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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

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July 6, 2016

Secretary Kimberly Bose
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

OFFICE OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
2016 JUL 14 P 4: 53
FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION

RE: PennEast Pipeline Docket: CP 15-550-000

Dear Secretary Bose:

Ten years ago, no one imagined that clean power goals could advance hand-in-hand with substantial declines in the cost of energy. Pennsylvania natural gas did so!

Pennsylvania natural gas touches every part of our commonwealth. New natural gas-fired electrical power plants being sited across the state, an aggressive forthcoming build-out of natural gas fueling stations, the game-changing decision by Shell Chemical to build a multibillion-dollar petrochemical facility just north of Pittsburgh, companies and schools installing natural gas-fueled combined heat and power projects, and the list goes on – but harvesting benefits demands adequate pipeline infrastructure.

These benefits include Pennsylvania’s “impact fee.” Impact fees paid by natural gas producers are distributed to every county in the state, as well as supporting state agencies. Unfortunately, impact fee collections declined 16 percent last despite increased production. Of course, natural gas prices have declined nationally.

However, gas prices are downright depressed in sections of Pennsylvania due to insufficient pipeline capacity. The existing pipeline infrastructure never contemplated the richness of Pennsylvania’s resources. No one would try to pour a gallon of milk through a straw into a glass – but that is the situation we face with pipeline capacity constraints. This condition denies the benefits of plentiful natural gas to communities in eastern Pennsylvania and our New Jersey neighbors.

That’s why I’m pleased to join several of my General Assembly colleagues (including my counterparts, Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee Majority Chairman Gene Yaw and Minority Chairman John Yudichak) in supporting the proposed PennEast Pipeline.

The PennEast Pipeline has been developed to serve a specific need: addressing capacity constraints in eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey. It will allow communities in not only Pennsylvania, but our friends in New Jersey, to realize the benefits of Pennsylvania natural gas.

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In my service as Chairman of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, I fully understand the delicate balance between protecting our environment and accessing and delivering affordable energy. Every issue that comes before our committee is analyzed thoroughly through these lenses.

I have weighed the PennEast Project like other energy and environmental matters, and conclude that we can safely build out new pipeline capacity like PennEast while protecting our waterways, forests and wildlife. And when it comes to air quality, building new infrastructure to support new natural gas electric generation is a major benefit to the environment and our communities.

Pennsylvania's place as a leader in energy includes Benjamin Franklin's electricity experiments in Philadelphia and the birth of the oil industry in Titusville. Please help Pennsylvania to continue building upon that legacy with the PennEast Pipeline. This Project will be an important step forward in not only Pennsylvania's, but the region's energy and economic future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Maher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John A. Maher
Chairman
Environmental Resources and Energy Committee
House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

JAM/mlt