



June 8, 2015

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop,

The Distribution Contractors Association (DCA) represents contractors, suppliers and manufacturers who provide construction services including installation, replacement and rehabilitation of natural gas pipelines. DCA supports the National Energy Security Corridors Act (HR 2295), which would give the US Department of the Interior authority to approve natural gas pipelines crossing National Parks Service land without first seeking project-specific authorization from Congress, as now required under current law. We strongly encourage the committee to approve this legislation.

According to IHS Global Insight, 47,000 miles of new pipelines will be built in the U.S. between now and 2025 to connect shale energy to industrial and consumer end markets, representing \$100 billion invested in infrastructure. IHS Global also estimates that \$3 trillion will be invested in unconventional gas development between now and 2035, creating 2.4 million jobs along the way, and generating nearly trillions of dollars in federal, state, and local tax and royalty revenue.

Unfortunately, the current permitting process often obstructs production and transportation of an enormous economic driver. Key pipeline projects on both private and public lands are often stalled because of delays in acquiring federal and state permits and rights-of-way approvals from various regulatory agencies. The Congressional Research Service reports that natural gas production on state and private lands increased by 38 percent between 2010 and 2014 while production on federal lands fell by 30 percent over the same time period.

Under the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA), the Department of Interior (DOI) has the authority to issue permits and right-of-ways for the construction of natural gas pipelines across federal land. However, the MLA's definition of "federal lands" clearly exempts lands managed by the National Park System (NPS). This essentially puts Congress in the role of a permitting agency for individual natural gas pipeline projects on NPS properties, creating additional bureaucratic hurdles and unnecessarily adding years to the process. DOI is well situated to effectively review and make decisions regarding permitting of natural gas pipelines on these properties.

DCA members provide the manpower, equipment and expertise necessary to help build the pipeline infrastructure needed to meet the skyrocketing demand for American natural gas. We support several bills that would update and improve the permitting process for natural gas pipelines, and we encourage the committee to pass HR 2295, which would clarify DOI's authority to approve or deny natural gas pipeline projects on public lands, including NPS properties.

Sincerely,

Robert Darden
Executive Vice President