.
24 Allison, if you're on you can offer with your
25 testimony.

1 MS. MCLEOD: Thank you very much. My
2 name is Allison McLeod, A-L-L-I-S-O-N M-C-L-E-O-D.
3 Good evening. I'm a public policy director for the
4 New Jersey League of Conservation Voters, and I
5 thank PA DEP for the opportunity to testify.

6 We stand in opposition to this
7 project, and we ask you to deny the Chapter 102 and
8 105 permits. We have serious concerns about the
9 safety, climate impacts and market need for this
10 project. The proposed project does not only impact
11 Pennsylvania, it is diametrically opposed to New
12 Jersey's stated goals of reducing greenhouse gas
13 emissions 50 percent by 2030. And in fact, this
14 project would add over 16.62 million metric tons of
15 CO2 equivalent per year to our total inventory in
16 New Jersey, an approximate 16 to 18 percent increase
17 from just this project.

18 Well, through routine venting and
19 fugitive leaks compressor stations release methane,
20 carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, volatile organic
21 compounds, sulfur dioxide and fine particulate
22 matter; all of which are harmful pollutants with
23 direct public health impacts including asthma.

24 In addition to climate and
25 environmental impacts we have serious safety

1 concerns for the people and resources along the
2 proposed route. In 2013 at the same New Jersey
3 Transco compressor station proposed for expansion in
4 this project a flash fire injured 13 people, sending
5 two workers to the hospital. The New Jersey
6 communities along the route should not have to bear
7 the cost for emergency response and preparedness.
8 And the State of New Jersey itself has concerns
9 about the market need for this project.

10 The NJ Board of Public Utilities
11 recently commissioned a study which concluded the
12 state already has enough gas supply to meet demand
13 through 2030 even during peak demands and extremely
14 cold weather events. New Jersey ratepayers should
15 not shoulder the cost for expanding gas
16 infrastructure when our own studies demonstrate that
17 more than enough capacity exists today and in the
18 future. Both NJPU and the - a New Jersey ratepayer
19 advocate filed a Motion to Intervene on this project
20 lodging those concerns.

21 Regarding the permits for this hearing
22 this evening we attest that Transco needs to better
23 account for sensitive wildlife along the
24 Pennsylvania route, including local bat populations
25 and wood turtles, address the lack of restoration

1 for proposed wetland impact and address the concern
2 of land size during construction. Chapter 102 and
3 105, which we're talking about tonight, are
4 expressly designed to protect our precious water
5 resources. This project would cross exceptional
6 value wetlands, water bodies that support whole
7 water fisheries, high quality and exceptional value
8 streams and trout reproduction waters. Clearing
9 forests along these waterways will further impact
10 water quality and local habitat and any leaks or
11 accidents would run the risk of catastrophically and
12 permanently impacting these precious resources.

13 Climate change and its impacts don't
14 respect state borders and as a New Jerseyan I urge
15 you to say no to these permits. Thank you.

16 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
17 Allison.

18 Going to move onto number nine, Keith
19 Safford. Keith, if they're there can you hear us?

20 MR. SAFFORD: Can you hear me now?

21 CHAIR: I can. Go ahead, Keith.

22 MR. SAFFORD: Awesome. My name is
23 Keith Safford and I live in Stewartstown, PA. I'm
24 not an executive director or bigwig anywhere. I'm
25 just an average citizen who pays taxes and is paying

1 out the wazoo for fuel. First, thank you for
2 allowing us to express our concern for the expansion
3 of this gas pipeline.

4 Pennsylvania's rich in natural
5 resources whereas one of those natural resources is
6 natural gas. I've heard that Pennsylvania could by
7 itself supply of the United States' requirements for
8 natural gas. That in and of itself is a no-brainer
9 to fully utilize and further enhance the economic
10 state of Pennsylvania and also aid in making the
11 United State energy dependent. Building the
12 pipeline would also create numerous jobs which are
13 also a great benefit to the people residing in
14 Pennsylvania, and every effort should be made to
15 ensure those jobs go to Pennsylvania residents.

16 I do think that careful thought should
17 be put into the path of the pipeline so as not to
18 encroach on natural landscapes, parks, forests and
19 being careful not disrupt too many homeowners by
20 eminent domain. However, in capital letters, I'm
21 confident that this pipeline can be constructed with
22 minimal impact on the above mentioned locations and
23 that its benefits far outweigh its bad points.

24 We do not want to end up like Europe
25 dependent on energy from a dictatorial nation like

1 Russia who at the flip of a switch can cut them off
2 and freeze them out in the winter and have control
3 over those sovereign nations. It is always in the
4 best interest of each nation to be independent on as
5 much possible. The idea of a global economy has
6 failed the citizens of the United States and have
7 put us the beck and call of those who do not have
8 our best interest at heart. I feel the majority of
9 Pennsylvania citizens support the concept of PA
10 being a supplier of natural gas for the United
11 States and for planet Earth as a whole.

12 In summary, as a hunter, fisherman and
13 hiker who appreciate and loves the environment I
14 urge PA Department of Environmental Protection to go
15 ahead with the extension of the pipeline. And thank
16 you for letting me express my opinion.

17 CHAIR: All right. Thank you very
18 much, Mr. Safford.

19 Our next speaker is Carol Staten.
20 Carol, if you're on can you hear me? Carol, maybe
21 you're not unmuted. Darek, do we have Carol?

22 MR. JAGIELA: We do. She's unmuted
23 but we're not hearing anything. We need to move on
24 and I'll send her message.

25 CHAIR: Okay. No problem. That's

1 fine. All right. We'll get back to Carol.

2 Speaker number 11 is Matt Zupon.

3 Matt, if you can hear me?

4 MR. ZUPON: Can you hear me?

5 CHAIR: Yes, we can, Matt. You're
6 good to go.

7 MR. ZUPON: Okay. Awesome. Thank you
8 so much. So yes, thank you for this public comment
9 session. My name's Matt Zupon. I am a concerned
10 citizen not part of any group here today. And I -
11 I'm here today to express my firmest support for the
12 Transco pipeline's expansion.

13 With the highest gas tax in the
14 country we all feel the pain at the pumps the most
15 in the country. Pennsylvanians deserve cheap,
16 effective energy to foster a more affordable and
17 inclusive Commonwealth.

18 This expansion will run merely 30 - 35
19 miles across our eastern provide and will provide
20 energy to three million people in multiple states.
21 The Coal Belt will benefit the most from this in
22 terms of both savings and jobs. As our world
23 transitions away from coal it would create 6,500
24 jobs in depressed areas and generate \$375 million in
25 GDP without costing the taxpayer a penny. Growing

1 counties like York and Cumberland, which happens to
2 the fastest growing in Pennsylvania, would directly
3 benefit from this as well. A growing population
4 requires more energy and with the war in Ukraine
5 continuing and winter fast approaching
6 Pennsylvanians need this cheap, reliable source.

7 This project will also improve
8 multiple existing facilities. This will overall
9 come at a price tag of \$800 million and will
10 generate a hefty sum and tax revenue for both state
11 and local offices, and this will help us with our
12 state especially in the decline after the pandemic.

13 Just today OPEC announced its capping
14 of oil production by millions of barrels. This will
15 provide a major problem for the people of
16 Pennsylvania and our neighboring states without
17 this. The pipeline costs Pennsylvania zero dollars.
18 The project will generate thousands of jobs. The
19 GDP will explode with growth in areas formerly
20 designed for coal production. This will be a huge
21 net benefit for all of Pennsylvania in especially
22 the depressed Coal Belt.

23 I urge the Pennsylvania Department of
24 Environmental Protection to approve expansion of the
25 Transco pipeline. Thank you.

1 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Matt.

2 Okay. We'll move on now to the second
3 row. Speaker number 12, Theresa Ching, if you're -
4 if you can hear me Theresa you're up.

5 MR. JAGIELA: Colleen, she was one
6 earlier, but I do not see her right now.

7 CHAIR: Okay. Again, we can circle
8 back to her. All right.

9 I'm going to call on Lamora Dorrell. I
10 did get an e-mail from her. Lamora, did - were you
11 able to log on?

12 MS. DORRELL: Yes, I was.

13 CHAIR: All right. You're up.

14 MS. DORRELL: Okay. Thank you for
15 allowing me to speak at this hearing. My name is
16 Lamora Dorrell. I'm a senior citizen. Lamora's L-
17 A-M-O-R-A. Dorrell is D-O-R-R-E-L-L.

18 I was switched from oil to electric in
19 my apartment. My bill went up in price. On my
20 fixed income I was unable to keep up with my bills.
21 Unfortunately I was unable to pay the electric bill
22 for three months and my bill was over \$2,500. So
23 without warning my electric was turned off.

24 My Social Security just pays my rent
25 with a little left, so I have to work as a companion

1 for people older than I am. It is very rewarding
2 and I able to help people. Everyone I've cared for
3 I've become like a family member. I help with
4 bathing, doing wash and cooking and other personal
5 care items. I take them to their - their
6 appointments like doctors, hairdressers, etcetera.
7 I do go grocery shopping. I try to keep them
8 occupied by doing things they like; saying prayers,
9 talking, watching TV, etcetera.

10 When my electric was turned off I
11 stayed in my apartment for a week. Food went bad.
12 It started to smell. Trying to clean the
13 refrigerator was hard to do with my COPD. I was
14 having trouble breathing. I had to lay down with a
15 fan blowing on me. I have an electric chair and it
16 was the back position, so I had to climb in and out
17 and it was - and at 74 it wasn't easy. I've used
18 flashlights and a battery operated fan. It was very
19 stressful. No phone, no lights, no TV, no internet,
20 just darkness.

21 The rising cost is a large burden to
22 my way of life. My friend, which has been for 71
23 years, could not reach me and thought I might be
24 dead. She called my godson and had - and they came
25 over to check. I went home with them and was there

1 until the electric was turned on. I am so lucky to
2 have these people in my life. I don't know what I
3 would have done if I hadn't had them.

4 That is why I am asking DEP to approve
5 all the permits in question. Thank you again for
6 this opportunity.

7 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much.
8 Thank you very much, Lamora.

9 Jeff Pembroke is offline. We're going
10 to skip over for now to John Healy. John, can you
11 hear me?

12 MR. HEALY: Yeah. Can you hear me?

13 CHAIR: Yes, we can. You're up, sir.

14 MR. HEALY: Hi. I'm John Healy. My
15 name's spelled J-O-H-H H-E-A-L-Y. I'm with
16 Pipeliners Union Local 798. We're out of Tulsa,
17 Oklahoma.

18 We've been through this Luzerne County
19 a few times and I got a couple things I'd like to
20 say, and I've been involved in a few of these. But
21 it seems to me that it's been said better now and
22 already than it has in most of the meetings.
23 There's some actually serious intelligent
24 conversation going on here.

25 This Fred Gaffney's right on point.

1 Kevin Sunday a lot of great points. And this
2 Stephanie Wissman out of the API that's - that's
3 great to hear from her. If you're still out there
4 Stephanie, thanks for info and API 1104 is our code
5 book. This Keith Safford, the nonexecutive, boy I'm
6 sure you ain't listening to him. You know, he spoke
7 and touched on a little bit about what's going on go
8 on in Europe and it's going to get a lot worse here
9 this winter. And I would assume that's going to be
10 a wakeup call from some of these people in this
11 country.

12 It shows the importance of the energy
13 infrastructure that we need and the - the truth of
14 the wind and solar that - that actually burns most
15 fossil fuels than we're getting out of it. And
16 then, you know, if we're supposed to just heat these
17 homes with - with wood, how, we have no forests left
18 and there'd be twice as much carbon released into
19 the atmosphere. This natural gas is - we're needed
20 it. And I'm happy to hear a lot of the conversation
21 that's going on here today.

22 And thanks for having me and we'll be
23 available to - to build and construct. And I
24 strongly the urge the approval of this project and
25 so do a lot of others in my field. Thanks for

1 letting me speak and I'll yield.

2 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
3 John Healy.

4 Our next speaker is Dan Felix. Dan,
5 if you're on can you hear me, Dan?

6 MR. FELIX: I can hear you. Can you
7 hear me?

8 CHAIR: Yes, we can. Okay. Dan,
9 you're on.

10 MR. FELIX: Okay. My name is Dr. Dan
11 Felix. I am a retired educator who has lived his
12 entire life in Pennsylvania. Thank you for allowing
13 me to speak here today concerning the Transco
14 transmission pipeline permits upgrading.

15 My reason for speaking today is my
16 concern about expanding the pipeline to help lower
17 the price of natural gas and to help people to
18 survive. Not allowing the pipeline to be upgraded
19 to allow a greater flow of natural gas will make it
20 much more difficult for many people to gain access
21 to natural gas. The prices of energy have risen
22 greatly over the past few years. As winter
23 approaches the need for natural gas and other
24 heating oil products will increase and people on a
25 fixed income will have decided if they want to eat

1 or be warm. The must keep some heat in their homes
2 to keep pipes from freezing which means they must
3 spend some money on heating and thus less on food.

4 We are not ready to shift to renewable
5 energy sources that quickly. The use of natural gas
6 and other carbon energy sources is needed for
7 several years to allow for a gradual shift to
8 renewable. It is wrong to make this sudden shift of
9 shutting off of all carbon-based fuels with nothing
10 in place to replace those fuels. After 100 years we
11 still have people using horse and buggies. The
12 change to automobile didn't change in one year. The
13 government didn't tell people that they must change
14 to automobiles. Why must the government be making
15 people stop cold turkey off of their use of carbon-
16 based fuels?

17 Our children are our future. How will
18 they feel about whether a pipeline is approved or
19 not? They won't know and probably won't care. All
20 they know is their parents won't have any extra
21 money for things they want to buy, or it may be
22 worse. They may be cold and/or hungry. This needs
23 to be something they, the children, see as a good -
24 that's good for them. Being cold and hungry won't
25 be seen as good for them if - if that's what

1 happens.

2 I personally care about helping
3 others, especially the children. My children, my
4 grandchildren, all children will be impacted by
5 higher energy costs. Until the renewable sources
6 are capable of providing the needs of a majority of
7 the people it will harm people than it will help. I
8 want my grandchildren to have a better life than me
9 and not having access to lower cost energy hurts
10 their lives enormously.

11 Again, thank you for allowing me to
12 share my thoughts and I pray that you will make a
13 decision in the near future to grant these permits
14 allowing the upgrade to these pipelines. Thank you.

15 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr.
16 Felix.

17 Okay. We're going to move onto
18 speaker 17, Robin Mann. Robin, if you're on you can
19 speak.

20 MS. MANN: I'm on. Can you hear me?

21 CHAIR: Yes, I can. Just speak up a
22 little bit so the stenographer can hear you, Robin.

23 MS. MANN: Okay. Thank you for
24 holding this hearing. My name is Robin Mann, R-O-B-
25 I-N M-A-N-N.

1 It's my grandchildren who inspire me
2 to participate in a hearing like this. I've been
3 active volunteer with the Sierra Club and with my
4 local watershed association for decades working on
5 wetlands and water quality protection, and I'm
6 active in our watershed association's efforts to
7 plan for climate resilience in light of Climate
8 Imperative.

9 I urge the Department to deny the
10 permits for Transco's Regional Energy Access
11 Expansion Project. First, it is not my
12 understanding that this proposed pipeline would be
13 completed and bring frack gas online in upcoming
14 months. Over recent decades the rich abundance of
15 exceptional value wetlands and high quality streams
16 in the Pocono region, some of the most pristine in
17 the Commonwealth, have been compromised, much
18 because of the failure to adequately require the
19 state protections requiring avoidance of unnecessary
20 fills and destruction. The resulting effects
21 include the undermining of water quality, the lost
22 of flood water absorption and retention and the
23 elimination of habitat for sensitive species.

24 Now that climate change is magnifying
25 the stresses on dependent species imposing even more

1 extreme fluctuations in precipitation and higher
2 temperatures it is imperative to safeguard remaining
3 wetlands and headwater streams wherever as possible
4 as here.

5 The project is unnecessary as New
6 Jersey has indicated, and in the not too distant
7 future would be obsolete. If built, this unneeded
8 pipeline would impact 114 exceptional value
9 wetlands, 37 high quality streams and impact around
10 297 acres of forested lands. The project itself
11 would also be fueling the climate crisis at time
12 when we should be doing everything, everything I
13 underscore, we can do to reduce emissions and
14 protect public health. The industry profits and
15 economic benefits from this project would be short-
16 term. The damage would be permanent.

17 Again, I urge the Department to deny
18 the permits.

19 CHAIR: Thank you, Robin.

20 Okay. We'll move on now to our next
21 speaker, Charles Thomas. Charles, if you're on can
22 you hear me?

23 MR. THOMAS: Yep.

24 CHAIR: All right. Charles, you're
25 up.

1 MR. THOMAS: Good evening. My name is
2 Charles Thomas representing Local Union 798. First
3 off, I'd like to thank the Pennsylvania Department
4 of Environmental Protection for allowing me to speak
5 on behalf of our members.

6 Pipeliners Local Union 798 has over
7 6,000 members including over 900 in the northeast
8 and 320 in Pennsylvania alone. I'm advocating for
9 the Regional Energy Access Project on behalf of our
10 membership.

11 The REA is a much needed project to
12 address projected future supply deficits for the
13 area. It will lower energy costs for residents and
14 increase grid reliability. The REA will provide
15 enough natural gas to the region to power over three
16 million homes. Natural gas provides a reliable
17 pathway to lower emissions without sacrificing grid
18 reliability. The REA will maximize existing
19 infrastructure, and in doing so will minimize
20 environmental impact. Regional natural gas demand
21 continue to rise as businesses and power plants
22 convert to cleaner burning gas to help reduced their
23 carbon footprint.

24 We must take advantage of our
25 abundance of natural gas to lower emissions and

1 carve our pathway to energy independence. Current
2 affairs internationally have shown that energy can
3 essentially be weaponized and energy independence is
4 vital not only to maintain our quality of life but
5 also a matter of national security.

6 William is committed to utilizing a
7 union workforce of over 6,000 workers during
8 construction. It's projected to produce over \$6
9 million in local tax revenue and \$17 million in
10 state tax revenue. The local economies will also
11 largely benefit as the workers who travel will need
12 lodging, food and goods for the project's duration.
13 Current estimates project that regionally the GDP
14 contribution to the region could exceed over \$350
15 million. Taking advantage of the available union
16 workforce will allow the workers to add to their
17 healthcare as well as their pensions, further
18 alleviating taxpayer burdens both short and long-
19 term. 6,000 workers equals 6,000 families having
20 their insurance needs covered.

21 In closing, I ask that the
22 Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
23 approve relevant permits for the REA. This project
24 is vital to secure the energy our region needs.
25 Thank you for your time.

1 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr.
2 Thomas. Moving now.

3 We are going to go to Frank Sworden.
4 Frank, if you can hear us?

5 MR. SWORDEN: Yes, can you hear me?

6 CHAIR: Yes, I can. Go ahead, sir.

7 MR. SWORDEN: My name is Frank, F-R-A-
8 N-K, Sworden, S-W-O-R-D-E-N. I live in Washington
9 County, which is in southwestern Pennsylvania, and
10 I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to speak.

11 I am a retired school teacher and
12 college professor and football coach for 37 years.
13 I own 12 acres, which there is four gas wells under
14 by property. My son is a college graduate, a
15 teaching degree, tried for five years to get a full-
16 time teaching job. He couldn't because of our
17 dwindling population here. And my son now for the
18 past ten years has been a worker in the gas well
19 industry. He never could find that full-time
20 teaching job because as I said earlier the dwindling
21 population in southwestern Pennsylvania. A lost of
22 the steel mills and the other industrial businesses
23 in our area.

24 Having experienced gas well drilling
25 and pipeline construction on my own property and

1 adjoining properties environmental impact is minimal
2 at best. You wouldn't even know that there are
3 wells on my property or a pipeline down the road a
4 ways. I've watched the whole process since I am
5 retired, and I was impressed for the quality of the
6 work that these companies performed. The royalties
7 I receive is nice. Don't get me wrong, it is nice,
8 but an older lady down my street which I help
9 because she couldn't figure out if she owned her gas
10 rights, wasn't getting any royalties, but in the
11 process we found out she did own it. She saved her
12 house, literally, because she was losing their house
13 not having enough money. It was the lease money for
14 the royalties she receives. She now is still living
15 in that home.

16 It seems such a waste of resources not
17 to continue to drill for natural gas and oil when
18 the impact of the energy cost is rising. The
19 drilling company, and you'll love this one, even
20 paved a few miles of our country road free of cost
21 to the township which was tremendous. I don't
22 believe that the drilling will stop so I'd much
23 rather see a pipeline being built for the transfer
24 of this natural gas than truck after truck on the
25 highways transporting them.

1 I realize well natural gas and oil has
2 caused us to look at other countries for energy
3 supplies. I agree that wind and solar are important
4 alternatives. We just don't seem to have the
5 capabilities to supply our energy needs at this
6 time. I believe that a pipeline would be the safest
7 and most economical way to get the natural gas to a
8 population.

9 Please approve the Transco pipeline.
10 And I'd like to add at the end here. Columbia
11 Natural Gas Company has a right-of-way on my
12 property throughout my woods. You wouldn't even
13 know it was there. It literally - it seems
14 nonexistent. And I just believe that it's time for
15 us to move on and put the pipelines to make us
16 energy independent. And I thank you very much for
17 your time.

18 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Sworden.

20 Our next speaker Brian Burden, he's
21 not on right now. We're going to go to John Roth.
22 John Roth is not on the list but did register.
23 Darek, could we have John? Could you put him up?

24 MR. ROTH: Oh, and you can hear me?

25 CHAIR: Yes, I can.

1 Just state and spell your name, sir.

2 MR. ROTH: John Roth, J-O-H-H R-O-T-H.

3 Thank you for this opportunity to speak to - to
4 payer. Now, I'm favor of the expansion of this
5 pipeline.

6 I'm an independent consulting engineer
7 with 31 years as - in private practice. I've worked
8 on 31 international projects in 11 countries, not to
9 mention hundreds of domestic projects. My gas work
10 started up in Prudhoe Bay in the late '70s and I was
11 control engineer.

12 And there was a - you might remember,
13 BP had an oil spill which I wrote to congress
14 implying that the operation was very poorly done.
15 I'm very much a risk-benefit person. I'm a control
16 system engineer that worked on the orphan - Orphan
17 Well Law here in Pennsylvania as well as safety
18 instrumented systems.

19 I worked with Williams here in the
20 State of Pennsylvania on some of the Panda projects
21 and I've been very pleased with all their
22 procedures. They meet or exceed the existing codes
23 of APA - API, the EGA and the FEA codes, which I've
24 actually worked on the FEA 54 and 56 codes.

25 So with that in mind I favor this

1 project. I favor working with - seeing Williams do
2 the project here in this area and stiffening the
3 existing lines and the compressor stations. I'm
4 overseeing line installation routes in - in England
5 with a 26-mile high pressure line that's been in
6 since 2000 and has no problems. But I've also seen
7 other issues in pipelines in other areas of this
8 country and internationally. So I just want to
9 raise my hand in favoring this particular project,
10 to consider the expansion of Regional Energy
11 Project. Thank you very much.

12 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
13 Mr. Roth.

14 We're going to now - Darek, could we
15 have James Cupit? James, if you're on can you hear
16 me?

17 MR. JAGIELA: James is not on the
18 line.

19 CHAIR: Okay. All right.

20 Well, I'll move - we'll move back now.
21 Jason Eby? Jason, if you're on.

22 MR. EBY: Good evening. This is the
23 Jason.

24 CHAIR: Yeah, we can hear you, Jason.
25 Go ahead.

1 MR. EBY: My name is Jason, J-A-S-O-N,
2 Eby, E as in echo, B as in bravo, Y as in yellow.

3 My comments are coming from a farm
4 background. We farmers feed the world. We are the
5 backbone of America. But in my experience when
6 government agencies move in with licensing and
7 regulations everyone is less effective, and we don't
8 do as well for the ultimate goal of caring for the
9 land. In this country we operate under the
10 principle of providing the greatest goods to the
11 greatest number. When we put restrictions on the
12 goods that's coming from the land it makes less
13 people who benefit.

14 While environmentally friendly
15 practices are important my experience in - in
16 private business - my experience is that private
17 business will do better at caring for the
18 environment if we use the market forces instead of
19 regulations.

20 Now, speaking of this section of the
21 pipeline I am urging you to help make this happen.
22 If we don't have this piece of pipeline we'll haul
23 it on trucks. This would increase our carbon
24 footprint. It would also be longer before we can
25 get away from coal. We all agree it's time to use

1 natural gas instead of coal and oil. If we have
2 this piece of pipeline there would be more people
3 who have good paying jobs and supporting the local
4 businesses in the local - in the area. It is
5 projected with all the taxes coming in from people
6 working there is potential for \$17 million in
7 revenue coming to the state and \$6 million in
8 revenue coming to the local government, not counting
9 the almost \$400 million stimulating the local
10 economy.

11 While it does disturb the ground when
12 we put it in, a pipeline is built under the harsh
13 regulations and the strictest state - the standards.
14 It will give us years of service and we won't know
15 it's there. Plus it'll give more capacity than
16 hauling it with trucks. The private sector will do
17 it better and faster than government can.

18 Again, I urge the PA DEP to approve
19 this project. We need the growth in the area and
20 private business will make it happen cleaner and
21 faster than government can. Thank you for your
22 time.

23 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr. Eby.

24 We're going to circle back now to
25 number 21, James Cupit. James, if you're on we can

1 hear you.

2 MR. CUPIT: Can you hear me?

3 CHAIR: We certainly can, sir. Go
4 ahead.

5 MR. CUPIT: I'm going to make this
6 quick because I am currently suffering from COVID
7 but I thought this was way too important to miss.

8 And my name is James Cupit, C-U-P-I-T,
9 and I am from northwestern Pennsylvania. And in
10 northwestern Pennsylvania I serve on a school board.
11 And one of my main talking points is advocating for
12 our students getting trade jobs and trade tools they
13 learn to work on things such as pipelines. And I
14 understand if we approve all the permits and it goes
15 forth there would be an extra 6,500 jobs in
16 northeastern Pennsylvania; 6,500. That would be
17 amazing not just for the current state - state of
18 the economy but for the future of the economy.

19 So many students who strive to work on
20 projects such as this would have the opportunity to
21 get the good paying job and build a family and live
22 up to the American dream. It's also crucial that we
23 do this to heat the schools where our students go.
24 It's also crucial that we do this so we can help
25 lower gas prices in the eastern part of the state as

1 well as New Jersey and Maryland. It is crucial that
2 the DEP approves every single permit that is out
3 there right now for this project. It is crucial for
4 the current state of our Commonwealth and for the
5 future of this Commonwealth.

6 Yes, there may be concerns regarding
7 the environment. However, this is clean energy.
8 Let me say that again, clean energy. Yes, there may
9 be some political talking points saying how this
10 will hurt the environment but let me say that again.
11 They are political talking points.

12 So I encourage the DEP to approve
13 every permit currently out there for this project.
14 It is crucial for our Commonwealth now, for the
15 Commonwealth in the future. Thank you for having
16 me.

17 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
18 James.

19 We will move on now to speaker number
20 23, Warren Bittner. Warren, if you're on you can
21 hear me?

22 MR. JERNIGAN: I'm not Warren. My
23 name is not Warren Bittner. I'm just taking his
24 place. My name is Garth, that's G-A-R-T-H. The
25 last name is J-E-R-N-I-G-A-N - G-A-N, Jernigan.

1 CHAIR: Okay.

2 MR. JERNIGAN: I am not -.

3 CHAIR: Mr. Jernigan? Okay. Before -
4 .

5 MR. JERNIGAN: I -.

6 CHAIR: Okay. Hang on. Mr. - Warren
7 Bittner was the one who registered, but, however -

8 MR. JERNIGAN: I do too.

9 CHAIR: - I - excuse - I will allow
10 you to speak, but the registered name is Warren
11 Bittner, but we'll go ahead and we'll allow you to
12 speak since you're logged on.

13 All right. And just say and spell
14 your name, please.

15 MR. JERNIGAN: G-A-R-T-H. Last name
16 is J-E-R-N-I-G-A-N. And I'm just a guy.

17 Anyway, I know after having seen
18 pipelines put in the ground and having talked to the
19 people who have put them in the ground they are much
20 safer for transporting oil and natural gas than any
21 other method. If you're using truck or a rail
22 you're putting more CO2 in the area and everybody
23 hates it, except they make CO2 generators for people
24 with greenhouses, so CO2 is not necessarily a bad
25 thing.

1 I know that it will put money into the
2 economy. It's a resource that if you leave it if
3 the ground it's like having money in the bank and
4 you're not doing anything with it and it's not doing
5 anything for you. It will benefit the local economy
6 by those high paying pipe installers have to spend
7 their money on food, hotels, etcetera. There is
8 going to be taxes on the - the natural gas when it's
9 delivered. There's taxes on everything. So the
10 state gains money.

11 And I know and happen to see this
12 particular company put pipelines through Lancaster
13 County. They do it in such a way that after they
14 are done you cannot tell that they've been there
15 when they - after they have left. So they know that
16 in order to continue their business of being in the
17 pipeline business they have to do it economically,
18 they have to do it environmentally sound because
19 nobody will hire them if they're doing the job
20 right, and that is the following the standards set
21 by the government or not only following them but
22 exceeding them because they know they have to
23 breathe the air that everybody else has to breathe.
24 So they know that they have to deal with the same
25 things everybody has to as well. So it's to their

1 advantage to do things right and it saves everybody
2 money because trucks on the road with natural gas or
3 rail is a disaster waiting to happen.

4 There's no CO2 involved in
5 transporting natural gas or oil in pipelines. It's
6 safer. And the only time you have problems is when
7 somebody wasn't paying attention, or you've got bad
8 equipment somewhere that somebody wasn't paying
9 attention to. But for the most part it's much safer.

10 So therefore, I urge them to continue
11 to put this pipeline into place because without it
12 where are people going to get the natural gas they
13 need to heat their house with so they can be
14 comfortable and not die because of weather? It's
15 just plain and simple for an economic standpoint of
16 view and environmental standpoint of view.

17 The people who run these companies
18 they are also hunters. They're also fisherman. So
19 they don't want to mess up the environment like so
20 many people claim that they're going to do because
21 they know that if they do they won't be asked to
22 come back. Because look at it look term, there are
23 plenty of pipelines already in the ground. You got
24 to figure out that these people are replacing older
25 pipelines that have seen better days and are prone

1 to leakage. The ones that are new they're putting
2 in do not leak like they used to leak a very, very
3 long time ago. They're just replacing old stuff
4 with new stuff, and it just makes sense.

5 And like I said as Forrest Gump would
6 say and that's all I've got to say. Well, I thank
7 you for being gracious. Thank you.

8 CHAIR: Okay, sir. Sure. Thank you
9 very much. Is Mr. Warren Bittner there? If Mr.
10 Bittner wanted to give a statement now, please.

11 MR. JERNIGAN: No, he is - from what I
12 understand he is not available.

13 CHAIR: Okay. We're going to move on
14 now to number 24 -

15 MR. JERNIGAN: Yay. Thank you.

16 CHAIR: - Roger Sutton. Mr. Sutton,
17 are you on?

18 MR. SUTTON: Yes. Can you hear me?

19 CHAIR: Yes, I can, Roger. Go ahead.
20 You're up.

21 MR. SUTTON: Thank you.

22 Okay. Thanks for giving me this
23 opportunity to express my opinion on this important
24 expansion of the pipelines in our area. My name is
25 Roger Sutton, a retired senior citizen. Being that

1 I am a lifelong PA resident and voter the pipeline
2 expansion will help deep-rooted - will have a deep-
3 rooted impact on the Pennsylvania residents as well
4 as all energy users at this time.

5 Also as a former operator of a small
6 business, expanding the pipelines will contribute to
7 stabilizing prices for energy. This will help all
8 businesses which will help provide many jobs not
9 only pipeline workers but also for other supporting
10 businesses.

11 The use of a pipeline will improve the
12 safety of - transporting energy. This will also
13 lower distribution costs which will protect all PA
14 citizens. The lower energy cost will give all
15 citizens more discretionary income which in turn
16 gives everyone a better quality of life and improve
17 the economy.

18 I'm asking you to make the right
19 decisions and vote to increase expansion of the
20 Transco pipeline permits which will be a great
21 benefit to all residents of PA and neighboring
22 states. Thank you very much.

23 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr.
24 Sutton.

25 Okay. We are going to move on now to

1 number 25, John Treska. John, are you on?

2 MR. TRESKA: I don't know if you - if
3 everyone can hear me.

4 CHAIR: Yes, we can John, but just
5 speak up a little bit so the stenographer and
6 everyone else can hear you. Okay. So the
7 stenographer -.

8 MR. TRESKA: Okay. Well, thank you
9 for the opportunity to speak on the energy pipeline.

10 I've lived in Luzerne County,
11 Pennsylvania for the last 55 years. I want to
12 encourage expansion of the pipeline construction in
13 the northeast. We have seen many advantages through
14 job creation, price reduction for utilities since
15 the beginning of the pipelines in our areas.

16 Within the last year and a half
17 through halting of construction and cancelling
18 leases we are already seeing increases in prices on
19 cost of fuel, oil and electricity. Gasoline prices
20 are at an all-time high across the nation and feel
21 that the needs for better understanding of the
22 effects on manufacturing for the process of
23 production and products for petroleum very much so
24 in the lines of plastic industry. Let's look at the
25 hardships of winter fuel consumption on so many

1 Americans that don't have income to fill their
2 tanks.

3 I urge construction of the
4 transcontinental pipeline because one of my family
5 member's bills from the last year increased from
6 \$2.59 per gallon to \$4.39 per gallon for a \$450
7 increase before the seasonal price changes. I know
8 of one company that is up to \$5.29 a gallon, which
9 equates to \$1,322 for a 250-gallon fill. I believe
10 increasing the pipeline construction would - will
11 help to reduce the increasing the prices and help
12 keep us independent of foreign supplies coming into
13 our country. Also the idea of renewable energy is
14 not viable answer to the available technology since
15 there are no new nuclear power plant permits being
16 issued in trying to shut down existing plants.

17 As the nuclear submarine veteran I saw
18 my ability in that source of energy, but gas and oil
19 are a much cheaper and cleaner source. There is a
20 huge effort also to go all electric vehicles that we
21 don't have infrastructure to support. At that time
22 - at this time we don't have the capacity to supply
23 enough electricity for the demand. Also expense of
24 these cars is not middle class affordable
25 whatsoever.

1 So I ask you as a northeast
2 Pennsylvania resident to give get consideration to
3 increasing the oil and gas pipelines in Pennsylvania
4 to help our economy grow, keep energy costs
5 affordable and reduce chances of environmental
6 deterioration from inefficient electric vehicles.
7 Thank you for your time. Respectfully, John Treska.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you, John.
10 Appreciate your testimony.

11 We'll move on now to speaker number
12 26, Bubba Davis. Bubba, are you on? Speaker number
13 26, Bubba Davis?

14 MR. JAGIELA: Colleen, I do not see
15 Bubba on the line right now.

16 CHAIR: Okay. All right. We can
17 circle back. I think we got him.

18 John DeSantis? John, if you're on.

19 MR. DESANTIS: Okay. Can you hear me?

20 CHAIR: Yes, I can, John. Go ahead.

21 MR. DESANTIS: Okay. Hi. I'm John
22 DeSantis. I'm a retired New York City high school
23 math teacher. I've been living in northeast
24 Pennsylvania for three and a half years and I'm
25 speaking in support of the Transco pipeline.

1 We have all seen the consequences of
2 the interruption of pipeline development and the
3 curtailment of oil production. They have been
4 immediate in terms of loss of jobs, soaring gasoline
5 prices and resulting severe inflation. The increase
6 in prices has caused great hardships particularly to
7 the middle class. Trucks are the mainstay of the
8 economy and the high prices of gas affecting
9 trucking are passed along in virtually every
10 economic sector.

11 How's it affected me - my wife and me
12 personally? Well, we're both on fixed incomes. We
13 follow the news. They say inflation is nearing ten
14 percent, but our electric bills are up around 25
15 percent. Vitamins for example that cost \$49 two
16 months ago now cost \$71. A family sized box of
17 Cheerios is \$7 up from \$4 in just a month. We've
18 had to make some hard choices. We cut our cable TV
19 completely. We no longer watch it. We've
20 sacrificed trips to our family in New York. People
21 are having to choose between putting gas in their
22 cars and putting food on the table.

23 And let me say this, and I didn't have
24 this as part of my prepared comments, but I know
25 that I'm not much over two minutes. My wife and I

1 left New York because she lost a lucrative job and
2 were just about making it and - tax-wise. When we
3 moved to northeast Pennsylvania we said to our self,
4 hey, you know, things are much better here. What
5 were saving in New York taxes and different costs
6 we're living fine. That's all been eaten away by
7 everything that's happened over the last year and a
8 half.

9 So the approval and expansion of the
10 Transco pipeline will increase jobs, lower inflation
11 and restore prosperity to many. I urge the DEP to
12 support it's continuation of the Transco pipeline.
13 Thank you so much.

14 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
15 John DeSantis.

16 One - one more time I'm going to call
17 on Bubba Davis. Darek, Bubba Davis says he's on the
18 line. Do we have him?

19 MR. JAGIELA: Possibly logged in with
20 a different name.

21 CHAIR: Okay. And Mr. Davis, if you
22 can hear us, if you're logged in under a different
23 name please let us know, otherwise I'm going to move
24 on now after John DeSantis.

25 Davis Menya? Davis Menya, if you're

1 on the line you're up now.

2 MR. MENYA: Hi.

3 CHAIR: Go ahead, sir.

4 MR. MENYA: Oh, okay. My name is
5 Davis. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on
6 the regional pipeline and land expansion. My name
7 is Davis Menya again from Delaware County. I lived
8 in the area for over 15 years and worked in the
9 homecare industry for over ten years.

10 During the course of work over the
11 years I've seen how the increasing gas prices have
12 directly affected and impacted my work environment.
13 Most co-workers use their vehicles to go to various
14 homes helping our elderly citizens with their ADLs.
15 It's becoming harder to travel long distances due to
16 increased cost of transportation. Also during
17 winter we noticed the cost and burden of keeping
18 seniors warm and that's because the price of heating
19 is becoming unaffordable. Before that wasn't an
20 issue, however, it is now.

21 What does this mean for our seniors
22 and caregivers? For the elderly there will be
23 limited care afforded. Their lifestyles will be
24 affected to the extent of living under the poverty
25 line. Likewise, the increased cost of living will

1 make it harder for caregivers to perform their
2 duties. Some requiring to stay home instead since
3 there's little benefit to working.

4 Indeed, it's difficult now for our
5 elderly citizens and caregivers. However, if the
6 expansion of the pipeline goes through it will be
7 easier for the elderly citizens to have their -
8 their right to care accessible, which will lift
9 their standard of living. Likewise, the
10 continuation of the project will allow caregivers to
11 reach more citizens without breaking their bank. In
12 contrast if the proposed expansion doesn't go
13 through it will be more difficult for the elderly to
14 access their rightful care. And as well it will be
15 more challenging to have caregivers to afford their
16 duty - their duties.

17 We are seeing the direct impact of
18 increased gas prices on our citizens already.
19 Therefore, I ask you as a care worker, I ask you as
20 a caregiver, I ask you as a frontline worker of the
21 state and of this country to allow the expansion of
22 the pipeline which will alleviate the suffering of
23 many citizens and thus improve their standard of
24 living. This uncommon supply of natural resources
25 should be welcomed as a gift. It benefits us all

1 and stems from God's prosperity of all. Thank you.

2 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
3 Davis Menya.

4 Okay. We are going to move on now to
5 Careen Pourmonir. Careen, if you are on?

6 MS. POURMONIR: Okay. I'm here.

7 CHAIR: Careen? Okay. You're on. Go
8 ahead.

9 MS. POURMONIR: Yes. I've been a
10 nurse's aide for over 41 years in northeastern
11 Pennsylvania out of - out of Pittston. And the last
12 18 of those years I opened up a nonprofit and I do a
13 food distribution which serves over 500 people, 700
14 on a good month, and up to 2,000 people come through
15 our lines to ask for food. And sometimes the
16 difficult choices are made do I pay my medical
17 bills, do I pay my gas bills, or do I pay for food?
18 And when those seniors are making those choices I'd
19 like to see them be able to make the right choices
20 and not have to spend their money on gas bills and
21 high energy costs because it - it's so hard to see
22 people pull up to a food distribution and you
23 realize they're living out their vehicle because
24 they can't afford a home and they can't afford gas
25 and heat and - you know, all the things that we take

1 for granted when we own a home.

2 These people are struggling and this
3 pipeline and the transportation of, you know, fuels
4 will - will help everybody. The more money coming
5 into the system the more people who are able to
6 benefit from, you know, lower costs of these fuels.
7 People should be able to do much better in this area
8 on so many levels. And I just hope that everybody
9 realizes that supporting the transportation of this
10 fuel and getting this to be done the right way and -
11 and cleanly is the most important thing in our area.

12 You know, and if we don't have to
13 choose between food and fuel and medicine, if we are
14 able to pay all our bills and get things done so
15 much can be - we can benefit so much by having our
16 seniors survive and not struggle quietly. And so
17 many seniors don't come forward and say I need or I
18 - can I get help? They just suffer in silence.

19 And so I think that, you know, some of
20 us realize we need to be the voice for those people.
21 And when I have those people coming through my lines
22 and I have to try and give them milk or - or cheese
23 or meat or bread and I realize that they're choosing
24 forgo food so that they can pay that gas bill or
25 they can pay that - you know, sometimes they can't

1 even get their medicine.

2 And some things - some of these things
3 are just too costly. So I just want to see those
4 people, you know, struggle less on things that seem
5 to have, you know, so - and we could solve this. We
6 could solve this by getting, you know, the - the
7 pipelines to work and - and efficiently bring in the
8 fuels at a lower cost and then we don't have to put
9 that direction. We can put it towards the things
10 that matter and the things that make us feel better.

11 And I just think that the - the
12 pipeline is a good way to make our economy in our
13 area better and I support everything that they're
14 going to do to try and make it a strong solution.
15 Okay. I don't know.

16 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much.
17 No, that was great. Thank you. Thank you, Careen.
18 I appreciate your input.

19 MS. POURMONIR: Thank you. Okay.

20 CHAIR: No problem

21 We'll move onto speaker number 30,
22 Kacy Manahan. Kacy, if you're on am I saying your
23 name correctly?

24 MS. MANAHAN: Yes. Hi. Thank you.

25 My name is Kacy Manahan, K-A-C-Y M-A-

1 N-A-H-A-N. I'm with Delaware Riverkeeper Network.
2 Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

3 First, I would like to note that today
4 is Yom Kippur, the holiest day in Jewish religion
5 which involves fasting and prayer until sundown,
6 which was only moments before this hearing began.
7 The scheduling of this hearing on Yom Kippur has
8 diminished the ability of the Jewish community
9 members to participate. We request that DEP
10 schedule a second hearing and make the audio of this
11 hearing available online for those who had to miss
12 it.

13 Although we will be submitting written
14 comment by October 12th we would like to emphasize
15 at this hearing the project's impact wetlands and
16 riparian buffers. Transco's wetlands delineation
17 must be independently verified by DEP or the - or
18 the Army Corp of Engineers in order to ensure
19 adequate accounting of and protection of the public
20 natural resources that would be affected by the
21 project. Enhancement of existing wetlands to
22 replace functional losses is not appropriate without
23 also replacing the area and functions lost through
24 execution of any enhancement project. The post-
25 construction wetland and water course monitoring

1 plan must require action by Transco in the event of
2 onsite or offsite mitigation failure including the
3 potential creation of additional mitigation acreage.

4 Throughout the application Transco's
5 definition of temporary is not clear. Restored upon
6 the completion of construction could mean any point
7 in the future. The million dollar question is why
8 isn't there a temporal limit on the definition of
9 temporary? Under the definition included in
10 Transco's application temporary impacts could
11 include the entire time active installation of the
12 pipeline is taking place plus the time needed for
13 restoration to be documented as successful. Again,
14 there is no guarantee or enforcement mechanism to
15 ensure that these temporary impacts do not become
16 permanent through failure to adequately restore
17 water resources or through future applications for
18 construction or maintenance within the right-of-way.

19 Because of this flexible definition of
20 temporary acreage of permanent impacts to wetlands
21 is undercounted. Thermal impacts to streams and
22 wetlands are also minimized by describing vegetation
23 clearing as temporary even though it take decades
24 for trees to grow to a size that provides adequate
25 shading to water resources. Furthermore, there is

1 no assurance that the applicant will not seek to
2 work again in the same riparian buffers thus
3 potentially indefinitely delaying the full re-growth
4 of the riparian buffer. In addition, requests for
5 several of the riparian buffer waivers for
6 additional workspace are insufficiently supported
7 and seems to be for the applicant's convenience.

8 Again, Delaware Riverkeeper Network
9 does not support this project and requests that DEP
10 deny the permit - permit applications. Thank you
11 for your time today.

12 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you, Kacy.
13 Appreciate your input.

14 I'm going to circle back now to Bubba
15 Davis. You're on as Marion Davis. Mr. Davis, if
16 you're there you can speak now, please.

17 MR. DAVIS: I'm here.

18 CHAIR: All right. Go ahead, sir.

19 MR. DAVIS: Thank you so much, Colleen
20 and Darek. Sorry for the confusion. I am Bubba
21 Davis. My God-given name is Marion Davis, M-A-R-I-
22 O-N, Davis, D-A-V-I-S. I'm 42-year teamster. All a
23 hundred percent of the 42 years has been in the
24 construction and pipeline industry. And part of
25 that time I worked as a building teamster of

1 Department of Energy, 28 years. So I know a little
2 bit about the safety and - and environmental safety.

3 Several have talked on here about the
4 environmental impact not the monetary impact,
5 economic impact that it's going to bring in front of
6 these seven counties. I will - I just thank brother
7 Charles Thomas of 798 for his comments. Very well
8 thought out, Charlie, and all those that spoke. As
9 stated we have six local unions that cover those
10 seven counties, six teamster locals. They all men
11 and women, brothers and sisters, that raised their
12 families in those counties, educate their children
13 in those counties, play on the ball field and fish
14 and hunt the wetlands and the woodlands and have a
15 vested interest in doing this job right the first
16 time and doing it safe; physically safe and
17 environmentally safe.

18 Over my career I've been blessed to
19 start up no less than ten training centers with the
20 teamsters. Our emphasize is always on the
21 environmental safety as well as physical safety.
22 And sending our brothers and sisters home healthy,
23 safe the same way they came to work. They need
24 these jobs to feed their families in a time,
25 especially this year, where the industry has

1 disappointed them and their families.

2 I - I don't speak for the other three
3 trades that's a part of the - this - for the project
4 labor agreement that's already in place, the build
5 design. I don't speak for the other three trades,
6 but I can say I know the gentle - presidents of all
7 four of these unions personally. I know their
8 families; I know their wives. I've know them a long
9 time. And I can absolutely attest to their
10 emphasize and their commitment to safety and again,
11 also environmental safety. Because without doing
12 that we would not have the work for our members to
13 work on.

14 I have visited training centers from
15 all of the trades, multiple training centers with
16 the other three crafts. And I can tell you absolute
17 confidence and certainty that the emphasize put on
18 the safety of these brothers and sisters that
19 perform this work is 100 percent and then some. I -
20 I've been in counties of Pennsylvania. I have
21 serviced jobs through my previous employment with
22 the teamsters. Incidentally I now work for our
23 teamsters' Labor Management Cooperation Trust Fund.
24 And my assignment, my job is community relations,
25 public relations and relations with the indigenous

1 group. We have a - you know, a commitment to
2 provide work and provide opportunities for all of
3 God's people, all of them.

4 So our - our commitment is - is not
5 black. We have signatory contractors through the
6 Pipeline Contract Association that are committed to
7 this industry. That's all they do. They do
8 specialty work.

9 CHAIR: Thirty (30) seconds, sir.

10 MR. DAVIS: Thank you. When - when we
11 have a project we bring in specialty contractors
12 that are long time in this industry and know how to
13 do it right the first time and do it safe. Thank
14 you so much for giving me the opportunity and giving
15 all of us the opportunity to speak here tonight.

16 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
17 sir.

18 All right. We're going to move on now
19 to speaker number 31, Jason Hayes. Jason, thanks
20 for your patience. If you're on, you can hear me,
21 you have the floor.

22 MR. HAYES: Good evening, Colleen.
23 Can you hear me?

24 CHAIR: Yes, I can. Go ahead, Jason.

25 MR. HAYES: Okay. I'd like to start

1 by thanking the Pennsylvania Department of
2 Environmental Protection for allowing me the time to
3 speak. I'm a lifetime resident of Luzerne County
4 where I've worked on and around natural gas
5 pipelines for the last 15-plus years. I've on every
6 crew of the pipeline from the start of clearing the
7 trees from the right-of-way all the way to the end
8 of the project where the final cleanup restores the
9 land back to its original landscape and every crew
10 in between.

11 I'm a member and a business
12 representative for the International Union of
13 Operating Engineers Local 542. We are the men and
14 women that operate the heavy equipment on most of
15 these projects in eastern Pennsylvania. These men
16 and women are highly skilled and trained to run
17 these machines safely and proficiently. You can ask
18 any member of Local 542 who has worked on a pipeline
19 and I'm sure they'd be happy to tell about the
20 strict sometimes over the top safety procedures and
21 environmental take - taken on these pipeline
22 projects. I've personally seen over the years that
23 safety and environmental protections are the number
24 one priority of Transco and the contractors building
25 these projects.

1 I'd like to emphasize the positive
2 impacts that these projects have on the communities
3 as they're building built. They are sometimes
4 overlooked with all the negative publicity they get.
5 Let's talk about the increase in the revenue that
6 these businesses will see during construction to the
7 restaurants, hotels, gas stations, grocery stores,
8 auto part stores, banks, etcetera. They'll all see
9 economic growth directly from these projects. This
10 will create thousands of good paying union jobs with
11 family sustaining wages and benefits and not to
12 mention affordable clean natural gas for homes and
13 businesses. These are just some of the examples how
14 the communities could financially benefit from the
15 Regional Energy Access Expansion Project under
16 construction and going forward.

17 Pennsylvania needs this project. On
18 behalf of the International Operating - Operating
19 Engineers Local 542 and its members I ask the
20 Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
21 to grant Transco its permit and get Pennsylvania
22 back to where it can reap the benefits of clean
23 affordable natural gas. Thank you.

24 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you - very much,
25 Jason Hayes.

1 I believe we're going to go Christine
2 - Christine Digiulio. Christine, if you're on can
3 you hear me?

4 MS. DIGIULIO: I can hear you. Thank
5 you so much.

6 CHAIR: Okay. Go ahead.

7 MS. DIGIULIO: All right. So I would
8 like to actually address one thing. That I am going
9 to speak right now to the Department of
10 Environmental Protection Staff. I am a scientist as
11 well and I understand what this hearing is about,
12 which is specifically about what your purview is as
13 the DEP, and that is to speak to the permits that
14 you are allowing for encroachment upon water and
15 erosion and sediment control. Specifically we need
16 to talk about what everybody else - I'm - I'm going
17 to address everybody else that has been talking
18 here.

19 I hear everybody's concerns.
20 Everybody's concerns are valid. And it is not the
21 place - to - to those people who are speaking
22 concerns that are not within your purview as the DEP
23 Staff you need to go to the proper entity and speak
24 your concerns to them instead of putting your
25 pressure on these people who are trying to do the

1 best they can to actually serve this state and this
2 community. The job of the DEP is exactly stated as
3 to what we are speaking to here which is about water
4 and about protection of the water and the
5 environmental aspects and the resources that we have
6 in Pennsylvania. That is their job. All of the
7 other things are not to be considered. It is not
8 within the purview of the DEP to consider those
9 things. Whether or not - we don't need to be
10 playing the fiddle about it. If you haven't done
11 your due diligence within the other entities then
12 you don't.

13 I am running for governor of
14 Pennsylvania at this point and I'm going to tell you
15 as a scientist I'm also doing it because I have
16 recognized the pressures that are placed upon the
17 DEP, which is unreasonable. And am I going to speak
18 exactly to the DEP right now. You have a due
19 diligence to do exactly what you are supposed to do,
20 which is to look solely at the things that people
21 are complaining about within the purview you have.
22 I am speaking as a resident of Chester County,
23 Pennsylvania who has gone to the Mariner East, and
24 this pipeline's going through my county as well.
25 And that has to do with - what I am concerned about

1 is the water impacts, the groundwater impacts which
2 is the stormwater and everything, taking into
3 consideration the climate change and how our water
4 is more impact - like the storms are so much worse.
5 Our groundwater is not absorbing the same.

6 So when you are disturbing the earth
7 that is - the federal government may have like
8 terrible legislation, however, our state has the
9 ability to do better. You have the ability to go
10 above and beyond, and you can do that. And I'm
11 asking you to consider a groundwater impact study
12 before you allow any of these projects so that the
13 harm that is done isn't like put upon the people of
14 Pennsylvania who you are supposed to be serving.

15 We have got to start looking at the
16 truth in this. I love all - everybody's concerns
17 are valid but what we're talking about here is about
18 how this project is literally going to impact the
19 residents of Pennsylvania and the environment, the
20 water. How do you know that this will not harm us
21 ten years down the road if you don't have any idea
22 about the impacts unless you do these groundwater
23 impact studies? Then you -.

24 CHAIR: Thirty (30) seconds,
25 Christine. Thirty (30) seconds.

1 MS. DIGIULIO: Thank you, ma'am.

2 CHAIR: Uh-huh (yes).

3 MS. DIGIULIO: Then you don't have any
4 idea and you cannot say that you're actually
5 protecting us within your purview. Like this is
6 about what you are asking us to comment on, which is
7 the permits. So let's just be clear, all of the
8 other things that are said tonight, love it,
9 however, you guys have a duty to look at what's
10 actually the truth. You're supposed to protect our
11 water, our environment. That is your duty and I
12 just - I'm just - as a scientist I'm with you guys.
13 Please do what you do best and - and don't let this
14 stuff - all these other things impact you. It's
15 unfair that they put that on you.

16 CHAIR: Thank you very much,
17 Christine. Appreciate your comments.

18 All right. We're going to backtrack
19 now. Going to get back to some people who may have
20 logged in and had trouble getting on line, now.
21 It's probably about five or six people.

22 First person we're going to call back
23 on now is Barbara Brandom. Barbara, are you on?

24 MS. BRANDOM: Yes, I am. I'm right
25 here.

1 CHAIR: Hi, Barbara. Go ahead.

2 MS. BRANDOM: Okay. First, I want to
3 thank Kacy Manahan and Allison McLeod for their
4 comments. I think that they are addressing water
5 and the environmental issues. And I want to thank
6 Christine Digiulio for focusing on what should be
7 the work of DEP.

8 I agree we have heard some terrible
9 stories from people and I have elderly friends who
10 are suffering the same things as you were referring,
11 but don't think that putting in one more pipeline is
12 going to solve those problems. Look to the
13 government of Pennsylvania that has been taking our
14 tax dollars the petrochemical industry and the
15 government of United States that is giving away
16 money to more petrochemical industries. Look to how
17 that industry interacts with the banks. So no more
18 about that, but it's a huge problem and it's - it's
19 difficult to address and that's what's impacting our
20 finances as family members.

21 We - here in this - this DEP hearing
22 we need to focus on protecting our water and I'm
23 particularly interested in cumulative impacts
24 because there been a study of this. I read through
25 what was posted on the PA environmental news website

1 and I didn't see anything directly relating to
2 cumulative impacts, and I think that's a significant
3 problem. Also I realize that the pipe companies -
4 pipeline placement companies not always used the
5 best - the large resources of the Department of
6 Natural - Department of Natural Resources in the
7 State of Pennsylvania because they have a lot of - a
8 large library on the quality of the earth.

9 And if the people that had drilled the
10 Mariner East pipeline or dug the Mariner East
11 pipeline and the Flacon pipeline had consulted that
12 library and modified their plans according the
13 explosion on Falcon and the water contamination
14 around Mariner East could have been prevented. So I
15 really want to know that this pipeline request -
16 these permits are using that information even though
17 they're not actually required to. Because what we
18 most can be concerned with is preserving resources,
19 the water resources for future generations. Once
20 they are in danger they're not going to get better.

21 And we know that with the increased
22 heat there's going to be more rains, more flooding,
23 more infringements of our aquifers and we need to be
24 very conservative about granting permits for any -
25 any kind of industrial activity, any activity that

1 does not take into account preservation of our water
2 resources.

3 CHAIR: Thirty (30) seconds.

4 MS. BRANDOM: Thank you all for your
5 comments. They're all important. I hear your pain
6 and let's keep working together. Thank you very
7 much for allowing me to comment. My name is Barbara
8 Brandom. Brandom, B-R-A-N-D-O-M. I'm a retired
9 physician. Thank you.

10 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Barbara.
11 Our next speaker that we have, Thermon
12 Spence. Thermon, if you're on -.

13 MR. SPENCE: I am.

14 CHAIR: Yep. Go ahead.

15 MR. SPENCE: Yes, Hello. Thank you.
16 My name Thermon Spence. I'm 65-years-old. I did 12
17 years in the Marine Corp. I'm a disabled vet. I've
18 been all over the world almost.

19 And we're supposed to be the United
20 States. We supposed to be better than everything,
21 but I've seen other countries that do better than we
22 do. But we're hurting our own economy because
23 basically we trash our own water worser than
24 pipeline would ever do so we need this pipeline
25 because the pipeline creates jobs, and it helps

1 economically the families and puts food on the table
2 where there's not none. And as many people in the
3 past have been saying on this line they have to make
4 decisions between putting food on the table or gas
5 in the tank. Heating bills, electric bills going
6 all up. This is ridiculous. We're supposed to be
7 the best, the United States, meaning the best of the
8 best and it looks like we're not doing that because
9 we're cutting our own people out of the equation.

10 We need this pipeline more than
11 anything so it can boost the economy, reduce the
12 taxes, reduce the bills of the petrol, we feed the
13 people. A dozen of eggs now costs you almost \$4 and
14 some cent when you used - could get a dozen of eggs
15 for a dollar and a quarter, \$1.34. And that's small
16 eggs. This is ridiculous.

17 If the fuel and the - and - even me as
18 a human worker - and I have one other comment. I
19 work for the water department and I'm telling you
20 scientist might have it right, but when you see it
21 physically, I clean water every day, and we pollute
22 the water so badly on just not policing our self.
23 So oil going into the water would not hurt you as
24 much as we hurt it as human beings because we
25 pollute our own water.

1 But we can also have water - we have
2 the ability to clean it up better with oil than we
3 can when we trash and anything else and hazardous
4 waste into the water. So there's no way this line
5 can hurt you as much as much as man hurts his own
6 environment. So I disagree with the scientists
7 because they don't see it every day. They don't
8 work in it every day. They don't see people sick
9 and dying that works in this water every day. And
10 we work very hard in the water department. And - and
11 Philadelphia we're considered one of the cleanest
12 waters in the country. We -.

13 CHAIR: Thirty (30) seconds.

14 MR. SPENCE: Yes, okay. And I just
15 encourage you to take a disabled vet and hear what
16 he says because he's been all around the world. And
17 thank you and have a blessed day.

18 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Thermon.

19 Our next speaker I don't know if he
20 wants to speak but we'll give him the floor, Mark
21 Orosz, O-R-O-S-Z. Mark Orosz?

22 MR. OROSZ: Orosz.

23 CHAIR: Orosz. Thank you for that.
24 Appreciate that. Go ahead, Mark. Spell your last
25 name please, Mark.

1 MR. OROSZ: I would have. My name is
2 Mark Orosz, M-A-R-K O-R-O-S-Z. The Z is silent.
3 And I'm a previous small owner - yeah. I'm a
4 previous small business owner and a concerned
5 retired citizen.

6 I'm for the pipeline and feel the best
7 to stay within the country, it will help boost our
8 economy and help more people and stay off
9 employment. There are many policies that put me out
10 of business and many others that I knew of every
11 day. And more businesses are closing. But we need
12 to come together or - and change the policies or
13 we'll become Venezuela. And I'm about done.

14 I urge you reinstatement the Transco
15 pipeline for our future and our future
16 grandchildren. Thank you. Have a good day.

17 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mark.

18 We're going to move on now to another
19 speaker, Edward Stelacio. Edward if you're on?

20 MR. STELACIO: I am. Can you hear me?

21 CHAIR: Yes, we can, Edward. Go
22 ahead.

23 MR. STELACIO: Yes. My name is Edward
24 Stelacio, E-D-W-A-R-D, last name, S-T-E-L-A-C-I-O.
25 I think you Chairman for allowing me this

1 opportunity.

2 Good evening. My name is Edward
3 Stelacio. I'm a US Army veteran. Now I volunteer
4 at the American Legion. I'm a retired city
5 detective and retired registered nurse. We lived in
6 Philadelphia for over 50 years. We have resided in
7 Susquehanna County now for over 28 years.

8 Prior to natural gas exploration
9 Susquehanna County was one of the three poorest
10 counties in the state until gas exploration and
11 pipeline. Since the moratorium on pipeline and
12 drilling we, my wife and I, have been seriously
13 financially impacted. These hardships have caused
14 us and along with many residents to realign our
15 life. We have been forced to decrease our comfort,
16 we have been - such as cutting back on food and
17 heat, also cutting back on our visits to our
18 children who live various parts of the state.

19 I stated I'm a volunteer with the
20 American Legion. Increase in lodging, meals and
21 necessities along with food have prevented me from
22 traveling and helping needing veterans. Daily life
23 essentials have reduced our ability to socialize and
24 help our children and grandchildren who are likewise
25 affected. There's been an increase in school

1 tuition, clothing, food and transportation. Prior
2 to the moratorium our county and community began to
3 thrive. Long lines at stores, food establishments
4 and gas stations. Small businesses thrived and even
5 expanded. Many new careers were open to our people
6 including but not limiting to well-paying jobs in
7 truck drivers, drillers and technicians. Now, once
8 again these individuals are forced into laboring at
9 stone quarries and menial tasks with a severe drop
10 in income. This has impacted family structure and
11 welfare. Families have returned to or under the
12 poverty level. Parents can only once again provide
13 basic life essentials.

14 Please, I implore you. I have two
15 wells around me in my neighborhood. I have not seen
16 any pollution, any problems with water, any decrease
17 in the ecosystem. Grant the necessary permits to
18 allow Trans' pipeline expansion and improvement to
19 proceed. Thank you and thank you once again for
20 allowing me to speak.

21 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
22 sir.

23 I'm going to circle back now to
24 speakers five, six, seven Darek if you can hear me.
25 I know we have two more we have to call on. Rich

1 Nataleni, is he on the line?

2 MR. JAGIELA: Not -

3 CHAIR: Okay.

4 MR. JAGIELA: - from what I can see,
5 Colleen.

6 CHAIR: Okay. No problem.

7 All right. We're going to go - how
8 about Gregory Hutt or Donna Hutt?

9 MR. JAGIELA: I do not see Greg or
10 Donna.

11 CHAIR: Okay. No problem. Thank you
12 very much.

13 All right. . So we're going move on.
14 We have one more speaker that is not on the list and
15 has jumped on, Christine Shelly. Christine, can you
16 hear me? Are you on the line.

17 MS. SHELLY: I can. Can you hear me?

18 CHAIR: Yes, I can. Go ahead, ma'am.

19 MS. SHELLY: Great. Thank you very
20 much. My name is Christine Shelly. Last name is
21 spelled S-H-E-L-L-Y. And thank you for letting me
22 speak tonight. I just found out about this meeting
23 about two hours before it started.

24 And I hear so much banter during this
25 meeting about economics and money, supply, domestic

1 energy, progress, capital, zero emissions, cleaner
2 burning fuels, but I do not hear realistic talk
3 about how much damage is being done to our
4 environment. The pollutants and emissions that
5 result from the start of the process for fracking
6 for NLGs to the end of the transport and how much
7 irreparable damage is happening in the communities
8 through which these pipelines travel.

9 I live in one of these communities.
10 Fresh water is polluted and fouled in the fracking
11 process and cannot be cleaned. I think they can
12 only use the water used in fracking twice before it
13 has so much oil and detergent mixed in that it
14 cannot be used again. Do we see the drought that's
15 happening in the west? Why are we not preserving
16 our water resources? Not knowing what to do with
17 this wastewater somebody decided that we should use
18 this poisonous byproduct to desalt our roads in the
19 winters. Where do you think that poison goes? Into
20 our fields, into our crops.

21 I live across the street from a
22 compressor station which is being built. It would
23 take me an hour to tell you all of the lies that
24 were told to us by the company and all of the damage
25 that they are doing in our town, which is zoned

1 agricultural residential. These pipelines do not
2 create jobs for the citizens. A group comes in.
3 They build what they need to build, and they leave.

4 If we are trying to supply our own energy needs
5 then why did our government sign a contract with
6 Poland to supply their country with 15 percent of
7 their daily consumption? Must of this gas is for
8 export.

9 The scientists have been screaming
10 about climate change since the 1970s. Because our
11 predecessors did not act for our future, which is
12 the now, we must act now if we expect this planet to
13 continue to sustain us. Let me be plain when I say
14 the planet will be fine, but we might not be around
15 to see the damage we imparted to all the species who
16 once populated the biosphere in which we all abide.

17 I just do not understand this madness
18 when the science tells us that we are just a few
19 years from tipping point that will result in
20 irreversible climate breakdown. You are moving
21 forward with business as usual as if your only
22 concern in the economics of gas. Have you even read
23 the IPCC report in which the international
24 scientific experts summarize the remaining CO2
25 budget for the planet? The climate is not warming,

1 it's hearing up and our children will never forgive
2 us.

3 I am asking you to please, please
4 consider the permits and deny them for this
5 pipeline. We need to preserve our water resources
6 that are becoming scarce as the climate and the
7 planet are heating up. We are going to need this
8 fresh water and if we pollute it, God help us, our
9 children will not forgive us. I thank you for
10 listening to my comments and taking them into
11 consideration.

12 CHAIR: Okay, Christine. Thank you
13 very much. I appreciate your comments.

14 That appears to be the last speaker we
15 have registered.

16 Darek, if there's - are there any more
17 phone numbers we're not calling on? It seems like
18 this is the last speaker that we have. Correct?

19 MR. JAGIELA: Yeah, that's correct.
20 That's the last person who reached out.

21 CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much,
22 Darek. Appreciate that.

23 All right. That concludes the virtual
24 public hearing regarding Transcontinental Gas
25 Pipeline, LLC permit applications for the proposed

1 22-mile Regional Energy Access Expansion Pipeline
2 Project.

3 I want to point out written comments,
4 which hold the same weight as virtual public
5 comments will be accepted by the Department until
6 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 12th at 4:00 p.m.
7 You can e-mail them to me Colleen Connolly,
8 coconnolly@pa.gov or to the e-mail that you see on
9 the screen, ra-eprrregionalpermit@pa.gov. You can
10 also mail physically your written comments to
11 Colleen Connolly, Community Relations Coordinator at
12 DEP's Northeast Regional Office, 2 Public Square,
13 Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701. We'll leave that e-mail
14 address up there for a little while. You can e-mail
15 your comments to myself or to that ra-
16 eprregionalpermit permit e-mail address.

17 I want to thank everyone for turning
18 out for this virtual public hearing tonight. We
19 appreciate you offering your comments. DEP will
20 repair - prepare a comment response document to all
21 of the 35-plus comments we received tonight and the
22 written comments we received tonight in the coming
23 weeks. And that public comment response document
24 will be made available to the public. Thank you
25 again everyone for turning out tonight. Please

1 check DEP's public participation policy for more
2 information on how you can comment on the pipeline
3 and get further information. Thanks again for
4 turning out everyone. Please have a good night.
5 Thank you.

6 * * * * *

7 HEARING CONCLUDED AT 8:44 P.M.

8 * * * * *

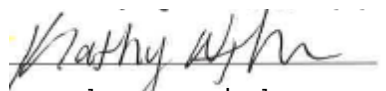
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.

Dated the 28 day of October, 2022


Kathryn Witherow,
Court Reporter