

ANN McLANE KUSTER  
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## Congress of the United States House of Representatives

April 1, 2016

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Norman C. Bay  
Chairman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street NE  
Washington, DC 20426

RE: FERC Docket No. PF14-22-000

Dear Chairman Bay:

I write to request that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) include a comprehensive health impact assessment as part of any official review for the Northeast Energy Direct (NED) pipeline. While FERC currently analyzes the impacts that proposed energy projects will have on our environment and natural resources, a thorough analysis of the risks to public health are not conducted by FERC.

As you are aware, the development of interstate natural gas pipelines requires the construction of compressor stations, which facilitate the transportation of natural gas within the pipeline. As part of the normal operating process of these compressor stations, excess natural gas is vented into the air during blowdowns and other maintenance events. These vented emissions include organic compounds and hydrocarbons such as benzene and hexane, which are known human carcinogens that pose significant health risks – particularly within vulnerable populations.

In my congressional district, Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, LLC seeks to construct a 40,000-horsepower compressor station in the town of New Ipswich as part of the NED pipeline. The location of the New Ipswich compressor station is regrettably half a mile from the Temple Elementary School, where children from Kindergarten through fourth grade attend school. The health of our children and local communities are critically important, and an independent and comprehensive health assessment conducted by FERC would provide much needed transparency for those living near the proposed natural gas pipeline infrastructure.

As part of drafting a comprehensive health impact assessment, FERC should include analysis from public health experts, and recorded health information from individuals living within close proximity to existing compressor stations. Additionally, FERC's reliance on federal exposure limits for air pollutants is flawed because these limits are mostly based on averages and do not accurately reflect the pollutant levels during peak emission times. I request that when drafting a

health impact assessment, FERC utilize all necessary resources to measure gas emissions during peak venting occurrences and match all registered carcinogens against Clean Air Act emission limits. Furthermore, I request that FERC provide an explanation as to why air pollutant limits are based on averages, rather than peak emission occurrences.

The inclusion of a comprehensive health impact assessment for the proposed NED pipeline would be of great benefit to my constituents, and all Americans who are impacted by this project. With the rapid expansion of natural gas infrastructure across the country, there is great concern that air quality and public health concerns are not being adequately reviewed and measured during the FERC approval process. If FERC can analyze the impact that projects will have on our environment, it certainly has the resources and the capacity to judiciously analyze the impact that these projects will have on human health.

Thank you for your review and attention to this request. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Travis Krogman in my Washington, D.C. office at: 202-225-5206.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann McLane Kuster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress