

December 13, 2016

The Honorable Norman C. Bay
Chairman
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Chairman Bay:

I write regarding the West Roxbury Lateral pipeline segment and my deep concerns that the voices of West Roxbury are not being heard.

As you are aware, the West Roxbury Lateral pipeline segment will carry highly pressurized natural gas in close proximity to an active quarry where dynamite is regularly exploded.¹ This choice of path has left many residents concerned about the hazard of potential leaks – or worse – occurring in their densely populated neighborhoods.

For two years, residents of West Roxbury have been vocal in their opposition to this pipeline project and, for two years, their voices have largely gone unheard by federal regulators and industry. Recently, Boston's local leaders – charged with the protection and safety of the West Roxbury community – renewed their request that public safety information be made available by Spectra Energy Corp. Letters sent by Boston's Mayor Walsh, Police Commissioner Evans, and Fire Commissioner Finn highlight an alarming lack of response and respect by Spectra Energy Corp. for our local officials.^{2,3} The requested information concerns the “security plan for the Grove Street meter station” and a “heat release map to determine the appropriate evacuation perimeter should a leak occur.” These are crucial pieces of information for the Boston Police and Fire Departments to properly assess security concerns and prepare for emergency responses.

We have seen the devastating impact of pipeline incidents on communities throughout the country. In Shelby County, Alabama, two pipeline workers were killed and four others were injured due to a pipeline explosion.⁴ In Porter Ranch, California, thousands of residents were displaced from their homes amidst complaints of headaches, nausea, and other symptoms.⁵ Pipelines can pose serious threats to the safety and well-being of our communities – which is why safety concerns must be fully heard and transparently evaluated.

¹ <http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/11/30/pipeline/DrigQDZyIMPdMkDkkT58cN/story.html>

² <http://d279m997dpfwgl.cloudfront.net/wp/2016/12/SPECTRA-WALSH-LETTER.pdf>


³ <http://d279m997dpfwgl.cloudfront.net/wp/2016/12/SPECTRA-FIRE-LETTER.pdf>

⁴ http://www.al.com/news/birmingham/index.ssf/2016/12/second_death_confirmed_in_colo.html

⁵ <http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/one-year-and-97100-metric-tons-of-methane-later-the-porter-ranch-gas-leak/>

I urge FERC to suspend approval of the West Roxbury Lateral pipeline until safety concerns are addressed. At a minimum, industry and federal regulators should immediately comply with local authorities' requests for additional information as they continue to provide security and emergency preparedness for our West Roxbury residents.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator