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8TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
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April 5, 2017

The Honorable Cheryl LaFleur
Acting Chairman
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Acting Chairman Cheryl LaFleur:

On March 29, 2017, an interstate natural gas pipeline owned by Spectra Energy in Providence, Rhode Island ruptured, forcing the closure of Interstate 195 and several streets in the area. According to reports from the Providence Journal and the Patriot Ledger, residents reported the smell of gas, leading to the response from public safety officials, Spectra Energy, and National Grid. I am deeply concerned that Spectra Energy does not have the infrastructure in place to appropriately monitor gas leaks or potential safety hazards and I request that you suspend the use of the West Roxbury Lateral segment of the Algonquin Incremental Market (AIM) Project, as well as place the Atlantic Bridge Project, specifically the proposed Weymouth Compressor Station, on hold, until this incident is fully investigated and public safety risks are mitigated.

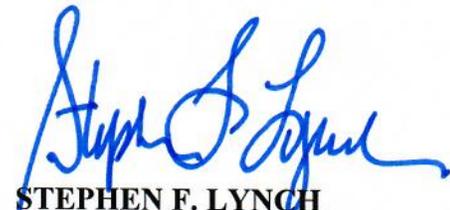
The Providence pipeline rupture is not the first incident in 2017 where Spectra Energy failed to notice a gas leak before residents reported the smell of gas. On January 6, 2017, a relief valve froze on a Spectra Energy gas metering station in Weymouth, Massachusetts and residents a mile away detected the smell of gas. Following the January incident, I immediately requested a full report on the public health impacts as well as the company's safety and response protocols and called for built in checks and balances in Spectra's organization to ensure the gas metering station is operated properly.

According to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, there were 37 serious pipeline incidents and 305 significant pipeline incidents in 2016. There have already been seven serious pipeline incidents and 44 significant pipeline incidents in 2017. Considering these sobering statistics and the fact that construction and weather related incidents have occurred on Spectra Energy pipelines in Providence, RI and Weymouth, MA already this year, I urge you to place the natural gas pipeline projects in Weymouth and West Roxbury, MA, on hold until a comprehensive investigation of the Providence incident is conducted and concluded and all appropriate safety measures for pipeline projects have been adopted.

Without residents reporting the gas leaks in Providence or Weymouth, the public safety and environmental impacts could have been exponentially worse and I am concerned about the dangers of additional pipeline projects in densely populated urban or suburban neighborhoods. The AIM Project,

specifically its West Roxbury Lateral segment, places a high pressure natural gas pipeline in dangerous proximity to an active quarry blast zone, in the middle of Boston's densely populated West Roxbury neighborhood. The Algonquin Atlantic Bridge Project proposes to build a natural gas compressor station in a North Weymouth neighborhood where nearly 1,000 households are within a half mile of the site. With the safety of local families' foremost in mind, I again urge you to delay both of these projects until we are certain that all proper safety measures are in place.

Sincerely,



STEPHEN F. LYNCH

Member of Congress (MA-08)