

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA**

April 4, 2017

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.
Deputy Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE, Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426

Re: Docket Nos. CP15-554-000 and CP15-554-001(Atlantic Coast Pipeline)

Dear Mr. Davis:

As leaders of the West Virginia Senate and House of Delegates; Virginia Senate and House of Delegates; and North Carolina Senate and House of Representatives, we respectfully ask the Commission to approve the pending application for a major project that holds great potential to improve the economies and supply of energy in our states: the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP). The project represents a much-needed addition to our nation's energy infrastructure, since it would provide a new, direct pathway for the burgeoning natural gas production in West Virginia and elsewhere in the Appalachian Basin to reach the growing markets of the Southeast.

For the people of our states, the project also holds the promise of thousands of new jobs, hundreds of millions of dollars of new economic activity, and lower energy prices. Additionally, we believe the pipeline would protect our region's environment by making clean-burning natural gas more available for the production of electricity. We are also very encouraged by the Commission staff's findings in the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) assessing the project. The draft EIS, in our opinion, conclusively demonstrates that construction and operation of the ACP would pose no threat to our states' priceless natural resources.

Studies have repeatedly shown that the project would produce enormous benefits for the economies of West Virginia, Virginia and North Carolina, beginning with the construction phase. These benefits were highlighted in a September 2014 report by the consulting firm of Chmura Economics & Analytics. The report's forecast of the total economic activity generated by pipeline construction is impressive: almost \$479 million in West Virginia, \$1.4 billion in Virginia and more than \$680 million in North Carolina. Chmura's estimates of the number of new jobs supported by the construction phase are noteworthy as well: almost 3,100 in West

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Virginia, 8,800 in Virginia and more than 4,400 in North Carolina. Many of these positions would be skilled labor directly employed in construction. The new jobs would offer hope and opportunity to thousands of hard-working men and women in our states. Although we have strived to promote economic growth and provide new jobs for our citizens, the recovery from the last decade's recession has been weak and progress has often been slow. Construction of the ACP would quickly improve that situation. In the words of Virginia Governor McAuliffe, the pipeline would be a "game changer." We agree.

Once it enters operation, the project would also help our economies move forward. In West Virginia, the ACP would promote the continued growth of natural gas production, particularly from the Marcellus and Utica shale fields. The pipeline would directly link these supplies to rapidly growing southeastern markets. And in Virginia and North Carolina, the pipeline would ease constraints plaguing an interstate natural gas pipeline system that has reached its capacity, often leaving it unable to serve new, energy-intensive customers. This has severely hampered our ability to attract new businesses, particularly modern manufacturing operations. The pipeline's operation would greatly improve our states' competitive positions and provide a significant boost to our economic development efforts.

Finally, the project would mean valuable new tax revenues for many of our counties and cities. According to a recent study by Dominion, the pipeline through the period ending in 2025 would generate more than \$60.1 million in property tax payments for West Virginia localities; more than \$70.6 million for Virginia localities; and more than \$60 million for North Carolina localities. These revenues will greatly assist our local governments as they work to maintain many vital services, such as education, transportation and law enforcement.

In short, construction and operation of the ACP represents a tremendous new opportunity for our states, and particularly for our working people. The benefits would be felt in many ways: job creation, economic growth, improved energy reliability, new revenues for local governments. All of this can be accomplished through a project that would not only protect but even improve the environment. We believe the case for the ACP is clear, and again we respectfully urge the Commission to approve it after the conclusion of your thorough and timely review.

Sincerely,



The Honorable William J. Howell
Speaker of the House
Commonwealth of Virginia



The Honorable Timothy K. Moore
Speaker of the House
State of North Carolina



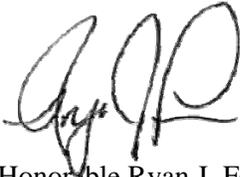
The Honorable Mitchell B. Carmichael
President of the Senate
State of West Virginia



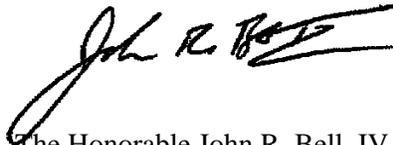
The Honorable Phil Berger
Senate President Pro Tempore
State of North Carolina



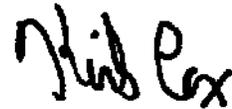
The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
Majority Leader of the Senate
Commonwealth of Virginia



The Honorable Ryan J. Ferns
Majority Leader of the Senate
State of West Virginia



The Honorable John R. Bell, IV
Majority Leader of the House
State of North Carolina



The Honorable M. Kirkland Cox
Majority Leader of the House
Commonwealth of Virginia



The Honorable Daryl E. Cowles
Majority Leader of the House
State of West Virginia



The Honorable Daniel T. Blue, Jr.
Minority Leader of the Senate
State of North Carolina



The Honorable Richard S. Saslaw
Minority Leader of the Senate
Commonwealth of Virginia



The Honorable Roman W. Prezioso, Jr.
Minority Leader of the Senate
State of West Virginia



The Honorable Corey L. Palumbo
Minority Whip of the Senate
State of West Virginia



The Honorable Timothy R. Miley
Minority Leader of the House
State of West Virginia



The Honorable Ken Goodman
Chairman, Main Street Democrats
State of North Carolina



The Honorable Matthew James
Vice Chair, Hampton Roads Caucus
Commonwealth of Virginia