JACKIE SPEIER
12TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

211 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0512
(202) 225-3531
FAX: (202) 226-4183

400 S. EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 410
SAN MATEO, CA 94402
(650) 342-0300
FAX: (650) 375-8270

WWW.SPEIER.HOUSE.GOV

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0512

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SUBCOMMITTEE:
GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AND
ORGANIZATION PROCUREMENT

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ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND
GLOBAL WARMING

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April 1, 2011

Mr. Paul Clanon, Executive Director
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298

APR 04 2011
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Re: Proposals for Natural Gas Transmission Line Safety

Dear Mr. Clanon:

I appreciate the fact that the CPUC is holding a public hearing on adopting "New Safety and Reliability Regulations for Natural Gas Transmission and Distribution Pipelines and Related Ratemaking Mechanisms" in San Bruno. The residents here had their lives inalterably changed on September 9, 2010 by the rupture of an aging gas pipeline operated by PG&E. Their concerns are my concerns and to that extent, I offer the following proposals to improve consumer safety in the delivery of natural gas by any and all operators subject to regulation by the CPUC:

- Require that operators disclose the location of transmission pipelines to any and all first responders. Such disclosure shall be in person to insure the information is received and understood. Additionally, the operator and the first responders shall exchange and maintain emergency contact information and emergency response plans to be used in case of a natural gas leak and/or fire. Operators should make annual contact with first responders to insure that all exchanged information is current.

- Require that operators disclose to customers the fact that they reside or work within 2,000 feet of a natural gas transmission line. Require that this notice be done annually and include contact information for reporting suspected gas leaks.

- Require the CPUC to establish a statewide database of pipelines removed from service. This database shall contain the following information provided by the operator: the reason for the removal; the condition of the pipe, including the condition of welds, its age, and the name of the manufacturer. The CPUC shall use the database to identify any emerging trends such as excessive corrosion or stress fractures specific to a manufacturer.

- Require installation of automatic, or remote control shut-off valves every five miles in lines that are in high consequence areas, or that run along an earthquake fault.

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- Require the CPUC to audit the integrity management plans of all operators every two years. Audit exceptions that are deemed critical shall be responded to within 24 hours, while all other exceptions must be responded to within 30 days.

- Make it clear that an operator may not maintain historical MOAPs by intentional spiking of pressure to or beyond the MOAP level.

- If an operator does not have documentation that a pipeline segment has been pressure tested, then one of the following must occur: reduce pressure 20%; hydro-test; or replace.

- Establish a rule for the duration of pressure test.

- Define the "most conservative value" to be assigned to any segment of pipeline that does not have a record of being pressure tested.

- An operator shall report to the CPUC any increase over MOAP within 24 hours.

- Require every operator to provide a replacement plan for any pipeline installed prior 1961 in a high consequence area. Each plan shall contain a timeframe for replacement beginning with the highest risk pipeline and descending to the lowest risk pipeline. The plan shall contain an estimated cost of replacement.

- Require that all pipe sold by Consolidated Western be inspected and tested, or replaced.

- Promulgate a rule for how the age of a pipeline shall be considered a risk factor and how the inability to utilize internal inspection equipment increases risk as a pipe ages.

- Increase CPUC's funding to provide for more inspectors.

All the best,

Jackie Speier

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

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