



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage

GOVERNOR

September 23, 2014

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress
1318 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Michael Michaud
Member of Congress
1724 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Pingree and Congressman Michaud,

I am writing to request that you reconsider your opposition to H.R. 1900, "The Natural Gas Permitting Reform Act," which would streamline permitting for critical natural gas infrastructure.

New England is in an energy crisis. Constraints in the natural gas pipeline infrastructure are causing electricity prices to spike to nearly unprecedented levels and requiring generators to use oil to keep the lights on in our region. Energy intensive manufacturing in Maine been idled in the winter months because prices are simply uncompetitive. The situation this winter is particularly difficult with prices doubling for small businesses. New England desperately needs new pipeline infrastructure.

The Natural Gas Permitting Act would help address this crisis. The legislation would require federal agencies 90 days to approve or deny a permit for a natural gas pipeline project. If agencies fail to complete their work, their permit is automatically approved. These critical infrastructure projects will save millions for the Maine ratepayer and we need a federal government to expeditiously approve these projects. We have already seen the Massachusetts Governor and some extreme activist groups attempt to slow down these projects. All analysis has shown that these projects would be enormously cost-effective. That is why the New England Ratepayers Association has endorsed the legislation and the companies proposing the projects support the legislation.

Yet, on November 21, 2013, you opposed this legislation in an up-or-down vote. Last Thursday, you both opposed the legislation again as part of a larger package of energy bills. Your vote against "The Natural Gas Permitting Reform Act" was wrong for New England, wrong for our employers competing against other regions that have access to natural gas, and a disservice to any Mainer struggling to pay their electric bills.



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Please reconsider your opposition and support natural gas pipeline growth to keep this region competitive. Twenty-six of your democratic colleagues supported the legislation and understand how natural gas can be the difference for our businesses. Please consider joining them and calling for enactment.

Please help Maine and publicly support H.R. 1900 and work to move this legislation into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul R. LePage". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Paul R. LePage
Governor