

Write a Letter to a Local Paper with Your Concerns About the Proposed Pipeline! (*Here's some help*)

If you want to share your opinions concerning the proposed pipeline in the form of a letter to the editor, the following information might be helpful. Although we've provided some examples of common concerns, please write from your heart, in your own words! If you have the time you might want to do a little internet research about problems with existing pipelines. There are lots of news stories out there.

Staunton News Leader

1. Mail: Letters to the Editor, The News Leader, 11 N. Central Ave., Staunton, VA 24402.
2. In person: Take your letter to their office on N. Central Street.
3. Online: It's easy to submit your letter online at www.newsleader.com/opinions.
4. Email: Send your letter to sta-letters@staunton.gannett.com.

The News Leader asks that your letter be short and concise, no longer than 350 words. They will not accept a longer letter. Remember to include your name, address, and phone number. You will receive a phone call from the News Leader before they print your letter, so include a number where you will be accessible.

The News Virginian in Waynesboro

1. Mail or in person. 1300 W. Main Street, Waynesboro, VA 22980.
2. Email. Send your letter to managing editor Brian Carlton at bcarlton@newsvirginian.com

TIPS FOR WRITING A LETTER:

- Write complete sentences and use spell check.
- Narrow your comments to only one or two points. Your letter doesn't need to be lengthy to be important and effective.
- Write about *your* concerns. Make it personal.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- **Encouragement.** Thank the Augusta County Board of Supervisors for looking out for the people of Augusta County on this issue.
- **Water.** The pipeline would cross dozens of streams in Augusta County, including the headwaters of the Calfpasture, South, and Middle Rivers. Augusta County has a lot of springs and sinkholes, and spills could easily travel to streams or the groundwater. Also, construction erosion could be severe, polluting our creeks and streams with major sediment run-off.
- **Fairness.** Dominion should not be allowed to oversee its own sediment and erosion control program, rules that any farmer or builder has to follow. If anything, a construction project on this scale should be subject to stronger state oversight, not weaker.
- **Public lands.** The pipeline would cut across 30 miles of the George Washington and Monongahela National Forest, described by the Forest Service as the "wildland core of the Appalachians." Voice your concerns about the negative impacts to hunting, fishing, and recreational use, and the degradation of rare habitats.

- **Safety.** There is a history of pipeline hazards that include explosions from leaks that cause injuries and loss of life as well as extensive property damage.
- **No local benefits.** The pipeline would degrade our resources and put our water at risk without providing new jobs and without reducing our power bills. Dominion estimates that it would cost \$5-8 million to tap into the gas pipeline, prohibitively expensive for any local business or town.
- **Loss of property value.** Properties that are crossed by the pipeline will lose development value and be worth less. Surrounding properties, especially within the blast zone, will lose value as well. Farmers face a loss of farm productivity.
- **Potential tax increase.** Counties could face a loss of operating revenue because of less real estate tax revenues. Counties might also be faced with increased costs for emergency services as well as costs associated with protecting public drinking water sources. If that situation occurs then localities will either have to raise taxes or cut services.

POINTS TO CONSIDER IF THE PIPELINE IS CROSSING YOUR PROPERTY:

- The pipeline easements will severely limit the future use of my land. The pipeline will affect the productivity of my crops. I am also concerned that I cannot build or even plant trees on the easement.
- I am concerned that the pipeline will decrease my property value. It could affect my mortgage and my ability to borrow. It could also complicate my property insurance.
- The pipeline could pollute the water that I use for my home, business, and farm. Augusta County has a lot of springs and sinkholes, and spills could easily travel to my water supply. The pipeline will also go through the George Washington National Forest which is a source of water for our whole county.
- I am frustrated that pipeline employees will be entering my property for decades to come.
- I am concerned that Dominion will put another pipeline in the easement or even expand the easement in the future.
- I am worried that Dominion will put a compressor station on my land or in my community. Although there is not currently a compressor station proposed in Augusta, Dominion has said that increasing capacity on the pipeline is a simple matter of adding additional compressor stations along the route. These large, noisy industrial buildings run day and night in even remote rural areas.

Questions? Visit AugustaCountyAlliance.org or contact us at info@augustacountyalliance.org.