

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H.R. 9338
OFFERED BY M . _____

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
“Pipeline Safety Authorization Act of 2026”.

4 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
5 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Definitions.
- Sec. 3. Minimum safety standards.
- Sec. 4. Opportunity for formal hearing.
- Sec. 5. Special permit program.
- Sec. 6. Civil penalties.
- Sec. 7. Strengthening penalties for pipeline safety violations.
- Sec. 8. Authorization levels.
- Sec. 9. Pipeline safety voluntary information-sharing system.
- Sec. 10. Grant program to repair, rehabilitate, or replace natural gas distribution pipeline systems.
- Sec. 11. Excavation damage prevention.
- Sec. 12. User fees.
- Sec. 13. Carbon dioxide.
- Sec. 14. Biennial pipeline safety rulemaking backlog plan.
- Sec. 15. Study and reports on Community Liaison Services.

6 SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

7 Section 60101(a)(21)(B) of title 49, United States
8 Code, is amended to read as follows:

9 “(B) does not include—

1 “(i) gathering gas (except through
2 regulated gathering lines) in a rural area
3 outside a populated area designated by the
4 Secretary as a nonrural area; or

5 “(ii) moving gas through a piping sys-
6 tem for a purpose that directly supports
7 the operations of an onshore production,
8 refining, or manufacturing facility, includ-
9 ing for use as fuel or feedstock, if the pip-
10 ing system is—

11 “(I) an in-plant piping system
12 that is located entirely within the
13 boundary of the facility; or

14 “(II) a transfer piping system
15 that extends less than one mile in
16 length outside the boundaries of the
17 facility;”.

18 **SEC. 3. MINIMUM SAFETY STANDARDS.**

19 Section 60102(b) of title 49, United States Code, is
20 amended—

21 (1) in paragraph (2)—

22 (A) in subparagraph (D), by inserting
23 “within the United States” after “benefits”;
24 and

1 (B) in subparagraph (E), by inserting
2 “within the United States” after “costs”;

3 (2) in paragraph (3)(B), by inserting “within
4 the United States” after “benefits”; and

5 (3) in paragraph (5)—

6 (A) by inserting “explicitly” before “re-
7 quired”;

8 (B) by inserting “, economic,” after “safe-
9 ty”; and

10 (C) by inserting “within the United
11 States” after “environmental benefits”.

12 **SEC. 4. OPPORTUNITY FOR FORMAL HEARING.**

13 (a) ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES.—Section
14 60117(b)(1) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

15 (1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” at
16 the end;

17 (2) in subparagraph (J), by striking the period
18 at the end and inserting “; and”; and

19 (3) by adding at the end the following:

20 “(K) in the case of an enforcement matter
21 relating to a notice of a probable violation
22 issued after the date of enactment of the Pipe-
23 line Safety Authorization Act of 2026, where
24 the respondent can reasonably show the cost of
25 the proposed compliance action will exceed

1 \$350,000, or where the proposed civil penalty is
2 \$350,000 or more, provide an opportunity for a
3 formal hearing described in paragraph (2)(B)
4 upon request from the respondent.”.

5 (b) **PROTOCOLS FOR PUBLIC HEARING.**—Not later
6 than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the
7 Secretary of Transportation shall publish protocols for
8 hearings open to the public pursuant to section
9 60117(b)(2) of title 49, United States Code, that ensure
10 an orderly process and protection of confidential informa-
11 tion, in accordance with section 554 of title 5, United
12 States Code.

13 **SEC. 5. SPECIAL PERMIT PROGRAM.**

14 (a) **COMPLIANCE AND WAIVERS.**—Section
15 60118(c)(1) of title 49, United States Code, is amended
16 by adding at the end the following:

17 “(C) **LIMITATION ON TERMS.**—The Sec-
18 retary shall impose no terms on a waiver under
19 this paragraph that do not apply to known
20 pipeline safety risks applicable to the standard
21 being waived under subparagraph (A).

22 “(D) **PUBLICATION.**—Upon completion of
23 the application requirements under section
24 190.341 of title 49, Code of Federal Regula-
25 tions, or successor regulations, the Secretary

1 shall publish notice of the application in the
2 Federal Register.

3 “(E) REVIEW OF APPLICATION.—The Sec-
4 retary shall complete a review of each such ap-
5 plication not later than 18 months after pub-
6 lishing a notice in the Federal Register de-
7 scribed in subparagraph (D) with respect to the
8 application.”.

9 (b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after
11 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
12 Transportation shall submit to the Committees on
13 Energy and Commerce and Transportation and In-
14 frastructure of the House of Representatives and the
15 Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transpor-
16 tation of the Senate a report on the implementation
17 by the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous
18 Materials Safety Administration of subparagraphs
19 (C) through (E) of section 60118(c)(1) of title 49,
20 United States Code.

21 (2) CONTENTS.—The report required under
22 paragraph (1) shall include—

23 (A) a listing of each special permit applica-
24 tion applied for under section 60118(c)(1) of
25 title 49, United States Code;

1 (B) a brief summary of the purpose of
2 each such special permit;

3 (C) the date on which each such applica-
4 tion was received;

5 (D) the date on which each such applica-
6 tion was completed or, in the absence of com-
7 pletion, the status of the application;

8 (E) the date on which the Secretary issued
9 a determination on the application; and

10 (F) the explanation of the Secretary for
11 any decision made outside the review period
12 identified in section 60118(c)(1)(E) of title 49,
13 United States Code, if applicable.

14 (c) GAO REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
15 submission of the report under subsection (b), the Comp-
16 troller General of the United States shall submit to the
17 Committees on Energy and Commerce and Transportation
18 and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and
19 the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
20 of the Senate a report assessing the Secretary of Trans-
21 portation's implementation of, and compliance with, sub-
22 paragraphs (C) through (E) of section 60118(c)(1) of title
23 49, United States Code.

1 **SEC. 6. CIVIL PENALTIES.**

2 Section 60122(a)(1) of title 49, United States Code,
3 is amended by—

4 (1) striking “\$200,000” and inserting
5 “\$341,200”; and

6 (2) striking “\$2,000,000” and inserting
7 “\$3,412,000”.

8 **SEC. 7. STRENGTHENING PENALTIES FOR PIPELINE SAFE-**
9 **TY VIOLATIONS.**

10 Section 60123 of title 49, United States Code, is
11 amended—

12 (1) in subsection (b), by striking “A person”
13 and inserting “Except as provided in subsection (e),
14 a person”; and

15 (2) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(e) PENALTY FOR CAUSING A DEFECT IN OR DIS-
17 RUPTING OPERATION OF PIPELINE INFRASTRUCTURE.—

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A person shall be fined
19 under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 10
20 years, or both, if the person knowingly and will-
21 fully—

22 “(A) causes a defect in a pipe, pump, com-
23 pressor, or valve in the possession of a pipeline
24 operator to be used in the construction of any
25 pipeline facility described in subsection (b) that

1 would affect the integrity or safe operation of
2 any such pipeline facility; or

3 “(B) disrupts the operation of any pipeline
4 facility described in subsection (b) by causing
5 or undertaking the unauthorized or unplanned
6 turning or manipulation of a valve.

7 “(2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term
8 ‘in the possession of a pipeline operator’ means, with
9 respect to a pipe, pump, compressor, or valve, that
10 such pipe, pump, compressor, or valve is—

11 “(A) in transit to a pipeline component
12 staging site or construction site;

13 “(B) at a pipeline component staging site;
14 or

15 “(C) at a construction site.”.

16 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION LEVELS.**

17 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
18 60125 of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

19 (1) by amending subsection (a) to read as fol-
20 lows:

21 “(a) GAS AND HAZARDOUS LIQUID.—

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—From fees collected under
23 section 60301, there are authorized to be appro-
24 priated to the Secretary to carry out section 12 of
25 the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49

1 U.S.C. 60101 note; Public Law 107–355) and the
2 provisions of this chapter relating to gas and haz-
3 ardous liquid—

4 “(A) \$183,000,000 for fiscal year 2027, of
5 which—

6 “(i) \$9,000,000 shall be used to carry
7 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
8 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
9 note; Public Law 107–355); and

10 “(ii) \$75,000,000 shall be used for
11 making grants;

12 “(B) \$188,500,000 for fiscal year 2028, of
13 which—

14 “(i) \$9,000,000 shall be used to carry
15 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
16 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
17 note; Public Law 107–355); and

18 “(ii) \$76,000,000 shall be used for
19 making grants;

20 “(C) \$194,000,000 for fiscal year 2029, of
21 which—

22 “(i) \$9,000,000 shall be used to carry
23 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
24 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
25 note; Public Law 107–355); and

1 “(ii) \$77,000,000 shall be used for
2 making grants;

3 “(D) \$199,500,000 for fiscal year 2030, of
4 which—

5 “(i) \$9,000,000 shall be used to carry
6 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
7 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
8 note; Public Law 107–355); and

9 “(ii) \$78,000,000 shall be used for
10 making grants; and

11 “(E) \$205,000,000 for fiscal year 2031, of
12 which—

13 “(i) \$9,000,000 shall be used to carry
14 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
15 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
16 note; Public Law 107–355); and

17 “(ii) \$79,000,000 shall be used for
18 making grants.

19 “(2) TRUST FUND AMOUNTS.—In addition to
20 the amounts authorized to be appropriated under
21 paragraph (1), there are authorized to be appro-
22 priated from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund es-
23 tablished by section 9509(a) of the Internal Revenue
24 Code of 1986 to carry out section 12 of the Pipeline
25 Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101

1 note; Public Law 107–355) and the provisions of
2 this chapter relating to hazardous liquid—

3 “(A) \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2027, of
4 which—

5 “(i) \$3,000,000 shall be used to carry
6 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
7 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
8 note; Public Law 107–355); and

9 “(ii) \$12,500,000 shall be used for
10 making grants;

11 “(B) \$30,500,000 for fiscal year 2028, of
12 which—

13 “(i) \$3,000,000 shall be used to carry
14 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
15 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
16 note; Public Law 107–355); and

17 “(ii) \$12,750,000 shall be used for
18 making grants;

19 “(C) \$31,000,000 for fiscal year 2029, of
20 which—

21 “(i) \$3,000,000 shall be used to carry
22 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
23 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
24 note; Public Law 107–355); and

1 “(ii) \$13,000,000 shall be used for
2 making grants;

3 “(D) \$31,500,000 for fiscal year 2030, of
4 which—

5 “(i) \$3,000,000 shall be used to carry
6 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
7 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
8 note; Public Law 107–355); and

9 “(ii) \$13,250,000 shall be used for
10 making grants; and

11 “(E) \$32,000,000 for fiscal year 2031, of
12 which—

13 “(i) \$3,000,000 shall be used to carry
14 out section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Im-
15 provement Act of 2002 (49 U.S.C. 60101
16 note; Public Law 107–355); and

17 “(ii) \$13,500,000 shall be used for
18 making grants.

19 “(3) UNDERGROUND NATURAL GAS STORAGE
20 FACILITY SAFETY ACCOUNT.—From fees collected
21 under section 60302, there is authorized to be ap-
22 propriated to the Secretary to carry out section
23 60141 \$7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027
24 through 2031.”; and

1 (2) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “2021
2 through 2023” and inserting “2027 through 2031”.

3 (b) PIPELINE SAFETY INFORMATION GRANTS TO
4 COMMUNITIES.—Section 60130(c) of the title 49, United
5 States Code, is amended—

6 (1) by amending paragraph (1) to read as fol-
7 lows:

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
9 appropriated to carry out this section \$2,625,000 for
10 each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031.”; and

11 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$1,000,000”
12 and inserting “\$1,500,000”.

13 (c) STATE DAMAGE PREVENTION PROGRAMS.—Sec-
14 tion 60134(i) of the title 49, United States Code, is
15 amended by striking “\$1,500,000 for each of fiscal years
16 2021 through 2023” and inserting “\$2,000,000 for each
17 of fiscal years 2027 through 2031”.

18 **SEC. 9. PIPELINE SAFETY VOLUNTARY INFORMATION-**
19 **SHARING SYSTEM.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 601 of title 49, United
21 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
22 lowing:

23 **“§ 60144. Voluntary information-sharing system**

24 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-
25 lish a confidential voluntary information-sharing system,

1 in accordance with the recommendations provided under
2 section 10 of the PIPES Act of 2016, that—

3 “(1) is a comprehensive, systematic, and inte-
4 grated structure for—

5 “(A) gathering, evaluating, and quanti-
6 fying critical pipeline safety data and informa-
7 tion; and

8 “(B) sharing recommended remediation
9 measures and lessons learned across the pipe-
10 line industry in an efficient and confidential
11 manner;

12 “(2) will encourage the voluntary sharing of
13 pipeline safety data and information to improve the
14 safety of pipeline facilities; and

15 “(3) may not be used in relation to the enforce-
16 ment of requirements under this chapter.

17 “(b) GOVERNANCE.—

18 “(1) GOVERNING BOARD.—

19 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than
20 one year after the date of enactment of the
21 Pipeline Safety Authorization Act of 2026, the
22 Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous
23 Materials Safety Administration shall appoint a
24 governing board for the VIS in accordance with
25 this paragraph, after consulting with public,

1 government, and private pipeline safety stake-
2 holders.

3 “(B) COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD.—The
4 governing board shall be comprised of 15 mem-
5 bers and shall represent a balanced cross-sec-
6 tion of pipeline safety stakeholders as follows:

7 “(i) 5 individuals shall be representa-
8 tives of departments, agencies, or instru-
9 mentalities of the Federal Government and
10 of the States and territories, one of which
11 shall be the Administrator.

12 “(ii) 5 individuals shall be representa-
13 tives of the gas or hazardous liquid indus-
14 tries, such as operators, trade associations,
15 inspection technology, coating, and ca-
16 thodic protection vendors, and pipeline in-
17 spection organizations.

18 “(iii) 5 individuals shall be represent-
19 atives of general public safety advocacy or-
20 ganizations, such as pipeline safety and en-
21 vironmental advocacy groups, labor and
22 worker safety representatives, and the gen-
23 eral public.

24 “(C) BOARD TERMS.—Each member of the
25 governing board shall be appointed for three

1 years, with the terms of five of the members ex-
2 piring each year. The term of at least one and
3 not more than two members described in each
4 of clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) of subparagraph (B)
5 shall expire each year. In the initial appoint-
6 ment, terms of one, two, and three years shall
7 be established to allow the terms of five mem-
8 bers to expire thereafter each year. Each mem-
9 ber may be reappointed for consecutive three-
10 year terms.

11 “(D) CO-CHAIRS.—The governing board
12 shall be co-chaired by the Administrator, who
13 shall appoint as co-chairs, with advice and con-
14 sent of the governing board, a member ap-
15 pointed under each of clauses (ii) and (iii) of
16 subparagraph (B). The co-chairs shall be jointly
17 responsible for organizing and conducting meet-
18 ings of the governing board.

19 “(E) AUTHORITY.—The governing board
20 shall make decisions by a super-majority, de-
21 fined as two-thirds plus one of the governing
22 board members, and shall have the authority
23 to—

24 “(i) govern and provide strategic over-
25 sight of the VIS;

1 “(ii) develop and make public govern-
2 ance documents, including a charter that
3 describes the scope of the authority and
4 objectives of the governing board;

5 “(iii) select a third-party data man-
6 ager with expertise in data protection, ag-
7 gregation, and analytics;

8 “(iv) approve the criteria and proce-
9 dures governing how the third-party data
10 manager will receive, secure, and accept
11 for inclusion in the VIS pipeline safety
12 data and information;

13 “(v) establish and appoint members to
14 issue analysis teams;

15 “(vi) collaborate with the issue anal-
16 ysis teams to—

17 “(I) identify the issues and topics
18 to be analyzed by the issue analysis
19 teams; and

20 “(II) specify the type of pipeline
21 safety data and information that the
22 issue analysis teams need to analyze
23 such issues and topics;

1 “(vii) determine the information to be
2 accepted for inclusion in, and shared using,
3 the VIS;

4 “(viii) determine the reports to be ac-
5 cepted for inclusion in, and shared using,
6 the VIS;

7 “(ix) determine which participating
8 entities are authorized to access informa-
9 tion and reports included in the VIS;

10 “(x) at least once per year, issue a
11 public report on VIS processes, member-
12 ship of the governing board, issues being
13 investigated and analyzed, pipeline safety
14 data and information that the VIS has re-
15 quested for submission to the VIS, and
16 safety trends identified; and

17 “(xi) perform other functions as the
18 governing board decides are necessary or
19 appropriate, consistent with the purpose of
20 the VIS.

21 “(F) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT
22 INAPPLICABLE.—The governing board shall not
23 be subject to the requirements of chapter 10 of
24 title 5, United States Code.

1 “(2) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT.—The Adminis-
2 trator shall provide program management and ad-
3 ministrative support for the VIS, including oversight
4 of the third-party data manager.

5 “(3) THIRD-PARTY DATA MANAGER.—The
6 third-party data manager selected by the governing
7 board shall provide data management and data over-
8 sight services for the VIS, including—

9 “(A) receiving and securing pipeline safety
10 data and information submitted to the VIS;

11 “(B) accepting for inclusion in the VIS
12 such pipeline safety data and information that
13 meets the criteria and procedures established by
14 the governing board under paragraph
15 (1)(E)(iv);

16 “(C) deidentifying, storing, and managing
17 pipeline safety data and information that is ac-
18 cepted for inclusion in the VIS;

19 “(D) collaborating with the issue analysis
20 teams to analyze and aggregate pipeline safety
21 data and information that is accepted for inclu-
22 sion in the VIS;

23 “(E) preparing reports as requested by the
24 governing board regarding the type of pipeline

1 safety data and information that is included in
2 the VIS; and

3 “(F) making recommendations to the gov-
4 erning board regarding the management of
5 pipeline safety data and information, as appro-
6 priate.

7 “(4) ISSUE ANALYSIS TEAMS.—The issue anal-
8 ysis teams established by the governing board
9 shall—

10 “(A) consist of technical and subject mat-
11 ter experts;

12 “(B) work with the third-party data man-
13 ager to aggregate and analyze pipeline safety
14 data and information submitted to the VIS that
15 is related to issues and topics identified by the
16 governing board; and

17 “(C) collaborate with the governing board
18 to identify issues and topics for analysis and
19 submit internal reports and recommendations to
20 the governing board on the identified issues and
21 topics.

22 “(5) PARTICIPATION.—

23 “(A) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—No
24 person shall be required to participate in or

1 submit data or information for inclusion in the
2 VIS.

3 “(B) PROHIBITION.—The criteria and pro-
4 cedures established under paragraph (1)(E)(iv)
5 shall prohibit the acceptance of data or infor-
6 mation about an operator if the operator has
7 not authorized the submission of the data or in-
8 formation.

9 “(C) SHARING OF INFORMATION.—The
10 governing board shall encourage the voluntary
11 sharing of pipeline safety data and information
12 among participating entities.

13 “(c) INFORMATION SHARING.—Pipeline safety data
14 and information accepted for inclusion in the VIS shall
15 be related to the issues and topics identified by the gov-
16 erning board to be analyzed by the issue analysis teams,
17 including—

18 “(1) pipeline integrity risk analysis information;

19 “(2) lessons learned from accidents and near
20 misses;

21 “(3) process improvements;

22 “(4) technology deployment practices;

23 “(5) information obtained through VIS pipeline
24 safety surveys of pipeline operator employees, pro-

1 vided that such surveys are voluntarily agreed to by
2 the pipeline operator; and

3 “(6) pipeline safety data and information that
4 may lead to the identification of pipeline safety
5 risks, as determined by the governing board.

6 “(d) CONFIDENTIALITY.—

7 “(1) NONPUBLIC INFORMATION.—To facilitate
8 the sharing of otherwise nonpublic pipeline safety
9 data and information in the VIS, nonpublic informa-
10 tion accepted for inclusion in the VIS shall be kept
11 confidential, except as provided in paragraph (2).

12 “(2) DEIDENTIFIED NONPUBLIC INFORMA-
13 TION.—

14 “(A) SAFETY.—The governing board may
15 approve the disclosure of deidentified nonpublic
16 information through the VIS, or by the Admin-
17 istrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Mate-
18 rials Safety Administration, that the governing
19 board in its sole discretion determines is appro-
20 priate to disclose to improve pipeline safety,
21 based on analysis of the deidentified informa-
22 tion and any safety findings or recommenda-
23 tions.

24 “(B) REPORTS.—The governing board, in
25 issuing public reports under subsection

1 (b)(1)(E)(x), shall approve the disclosure of
2 deidentified nonpublic information through the
3 VIS that the governing board determines is nec-
4 essary to adequately describe and illustrate the
5 issues and topics being investigated and ana-
6 lyzed using the VIS.

7 “(3) PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in
8 paragraph (2), no person, including any governing
9 board member, the third-party data manager, any
10 issue analysis team member, nor any Federal, State,
11 local, or Tribal agency, having or obtaining access to
12 nonpublic information accepted for inclusion in the
13 VIS, shall release or communicate such nonpublic in-
14 formation, in either an identified or deidentified
15 form, to any person the governing board has not au-
16 thorized to access such information.

17 “(e) APPLICABILITY OF FOIA.—Any nonpublic infor-
18 mation that is accepted for inclusion in the VIS and subse-
19 quently obtained by the Secretary or the Administrator
20 from the VIS is exempt from the requirements of section
21 552 of title 5, and specifically exempt from release under
22 subsection (b)(3) of such section.

23 “(f) EXCLUSIONS.—

24 “(1) EXCLUDED EVIDENCE.—Except as pro-
25 vided in paragraph (3), nonpublic information ac-

1 cepted for inclusion in the VIS shall not be obtained
2 from the VIS—

3 “(A) for use as evidence for any purpose in
4 any Federal, State, local, Tribal, or private liti-
5 gation, including any action or proceeding; or

6 “(B) to initiate any enforcement action or
7 civil litigation against a pipeline operator or its
8 employees or contractors relating to a probable
9 violation under this chapter (including any reg-
10 ulation promulgated or order issued under this
11 chapter).

12 “(2) EXCLUSION FROM DISCOVERY.—Except as
13 provided in paragraph (3), nonpublic information ac-
14 cepted for inclusion in the VIS shall not be subject
15 to discovery from the VIS in any Federal, State,
16 local, Tribal, or private litigation or other pro-
17 ceeding.

18 “(3) LIMITATIONS ON EXCLUSIONS.—The ex-
19 clusions described in paragraphs (1) and (2) shall
20 not apply to—

21 “(A) data or information that is evidence
22 of a criminal violation;

23 “(B) data or information not related to the
24 activities described in subsection (a)(1) for
25 which the VIS is established;

1 “(C) data or information otherwise re-
2 quired to be reported to the Secretary under
3 part 191 (including information about an inci-
4 dent or accident), part 192, part 194, part 195,
5 or part 199 of title 49, Code of Federal Regula-
6 tions (or a successor regulation) or required to
7 be reported under the requirements of a State
8 authority; or

9 “(D) data or information developed or ob-
10 tained from a source other than the VIS.

11 “(g) NO EFFECT ON DISCOVERY.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section, nor
13 any rule, regulation, or amendment shall be con-
14 strued to create a defense to a discovery request or
15 otherwise limit or affect the discovery of pipeline
16 safety data and information arising from a cause of
17 action authorized under any under Federal, State, or
18 local law.

19 “(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not
20 apply to exclusions from discovery from the VIS as
21 described in subsection (f)(2).

22 “(h) REPORTING.—Not later than the end of each fis-
23 cal year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report
24 on the status of the VIS.

1 “(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
2 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
3 \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031.

4 “(j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 “(1) NONPUBLIC INFORMATION.—The term
6 ‘nonpublic information’ means any data or informa-
7 tion, regardless of form or format, that a company
8 does not disclose, disseminate, or make available to
9 the public or that is not otherwise in the public do-
10 main.

11 “(2) PARTICIPATING ENTITY.—The term ‘par-
12 ticipating entity’ means an entity determined appro-
13 priate by the Secretary to submit information for in-
14 clusion in the VIS, or to be authorized to access in-
15 formation and reports included in the VIS, includ-
16 ing—

17 “(A) an operator of a pipeline facility, and
18 related employees, labor unions, contractors, in-
19 line inspection service providers, and non-
20 destructive evaluation experts;

21 “(B) the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
22 Safety Administration; and

23 “(C) a representative of a State pipeline
24 safety agency, a Tribal agency, a pipeline safety
25 advocacy group, a manufacturer of materials or

1 equipment used in pipeline facilities, a research
2 or academic institution, and other pipeline
3 stakeholders.

4 “(3) PUBLIC INFORMATION.—The term ‘public
5 information’ means any data or information, regard-
6 less of form or format, that a company discloses,
7 disseminates, or makes available to the public or
8 that is otherwise in the public domain.

9 “(4) VIS.—The term ‘VIS’ means the vol-
10 untary information-sharing system established under
11 subsection (a).”.

12 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
13 for chapter 601 of title 49, United States Code, is amend-
14 ed by adding at the end the following:

“60144.Voluntary information-sharing system.”.

15 **SEC. 10. GRANT PROGRAM TO REPAIR, REHABILITATE, OR**
16 **REPLACE NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION PIPE-**
17 **LINE SYSTEMS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 601 of title 49, United
19 States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the
20 following:

21 **“§ 60145. Grant program to repair, rehabilitate, or re-**
22 **place natural gas distribution pipeline**
23 **systems.**

24 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may provide
25 grants to eligible entities to repair, rehabilitate, or replace

1 natural gas distribution pipeline systems to improve pipe-
2 line safety.

3 “(b) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity desiring a
4 grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary an
5 application at such time, in such manner, and containing
6 such information as the Secretary may require, including
7 a description of the project proposed to be funded by the
8 grant.

9 “(c) USES.—A grant provided under this section may
10 be used for a project to repair, rehabilitate, or replace a
11 natural gas distribution pipeline system or portions of a
12 natural gas distribution pipeline system, including to ac-
13 quire equipment for use in such project.

14 “(d) CONSIDERATIONS.—The Secretary shall estab-
15 lish procedures for awarding grants under this section that
16 take into consideration—

17 “(1) the risk profile of the existing natural gas
18 distribution pipeline system owned or operated by
19 the eligible entity, including the presence of pipes
20 prone to leakage, and how the project would improve
21 the safe delivery of natural gas;

22 “(2) the financial ability of the eligible entity to
23 fund the relevant project in the absence of Federal
24 financial assistance;

1 “(3) the ability for the relevant project to im-
2 prove natural gas distribution pipeline system reli-
3 ability, reduce lost natural gas from leaking pipes, or
4 reduce costs associated with maintenance and repair
5 activities; and

6 “(4) the legal authority and capability of the el-
7 igible entity to carry out the relevant project.

8 “(e) PRIORITIZATION.—In making grants for projects
9 under this section, the Secretary shall prioritize grants for
10 projects—

11 “(1) for natural gas distribution pipeline sys-
12 tems that serve—

13 “(A) a rural area, as defined in section
14 22907(g)(2) of this title; or

15 “(B) an economically distressed community
16 that meets 1 or more of the eligibility criteria
17 described in section 301 of the Public Works
18 and Economic Development Act of 1965; or

19 “(2) that address the highest safety concerns
20 based on the risk profile and condition of the exist-
21 ing natural gas distribution pipeline system as out-
22 lined in the eligible entity’s distribution integrity
23 management plan (described in section 60109), fac-
24 toring in relevant data, including leak statistics, and
25 risk analysis.

1 “(f) LIMITATIONS.—

2 “(1) AWARDS TO A SINGLE UTILITY.—The Sec-
3 retary may not award more than 12.5 percent of the
4 amounts made available in any fiscal year to carry
5 out this section to a single eligible entity.

6 “(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more
7 than 2 percent of the amounts made available in any
8 fiscal year to carry out this section may be used by
9 the Secretary for the administrative costs of car-
10 rying out this section.

11 “(g) COST SHARING.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
13 graph (2), the Federal share of the cost of a project
14 (including the costs of acquiring equipment for use
15 in such project) carried out using amounts made
16 available under this section shall not exceed 50 per-
17 cent.

18 “(2) EXCEPTION.—In the case of a grant under
19 this section for a project for a natural gas distribu-
20 tion pipeline system that serves an area with a popu-
21 lation of fewer than 50,000 residents, based on the
22 most recent decennial census, the Federal share of
23 the cost such project (including the costs of acquir-
24 ing equipment for use in such project) shall not ex-
25 ceed 80 percent.

1 “(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 “(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
3 tity’ means—

4 “(A) a municipality, or a federally recog-
5 nized Indian Tribe, that owns or operates a
6 natural gas distribution pipeline system; or

7 “(B) a customer-owned cooperative that
8 owns or operates a natural gas distribution
9 pipeline system.

10 “(2) NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION PIPELINE
11 SYSTEM.—The term ‘natural gas distribution pipe-
12 line system’—

13 “(A) means distribution lines and associ-
14 ated pipeline facilities that transport natural
15 gas from a distribution center to end use cus-
16 tomers; and

17 “(B) does not include gathering lines or
18 transmission lines.

19 “(i) FUNDING.—

20 “(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

21 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
22 retary to carry out this section \$65,000,000 for each
23 of fiscal years 2027 through 2029, to remain avail-
24 able until expended.

1 “(2) REQUIREMENT.—Any amounts used to
2 carry out this section—

3 “(A) shall be derived from the General
4 Fund of the Treasury; and

5 “(B) shall not be derived from user fees
6 collected under section 60301 of this title.

7 “(j) SUNSET.—The authority to provide grants under
8 this section shall terminate on the date on which all
9 amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (i) have
10 been fully obligated and expended.”.

11 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
12 for chapter 601 of title 49, United States Code, is further
13 amended by adding at the end the following:

 “60145. Grant program to repair, rehabilitate, or replace natural gas distribu-
 tion pipeline systems.”.

14 **SEC. 11. EXCAVATION DAMAGE PREVENTION.**

15 (a) GRANTS TO STATES.—Section 6106 of title 49,
16 United States Code, is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (b), by inserting “adoption or
18 progress toward adoption of the leading practices
19 listed in subsection (b) and” before “legislative and
20 regulatory”;

21 (2) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as
22 subsections (d) and (e), respectively;

23 (3) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
24 lowing:

1 “(b) LEADING PRACTICES.—Each State shall adopt
2 as a part of its State one-call notification program leading
3 practices that—

4 “(1) identify the size and scope of a one-call
5 ticket for standard locate requests, including process
6 exceptions for special large project tickets;

7 “(2) restrict the longevity of a one-call ticket
8 for standard locate requests, which may include
9 process exceptions for special large project tickets;

10 “(3) examine and limit exemptions to the State
11 one-call notification program to prevent common ex-
12 cavation damage incidents, including limiting exemp-
13 tions for—

14 “(A) excavation or demolition performed
15 by the owner of a single-family residential prop-
16 erty;

17 “(B) any excavation of 18 inches or less
18 when maintenance activities are performed;

19 “(C) repairing, connecting, adjusting, or
20 conducting routine maintenance of a private or
21 public underground utility facility; and

22 “(D) municipalities, public works organiza-
23 tions, and State departments of transportation
24 for road maintenance;

1 “(4) specify tolerance zone horizontal dimen-
2 sions and requirements for hand-dig, hydro, vacuum
3 excavation, and other nonintrusive methods;

4 “(5) specify emergency excavation notification
5 requirements, including defining emergency exca-
6 vation and identifying the notification requirements
7 for an emergency excavation;

8 “(6) specify the responsibilities of the exca-
9 vator, including the reporting of damages due to ex-
10 cavation activities;

11 “(7) define who is an excavator and what is
12 considered excavation;

13 “(8) require the use of white lining or electronic
14 white lining, allowing for exceptions for special large
15 project tickets;

16 “(9) require a positive response, meaning the
17 utility, municipality, or other entity marks the area
18 of excavation in positive response to the notification
19 center and the excavator confirms a positive re-
20 sponse before beginning excavation;

21 “(10) require newly installed underground fa-
22 cilities to be locatable;

23 “(11) require the marking of lines and laterals,
24 including sewer lines and laterals;

1 “(12) require training programs and require-
2 ments for third-party excavators performing exca-
3 vation activities that are not subject to pipeline con-
4 struction requirements under part 192 or part 195
5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any suc-
6 cessor regulations);

7 “(13) require training for locate professionals;
8 and

9 “(14) encourage the use of commercially avail-
10 able technologies to locate underground facilities,
11 such as those that incorporate geographic informa-
12 tion systems and enhanced positive response.

13 “(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

14 “(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 3 years
15 after the date of enactment of the Pipeline Safety
16 Authorization Act of 2026, the Secretary shall sub-
17 mit to the Committees on Energy and Commerce
18 and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House
19 of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce,
20 Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report
21 detailing—

22 “(A) the adoption of the leading practices
23 described in subsection (b);

24 “(B) recommendations to increase the
25 adoption of such leading practices and rec-

1 ommendations for the reduction of excavation
2 damage incidents; and

3 “(C) the number of underground facility
4 damages per 1,000 one-call tickets in each
5 State for the reporting year.

6 “(2) ADDITIONAL REPORTS.—Not later than
7 once every 2 years beginning after the submittal of
8 the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall
9 submit to the Committees on Energy and Commerce
10 and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House
11 of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce,
12 Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report
13 detailing—

14 “(A) the adoption of the leading practices
15 described in subsection (b);

16 “(B) recommendations to increase the
17 adoption of such leading practices and rec-
18 ommendations for the reduction of excavation
19 damage incidents; and

20 “(C) the number of underground facility
21 damages per 1,000 one-call tickets in each state
22 for each year covered by the report.”; and
23 (4) by adding at the end the following:

24 “(f) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—This section shall not af-
25 fect—

1 “(1) the eligibility of a State or State authority
2 for a grant or payment under section 60107 or
3 60134;

4 “(2) the requirements of section 60105 with re-
5 spect to certifications under such section; or

6 “(3) the requirements of section 60106 with re-
7 spect to agreements under such section.”.

8 (b) STATE DAMAGE PREVENTION PROGRAMS.—Sec-
9 tion 60134(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amend-
10 ed—

11 (1) by striking “In making grants” and insert-
12 ing the following:

13 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In making grants”; and

14 (2) by adding at the end the following:

15 “(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In evaluating criteria
16 for determining the effectiveness of the damage pre-
17 vention program of a State, the Secretary shall con-
18 sider whether the State has, at a minimum—

19 “(A) effective, active, and consistent en-
20 forcement of the State one-call notification pro-
21 gram, as such term is defined in section 6102,
22 (including consistency in the application of en-
23 forcement resources, fines, and penalties to all
24 relevant stakeholders, such as operators, loca-
25 tors, and excavators);

1 “(B) data reporting requirements, includ-
2 ing—

3 “(i) to the local one-call center for ex-
4 cavation damage events on pipelines and
5 other underground facilities, that are not
6 privately owned, including (if available at
7 the time of reporting)—

8 “(I) information about the nature
9 of the incident, including the facility
10 damaged and the apparent cause of
11 such damage (with supporting docu-
12 mentation);

13 “(II) the organizations or entities
14 involved;

15 “(III) the impact to public safe-
16 ty, utility operations, and customer
17 service; and

18 “(IV) the impact to the environ-
19 ment; and

20 “(ii) to a nationally focused nonprofit
21 organization specifically established for the
22 purpose of reducing construction-related
23 damages to pipelines and other under-
24 ground facilities, of damages and near-
25 miss events to pipelines and other under-

1 ground facilities from excavation damages,
2 including potential contributing factors, fa-
3 cility damaged, type of excavator, work
4 performed, equipment type, and State; and
5 “(C) performance measures to determine
6 the effectiveness of excavation damage preven-
7 tion efforts.”.

8 **SEC. 12. USER FEES.**

9 Section 60301(d)(2) of title 49, United States Code,
10 is amended by inserting “, and any funds so appropriated
11 shall be returned to and merged with amounts in the Pipe-
12 line Safety Fund if such funds are canceled under section
13 1552 of title 31, United States Code” before the period
14 at the end.

15 **SEC. 13. CARBON DIOXIDE.**

16 (a) PROPOSED RULE.—Not later than 12 months
17 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
18 Transportation, acting through the Administrator of the
19 Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration,
20 shall publish in the Federal Register a proposed rule
21 under section 60102(i) of title 49, United States Code,
22 to ensure the safe transportation by pipeline of carbon di-
23 oxide in all applicable phases.

24 (b) FINAL RULE.—Not later than 2 years after the
25 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transpor-

1 tation, acting through the Administrator of the Pipeline
2 and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, shall
3 publish in the Federal Register a final rule under section
4 60102(i) of title 49, United States Code, to ensure the
5 safe transportation by pipeline of carbon dioxide in all ap-
6 plicable phases.

7 **SEC. 14. BIENNIAL PIPELINE SAFETY RULEMAKING BACK-**
8 **LOG PLAN.**

9 (a) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 180 days after the
10 date of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years there-
11 after, the Secretary of Transportation, acting through the
12 Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
13 Safety Administration, shall submit to the Committee on
14 Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Transpor-
15 tation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives,
16 and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transpor-
17 tation of the Senate, a plan to complete any outstanding
18 pipeline safety rulemakings required by law.

19 (b) INCLUSIONS.—Each plan under subsection (a)
20 shall identify each outstanding pipeline safety rulemaking
21 required by law, and the expected timeline for completion
22 of each such rulemaking.

23 (c) AMENDMENT TO THE PIPES ACT OF 2020.—
24 Section 106(a)(3) of the PIPES Act of 2020 (Division R
25 of Public Law 116–260) is amended by—

1 (1) inserting “, the Pipeline Safety Authoriza-
2 tion Act of 2026,” after “under this Act”; and

3 (2) striking “date of enactment of this Act”
4 and inserting “date of enactment of the Pipeline
5 Safety Authorization Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 15. STUDY AND REPORTS ON COMMUNITY LIAISON**
7 **SERVICES.**

8 (a) STUDY ON COMMUNITY LIAISON SERVICES.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transpor-
10 tation shall conduct a study examining the efficacy
11 of the Community Liaison Services within the Pipe-
12 line and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

13 (2) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study
14 under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Transpor-
15 tation shall consult the public, State, local, and
16 Tribal governments, and pipeline safety public inter-
17 est groups.

18 (b) REPORTS.—

19 (1) REPORT ON STUDY.—Not later than 12
20 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the
21 Secretary of Transportation shall submit to Con-
22 gress a report on the study conducted under sub-
23 section (a), including—

24 (A) an evaluation of the efficacy of the
25 Community Liaison Services at engaging with

1 the public on matters regarding pipeline safety,
2 including—

3 (i) conducting outreach and respond-
4 ing to the public; and

5 (ii) regularly informing the public of
6 best pipeline safety practices and of any
7 changes or updates to Federal pipeline
8 safety regulations; and

9 (B) recommendations for best practices
10 that the Community Liaison Services should
11 adopt to improve the engagement activities de-
12 scribed in subparagraph (A).

13 (2) ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF COM-
14 MUNITY LIAISON SERVICES.—Not later than 30 days
15 after the date on which each fiscal year begins, the
16 Secretary of Transportation shall publicly release a
17 report summarizing the services provided by and ac-
18 tivities of the Community Liaison Services in the
19 preceding fiscal year, including information on how
20 the Community Liaison Services engages with the
21 public.

