

**Answers to Additional Questions for the Record from  
“Fueling America’s Economy: Legislation to Improve Safety  
and Expand U.S. Pipeline Infrastructure” before the  
Subcommittee on Energy, Climate and Grid Security on January 18, 2024  
from the  
Liquid Energy Pipeline Association**

**The Honorable Michael C. Burgess, M.D.**

1. In your written testimony, you referenced that pipelines are the safest way to deliver energy. In a 2012 fact sheet from the Obama administration, pipeline infrastructure was considered a “top priority” and “vital part of a sustained strategy to continue to reduce our reliance on foreign oil and enhance our nation’s energy security.”
  - a. What do you believe caused Joe Biden’s drastic shift in policy from when he served as vice-president to now?
    - A. Policy positions taken on liquid pipeline infrastructure under Presidents Obama and Biden have diverged from economic, safety and environmental benefits in both the Obama and Biden administrations. On top of the jobs and economic benefits of pipeline construction, the Obama administration environmental impact analysis of the Keystone XL pipeline found constructing the pipeline would result in lower greenhouse gas emissions, fewer incidents and less release of product into the environment than the rejecting the pipeline. The analysis confirmed electric pump powered pipelines impact the environment far less than diesel powered trains. Nevertheless, President Obama blocked the Keystone XL pipeline during his administration and President Biden blocked it again at the start of his administration.**
  - b. What steps do you recommend this administration take to encourage a return to this former policy of strengthening our nation’s energy security and safe access to natural gas.
    - A. LEPA recommends the administration embrace the consumer and worker benefits of pipelines. Access to abundant American energy resources delivered by pipeline will help make energy more affordable for consumers. Workers will benefit from pipelines delivering fuels and raw materials to American manufacturers. The environment and climate will both benefit from pipelines as the safest and least impactful way to deliver energy. Indeed, this administration’s own climate agenda will not reach its goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions without pipelines needed to deliver captured carbon**

**emissions to safe, permanent underground storage sites. However, energy infrastructure approval takes far too long mired in bureaucratic red-tape and wasteful litigation. This administration can most benefit the American public, environment and pipelines by supporting and urging its Congressional allies to support comprehensive permitting reform.**

#### **The Honorable H. Morgan Griffith**

1. I believe that the public should have access to as much data on pipeline locations and safety incidents, as is feasible, and without disclosing security vulnerabilities. Are there additional disclosures that your members would be comfortable making public?
  - A. **LEPA supports transparency in pipeline safety performance. Each year, LEPA and the American Petroleum Institute publish a performance report with key metrics of pipeline safety. The pipeline industry uses this information to track performance and guide industry-wide safety improvement initiatives. Data for this annual performance report is downloaded from publicly available pipeline incident data collected by PHMSA. In fact, PHMSA's safety databases are quite extensive and provide hundreds of different data points on pipeline safety, incidents and their causes. However, while this data is publicly available, it is also hard to access by the public. Users must go through multiple steps on the PHMSA website to download data and perform analysis through its spreadsheet format. LEPA recommends Congress encourage PHMSA to make its voluminous existing pipeline safety data more user friendly and easily accessible by the public.**

#### **The Honorable August Pfluger**

1. PHMSA is far behind schedule in completing the idled pipe rulemaking, which, as you know, was required by Congress to be promulgated by the end of December 2022. PHMSA should not continue to regulate idled and full active pipelines the same – idled pipes do not actively carry hazardous materials, and they are disconnected from sources that allow for transporting hazardous materials, so the regulations should be appropriately tailored to reflect the reduced risk of incident. Importantly, regulating idled pipelines the same as active pipelines means PHMSA must direct its limited resources here when the funds could be better used implementing other regulations. Will you elaborate on the industry impact that the Idled Pipe Rule will have?
  - A. **PHMSA completion of the idled pipe rulemaking will improve pipeline safety by redirecting resources from low-risk areas to pipeline safety issues deserving greater attention. As PHMSA has stated in the past and Congress recognized through the 2020 pipeline safety reauthorization law, idled pipelines present a lower risk to the public and environment than active pipelines. PHMSA regulations requiring the same**

**inspection and maintenance actions for idled pipeline as active pipelines not only waste PHMSA's limited resources, they prevent pipeline operators from applying those wasted resources to active pipeline safety. LEPA urges PHMSA to come into compliance with federal law by completing the idled pipe rulemaking mandated by Congress.**