



## FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of the Chairman

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May 12, 2020

The Honorable Mark R. Herring  
Attorney General  
Commonwealth of Virginia  
202 N. Ninth St.  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Attorney General Herring:

I want to personally thank you for your May 7, 2020, letter regarding the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic on the approval of pending and new natural gas pipeline projects, liquified natural gas export facilities, and related fossil-fuel infrastructure projects. Regarding Virginia, two major energy projects, Mountain Valley Pipeline and Atlantic Coast Pipeline, already received Commission approval and are therefore outside the scope of your request.

Many are using the current situation, a time when reliable energy is particularly vital, to suggest moratoriums on certain types of energy projects. Energy is critical to millions of Virginians' daily lives – it lights our homes, supports a thriving local economy, fuels our transportation needs, enables communications and powers life-saving medical devices. As our nation grapples with these uncertain and unprecedented times, the energy sector must continue to deliver reliable and affordable energy for everyone. Hindering the build-out of energy infrastructure now could have long-term and lasting negative impacts on the delivery of energy in the future. For these reasons, I view requests for a moratorium on energy projects to be short-sighted and impractical. Any step to slow the energy economy is a step in the wrong direction. Leaders and policymakers at both the federal and state levels must maintain an eye toward the future and make decisions that best position our economy to emerge from this crisis stronger than ever.

Your letter also voices concern regarding potential impacts to individuals' due process rights when it comes to permitting new and pending energy projects during the COVID-19 pandemic. I would like to use this opportunity to affirmatively quell those concerns. I am proud of the Commission's deep commitment to transparency and public participation in all its proceedings. We have successfully transitioned our operations to a largely remote work environment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and still, the Commission remains able to process applications transparently and with full stakeholder engagement.

Specifically, we continue to post all submittals and issuances on the FERC [eLibrary website](#) and we continue to receive comments, which enable us to thoroughly consider and address parties' concerns in our orders. The Commission's electronic portals, which are the principal ways the public interacts with the Commission, remain open and functioning. The Commission has always allowed for late intervention for good cause, and, as a matter of policy, evaluates comments received after the close of comment periods to the extent practicable, making any formal extension of comment periods unnecessary. The public's need for strong energy infrastructure is not lessened by this pandemic. It is imperative that the Commission



continue to operate as close to normal as possible, so that the energy sector is well-positioned to contribute not only to Virginia's economy but also to the nation's economy as a whole. That is my focus as I lead the Commission during this crisis.

If I can be of any further assistance with this or any other Commission matter, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Chatterjee", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Neil Chatterjee