

March 4, 2026

**Opening Statement of Chairman Robert Latta
Subcommittee on Energy Hearing:
“America’s Energy Infrastructure: Authorizing Pipeline Safety”**

Good morning and welcome to today’s Energy Subcommittee hearing to discuss legislation authorizing the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration’s pipeline safety program.

I’d like to welcome our witness, the Honorable Paul Roberti, Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, or PHMSA (*fim-za*), and thank him for appearing before us today.

Your perspective will inform our legislative effort and update us on the Administration’s priorities for maintaining the safety of America’s pipeline infrastructure and enabling the safe expansion of it.

It is good to have a Senate confirmed Administrator leading this vital safety agency after the record long vacancy under the Biden-Harris Administration.

PHMSA is an agency under the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) that develops and enforces federal safety regulations for the nation’s pipeline infrastructure and the transportation of hazardous materials.

PHMSA works closely with industry and pipeline operators to ensure the safe delivery of nation’s most abundant energy resources, from natural gas and crude oil, to propane, jet fuel, gasoline, and other refined petroleum products.

States also play an essential role in carrying out PHMSA’s pipeline safety program, acting as “boots on the ground” to help inspect and oversee the safety of the over 3.3 million miles of both liquid and gas pipelines in PHMSA’s jurisdiction. In fact, States inspect and enforce pipeline safety regulations for over **85 percent** of the infrastructure under PHMSA’s safety authority.

Pipelines continue to be the safest and most efficient mode of transport for the energy American families and our economy depend on.

Reliable, affordable natural gas makes up almost half of our country's resource mix for power generation, and more than half of American families rely on natural gas to heat their homes, cook their food, and power their lives. Pipeline infrastructure in this country is essential to ensure the safe delivery of energy to fuel our country.

To advance PHMSA's mission to oversee the safety of our pipeline infrastructure, we will review the discussion draft before us today.

The draft legislation before us focuses on safety, exactly as Congress originally intended with PHMSA's mission. This discussion draft reauthorizes PHMSA for 5 years, enabling PHMSA to continue modernizing and enhancing its pipeline safety program.

The draft would codify several important provisions to improve the efficiency and safety of the agency. For example, the bill would:

- remove duplicative regulations that do not improve safety,
- clarify that PHMSA's cost-benefit analysis focuses on safety and not anti-energy agendas,
- reduce red tape so special permit programs can efficiently focus on pertinent safety requirements,
- strengthen penalties for pipeline safety violations that impair pipeline operations,
- establish a voluntary information sharing program to advance good safety practices among pipeline operators, and
- ensure state damage prevention programs adopt best practices to reduce the leading cause of pipeline damage incidents.

The United States' energy system is at a turning point. We're witnessing unprecedented energy demand not seen in decades, and demand is only expected to increase over the next several years.

Safe, efficient development and oversight of our gas and liquid pipeline system is key to providing reliable energy and power to American families.

For too long, sound pipeline safety policy has been hijacked by the environmental left, intent on stymying pipeline expansion and limiting its massive benefits to the nation.

I look forward to working with PHMSA, pipeline operators, and relevant stakeholders to make sure the pipeline safety program is efficient, predictable and focused on safety priorities that promote confidence and enable the safe expansion of our pipeline system.

I hope to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance legislation that provides for durable and focused safety oversight appropriate to pipeline infrastructure.

Again, thank you for being here and testifying Administrator Roberti. With that, I yield back.