

United States Senate

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March 23, 2015

Cheryl LaFleur
Chairman
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Chairman LaFleur,

I write today seeking clarification on the process by which you receive and review comments from citizens in communities that will be effected by proposed natural gas pipelines.

My office has been made aware of community concerns about recent Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) scoping hearings conducted in the Virginia communities of Nelson (March 18) and Augusta (March 19) counties related to the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline. As you know, when considering pipeline projects that are as comprehensive as this, there are very few voices as important as those whose community will be directly affected by its construction. I would ask your office to provide answers to the following questions:

1. Are there standards for signage, registration and event set-up to ensure attendees are clearly aware of a requirement to register in order to speak?
2. Are there standards on pre-access to sign-up forms by participants of private events using the same facility?
3. Is there a process in place to ensure comments submitted in writing receive equal consideration as those delivered verbally during public hearings at these FERC scoping hearings?
4. Is there a process by which citizens who aren't allotted time to speak, can still submit their questions/concerns in writing?
5. In the event questions or concerns arise about the conduct of a specific FERC field hearing, is there a process or precedent in place to request a follow-up hearing?

As the agency who holds the authority to approve interstate pipelines, I am certain FERC appreciates its duty to the citizens in the communities that could be affected by the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. A meaningful dialogue cannot take place until all parties involved feel they have had adequate access and opportunity to express their concerns.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with you to ensure FEFC has all of the relevant information and tools necessary to consider the important task that lies ahead. If you have further questions on this letter, please contact Ken Johnson (ken_johnson@warner.senate.gov) or Ann Rust (ann_rust@warner.senate.gov) in my office.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
UNITED STATES SENATOR