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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2103

September 8, 2014

Thank you for contacting my office regarding the proposed Kinder Morgan Tennessee Gas Pipeline. I appreciate your views and having the benefit of your opinion.

As you know, Kinder Morgan is currently working on a proposal for a new natural gas pipeline that would run approximately 250 miles through New York and Massachusetts. The preliminary route crosses through 44 towns in Massachusetts, including 15 communities in the Third District. Kinder Morgan hopes to receive all the necessary permit approvals by November 2016, and put the pipeline in service in late 2018.

It is undeniable that Massachusetts and the entire New England region is at an energy crossroads. Without careful and strategic long-term planning our region could continue to see steep increases in energy prices and decreased electric grid reliability. This is an unacceptable scenario for Massachusetts families and businesses alike. Accordingly, one proposal the New England Governors have suggested would be to impose a new tariff to incentivize construction of additional natural gas pipeline infrastructure in the region. While this proposal is still in its early stages and no decision to move forward has been made, the project currently proposed by Kinder Morgan would not be subsidized by public resources and the two proposals are currently unrelated.

New England is scheduled to lose over 8,000 MW of electric generating capacity in the next several years as old fashioned, dirty power plants are decommissioned. This is enough energy to power approximately 8 million homes. Even as the Commonwealth continues to significantly invest in energy efficiency programs, the state's overall electricity demand is expected to grow 1.2% annually over the next decade, and peak demand could grow 1.5% annually over that same time period. While natural gas is not a renewable resource or the answer to global warming, it is a viable interim option to helping us reduce our dependence on foreign oil and reduce our carbon dioxide emissions while we steadily work to increase deployment of renewable energy sources. Increasing access to reliable sources of natural gas could also help stabilize energy prices in New England, which have historically been above the national average. However, like all large infrastructure projects with the potential for significant environmental degradation, proposals for new natural gas pipelines must be closely scrutinized.

I have heard from hundreds of Third District residents expressing their concerns with the proposed project. Like them, I oppose the current proposed pipeline route. I find it deeply troubling that the proposed route passes through private and public conservation land, local farm land, state forests, parks, wildlife management areas, and wetlands. It is also my understanding

that the proposed route would cross drinking water supplies in several Third District communities. We have a long-standing history in the Commonwealth of preserving natural habitats and preserving open spaces for the public benefit. Kinder Morgan's proposed route has the potential to cross through some of the most cherished conservation land in Massachusetts; much of this land has been set aside strictly for conservation purposes using both public and private funds. In addition, Massachusetts' environmental regulations and endangered species designations often go above and beyond Federal designations and requirements due to our desire to retain these precious species. These species include the blue-spotted salamander, wood turtle, Blanding's turtle, American bittern, and brook floater. Environmental mitigation efforts during construction of the pipeline would not guarantee that wildlife is not negatively impacted. For these reasons, I have written to both the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and Kinder Morgan expressing my opposition to the current proposed route.

According to Kinder Morgan representatives, the company plans to file their first application with FERC early this fall. FERC is the federal regulatory body that oversees pipelines and energy projects that have interstate impacts. As part of this multiyear review process, Kinder Morgan will be required to submit alternative route proposals and undergo environmental reviews, which will include consultations from Federal agencies such as the Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency regarding safety and environmental concerns respectively, as well as public comment periods. During these comment periods, any individual or organization may submit comments and concerns with the draft proposal. FERC has published a *Citizen's Guide to Pipelines* as a source of information on the regulatory approval process and information for landowners to better understand their rights regarding proposed pipelines. This guide can be found online at: <http://www.ferc.gov/for-citizens/citizen-guides/citz-guide-gas.pdf> or a paper copy may be requested from FERC's Office of External Affairs at 202-502-8004. As soon as the formal application process is started by Kinder Morgan, FERC will also set up an e-subscription service on its website. This e-subscription will automatically email all documents that are filed in relation to the project, including announcements of public comment periods and local town hall meetings.

Kinder Morgan will also have to work with a number of Massachusetts regulatory agencies including the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and various divisions within the Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs throughout the siting and permitting process. The Energy Facilities Siting Board is the nine-member review board responsible for licensing the construction of major energy infrastructure in Massachusetts, including pipelines, and represents Massachusetts throughout the FERC review process. Charged with ensuring a reliable energy supply for the Commonwealth, the Board attempts to minimize the impact on the environment at the lowest possible cost. All Siting Board meetings are open to the public and constituents are encouraged to attend. Additional information on the Energy Facilities Siting Board can be found in their online handbook: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dpu/siting/handbook.pdf>.

I have been monitoring the proposed Kinder Morgan pipeline matter closely. Members of my staff have attended community meetings and have engaged with local organizations and individuals about the proposed line. We have also been briefed on the federal regulatory process by FERC. At recent community meetings, Kinder Morgan responded to constituent concerns about the proposed route by agreeing to look at alternative routes and stated they are meeting with state agencies like the Department of Transportation to discuss alternate route options in

order to limit the disruption of protected land. I will continue to monitor Kinder Morgan's efforts to address the serious concerns raised by communities along the proposed route, particularly the alarming environmental impacts. I will also be keeping a close eye on the role the federal government is playing to oversee the proposal. And, I will be urging FERC to ensure that their review process is comprehensive, open and transparent to the public and fully considers their concerns.

Thank you again for taking the time to be in touch. Please do not hesitate to contact my office in the future with questions or concerns on the proposed pipeline.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Niki Tsongas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Niki Tsongas

Member of Congress