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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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May 6, 2026

The Honorable Paul J. Roberti
Administrator
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Roberti:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Energy on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, to testify at the hearing entitled “America’s Energy Infrastructure: Authorizing Pipeline Safety.”

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Wednesday, May 20, 2026. Your responses should be mailed to Seth Ricketts Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 and e-mailed to Seth.Ricketts@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert E. Latta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a stylized "Latta".

Robert E. Latta
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy

cc: Kathy Castor, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy

Attachment

Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Bob Latta (R-OH)

1. How important is expanding pipeline infrastructure for the safe delivery of energy American's need?
2. In the draft legislation discussed at this hearing, there are a small number of provisions to enhance PHMSA's safety priorities, but the draft avoids adding more rulemakings, mandates, and studies. How will this help you focus on critical safety priorities and implementing past Congressional priorities?
3. PHMSA's special permit program is designed to reflect the unique characteristics of the wide variety of pipelines across all corners of our country, and is meant to enable safe development of pipelines, not inhibit them. Can you explain how the Biden-Harris Administration used the special permit program to prevent the development of pipeline infrastructure?
4. Congress authorized PHMSA's tech pilot program to enable operators to safely test new and innovative technologies that ultimately enhance pipeline safety. The program, however, went unused during the Biden-Harris Administration.
 - a. What caused the lack of utilization of the tech pilot program during the Biden-Harris Administration?
 - b. Would more statutory direction on implementing the tech pilot program lead to more successful outcomes?

The Honorable Brett Guthrie (R-KY)

1. How do you see AI and other advanced technologies helping pipeline safety and how do you incentivize implementation?

The Honorable Laurel Lee (R-FL)

1. During your confirmation hearing, you emphasized the importance of interagency information-sharing, particularly in the area of cybersecurity. The PIPES Act of 2016 mandated that the Department of Transportation convene a working group to consider development of a voluntary information-sharing (VIS) program to improve inspection feedback and collaboration between regulators and operators. From PHMSA's perspective, what is the tangible safety value of establishing a formal VIS program?
 - a. Additionally, what safeguards would need to be in place to ensure that voluntary participation meaningfully improves safety outcomes without undermining regulatory accountability?

The Honorable Frank Pallone (D-NJ)

1. Administrator Roberti, I appreciated your answer during the hearing that PHMSA would only grant enforcement discretion when an operator had affirmatively demonstrated that “safety will not be undermined.” Unfortunately, that description appears to depart from how PHMSA itself described the criteria necessary to qualify for enforcement description. In its notice, PHMSA describes the standard as not creating “an unreasonable risk to public safety, property, or the environment...” – a far more permissive standard.
 - c. What standard is PHMSA applying? The standard you described under questioning or the standard described in the notice?
 - d. The notice states that PHMSA will refrain from taking enforcement actions until reaching a final decision on the special permit. How does this comport with your statement that enforcement discretion would only be granted *after* an affirmative showing that safety would not be undermined?
 - e. The notice also states that enforcement discretion will be granted for a period even if a special permit is denied – potentially after a finding that an action would create an unreasonable risk to public safety. How does this match your claim in the hearing?
 - f. In a footnote contained within the notice, PHMSA notes that it intends to apply the same principles to requests to modify orders. Does this include orders issued to address safety violations or known risks?
2. You also stated that you “don’t expect it [enforcement discretion] to be used unless there are serious exigencies that warrant a strong public need to assist communities...” Again, this seems to depart from the scope envisioned by PHMSA’s notice.
 - a. How many applications for special permits pursuant to the notice has PHMSA received?
 - b. How many of those applications has PHMSA granted or denied? How many has PHMSA yet to make a determination on?
 - c. If PHMSA has granted any applications, please detail how the emergency identified by those permits meets the circumstances you laid out in the hearing.
3. I appreciated your response to Ranking Member Castor on the importance of PHMSA’s workforce, and the fact that you are currently attempting to hire for positions in PHMSA’s enforcement and inspection divisions. However, PHMSA has not published an updated organizational chart since February 2025, making it difficult for the public to hold you accountable to your commitments to Congress.

- a. Can you provide information on the number of staff within PHMSA’s Office of Pipeline Safety, including information on vacancies in safety-critical and policy positions?
 - b. Will you commit to consistently updating the online organizational chart?
 - c. Until recently, PHMSA’s PIPES Act Web Chart, tracking the implementation of the PIPES Act of 2020, also went months without being updated. Can you commit to consistently updating the PIPES Act Web Chart?
4. A number of current NTSB pipeline investigations involve home or building explosions. Do you believe that PHMSA has the authority to reduce these risks by requiring operators to provide methane leak detectors to gas customers? If you believe PHMSA lacks the authority, please identify the relevant statutory limitation.
 5. Last year, PHMSA noticed a number of advanced notices of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) and notices of proposed rulemaking (NPRM). Unlike PHMSA’s outstanding mandates from previous pipeline safety reauthorizations, these rulemakings were not required by Congress.
 - a. Why did PHMSA choose to prioritize these rulemakings over congressional mandates from prior reauthorizations?
 - b. Can you provide a status update for each of the ANPRM’s and NPRM’s issued last year?

The Honorable Paul Tonko (D-NY)

1. Administrator Roberti, during the hearing, I asked you about a number of research grants that PHMSA canceled last year. In an E&E News article, a PHMSA spokesperson was quoted calling these research projects part of the “Democrats’ ‘Green New Scam’ agenda.”
 - a. Do you believe that research into pipeline corrosion of carbon dioxide pipelines is a scam?
 - b. Three of the nine canceled projects were explicitly focused on inhibiting corrosion. During the hearing, you characterized these projects as focused on reducing carbon footprints. How is focusing on inhibiting corrosion in pipelines not safety-related?
 - c. Two of the nine canceled projects focused on safely transporting hydrogen in steel pipelines – especially relevant to safety as pipeline operators today are actively repurposing natural gas pipelines that run to homes and businesses to carry blends of natural gas and hydrogen. Is it your view that PHMSA should not study the risks associated with blends of hydrogen in pipelines originally built to carry natural gas? How can PHMSA establish “High Consequence Areas” for hydrogen

pipelines if PHMSA has canceled research designed to establish the potential impact radius of hydrogen pipelines?

- d. An incident with a carbon dioxide pipeline in Satartia, Mississippi hospitalized dozens of people in 2020. Why was it a priority for PHMSA to cancel research into understanding the impact radius associated with a rupture in a carbon dioxide pipeline?
- e. In your response to me, you cited a desire to make the right decisions with taxpayer money. But three of the canceled projects were in their final month when terminated. The cancelation simply means that the United States taxpayer will now see zero return for money they had already spent. Can you provide a list of canceled grants, along with information on how much funding remained unspent at the time of each grant's cancelation?"