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**Testimony of Congresswoman Madeleine Dean (Pennsylvania's Fourth District)**  
**House Natural Resources – Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands**  
**Hearing – June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

Chairman Neguse, Ranking Member Fulcher, and members of the Subcommittee – thank you for hosting today's National Parks, Forests and Public Lands hearing and for allowing me to share testimony in support of H.R. 7952, the Valley Forge Park Realignment Permit and Promise Act.

It is with great enthusiasm that I write in support of this bill and the project behind it.

This bipartisan bill, which I introduced with Congresswoman Chrissy Houlahan and Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick, is a straightforward fix to a technical but pesky issue facing Valley Forge National Historical Park.

As way of background, Valley Forge National Historical Park is an important historical landmark and natural space. The park is comprised of 3,500 acres of natural spaces, spanning both Montgomery and Chester Counties. It is a biodiversity haven for local species and plants in an area of Pennsylvania that is increasingly developed. In addition to its important conservation purpose, Valley Forge Park is a crucial historical landmark. It is the site of the 1777-1778 winter encampment of General George Washington and the Continental Army while the British occupied Philadelphia – then the Capital of the nation. During that time, while the Continental Army withstood a brutal winter, it also trained under former Prussian officer Baron von Steuben, and transformed into a more cohesive, unified, and modern fighting force. It is a national symbol of the resilience of our revolutionary spirit – and an important landmark in our national story.

As part of a broader effort to develop and enhance the area around Valley Forge National Historical Park, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation is working to realign and repave a road that runs through the Park's entrance. Part of the project involves moving the current utilities under the current roadbed to the new roadbed.

Unfortunately, while the Park can permit the movement of other utilities – like electric or broadband – they are barred by statute from permitting the movement of the segment of natural gas pipeline also under the current roadbed. If not rectified and permitted to move, the project could be further delayed, costing time and resources.

The bill in front of you today would allow the Secretary of the Interior to permit the movement of a small piece – approximately 2,400 ft. or half a mile – of natural gas pipeline to under the new roadbed. Specifically, the areas of pipeline permitted to be moved include the stretch starting at the intersection of North Gulph Road with Richards Road and the point on Valley Forge Park Road located 500 feet northwest of its intersection with County Line Road.

The bill does not allow for expansions, upgrades, or improvements to the pipeline. It is simply allowing the movement to better facilitate the current construction.

In addition to the straightforward benefits of moving the pipeline segment to ensure it remains with the other utilities, permitting its move will allow the creation of a trail connection. The current roadbed is planned to be replaced with a trail connector, linking Valley Forge Park to existing networks of trails in the surrounding community. This will better allow people to reach and enjoy the park, and further develop this important recreational hub in our community.

Thank you for your attention to this bill, and for your work on this Subcommittee to bettering our parks, preserving our history, and conserving our natural spaces. My staff and I are able to answer any questions you may have.

Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress