



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
RICHMOND

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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
EDUCATION  
GENERAL LAWS  
HEALTH, WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS

January 7, 2015

Ms. Kimberly Bose, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Ms. Bose:

I am writing to you with regard to the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline. I am a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, representing the people of the 20<sup>th</sup> House District. My district includes parts of Nelson and Augusta County and all of Highland County, all of which are impacted by the current proposed route of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

I am generally supportive of pipeline transmission of natural gas and crude oil. I believe that it is a safer and more efficient alternative to railcar and tanker truck delivery. Despite my concerns with the proposed pipeline, I still believe this to be the case. I do, however, have a number of concerns regarding Dominion's proposed route.

My first concern relates to the topography of our region. As I am sure you are already well aware, our area has one of the highest concentrations of Karst terrain in Virginia. I am concerned that the instability of the terrain could make breaks in the pipeline inevitable. This could cause leaks that threaten the water supply of not only these localities but surrounding localities, including the water supply of the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro, which I also represent. According to the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, the Shenandoah Valley is already particularly vulnerable to water pollution via sinkholes and fracture systems. It seems that construction of such a large pipeline through this region could only exacerbate that risk.

My second concern relates to the widespread use of eminent domain for this project. As you know, the route currently being surveyed by Dominion would require them to use eminent domain on a great deal of private property and farmland. I am never a fan of eminent domain or government "takings" and generally do not feel they should trump private property rights. I certainly understand that there are some instances where eminent domain is necessary for the public good. However, it is also worth pointing out that the property

owners who are sacrificing their property for this pipeline will not see direct benefit from this project.

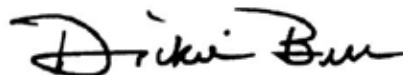
I was not in the legislature in 2004 when utility companies, specifically natural gas transmission companies, were granted the position they now enjoy, and during my tenure in the House there have been no other opportunities to debate the matter or vote to change it. I feel, however, that I must speak up for those in my district that have property that will potentially be affected by this proposal. This current route puts at risk property that has been passed down through generations. I hope that when reviewing this route and other routes you will look to limit the impact of this pipeline on private landowners.

I understand that in addition to Dominion's eastern preferred route, they have submitted an alternate western route. I hope that FERC will give this alternate route every consideration. By bypassing Nelson County and much of Augusta County with this route, I hope that it will place the pipeline in a safer terrain, where the chance of problems will be diminished.

Since plans for the pipeline were announced, I have remained in constant communication with representatives from Dominion. I have asked them and I ask you to look at any and all alternative options as they continue to survey for their pipeline. Some suggested alternatives include utilizing existing easements and rights of way, including installation parallel to existing pipelines and rights of way that are in existence for power and telephone lines. I hope that you will also take into consideration the rights of property owners along any route, and try to ensure that any route use as little private property as possible.

Thank you for your attention to these requests. If you have any questions or if I can be of any assistance as this process moves forward please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dickie Bell". The signature is written in black ink and is centered on the page.

Dickie Bell