

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 23, 2017

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Sessions:

Multiple media sources have reported recent attempts to disrupt the transmission of oil and natural gas through interstate and international pipeline infrastructure. In some instances, individuals have used blow torches to burn holes in pipelines or promoted violence against oil and gas company employees. In April, a newspaper in Colorado went as far as publishing a letter to the editor that stated, “If the oil and gas industry puts fracking wells in our neighborhoods, threatening our lives and our children’s lives, then don’t we have a moral responsibility to blow up wells and eliminate fracking and workers?”¹

While we are strong advocates for the First Amendment, violence toward individuals and destruction of property are both illegal and potentially fatal.

Damaging pipeline infrastructure poses multiple risks to humans and the environment. When an individual burns a hole through a pipeline currently in operation, there is a high probability this could ignite the contents, killing not only the perpetrator but other innocent victims. It also has the potential to cause property and environmental damage, as well as disrupt services to communities and consumers.

Recent incidents of individuals attempting to shut down lines by turning valves at pump stations illustrate the danger. Operation of pipeline facilities by unqualified personnel could result in a rupture – the consequences of which would be devastating. Even though some activists commit these acts of sabotage to raise awareness about climate change, they only create the serious risk of harm to the environment they claim to care about.

We realize the Department of Justice (DOJ) faces unique challenges when confronting these crimes, including identifying suspects amidst the rural and remote infrastructure across the country. But maintaining safe and reliable energy infrastructure is a matter of national security.

¹ <http://dailycaller.com/2017/04/22/colorado-paper-refuses-to-retract-letter-calling-for-violence-against-frackers/>

With this information in mind, we request that you respond to the following questions:

1. Do existing federal statutes, including the Patriot Act and Pipeline Safety Act, adequately arm the DOJ to prosecute criminal activity against energy infrastructure at the federal level?
2. Has the DOJ taken any prosecutorial or investigative action against those involved with the highly publicized October 11, 2016, attempted sabotage of four major crude oil pipelines in multiple states? If not, please explain the DOJ's reasoning for not pursuing this case.
3. Does the DOJ intend to pursue federal prosecutorial or investigative action of any individuals who knowingly and willfully damaged or destroyed interstate or international pipeline infrastructure?
4. Do the attacks against the nation's energy infrastructure, which pose a threat to human life, and appear to be intended to intimidate and coerce policy changes, fall within the DOJ's understanding of 18 U.S.C. Section 2331(5)?

We look forward to your response and to working together on this important issue.

Respectfully,



Ken Buck
Member of Congress



Kevin Cramer
Member of Congress



Lamar Smith
Member of Congress



Steve Scalise
Member of Congress



Trent Franks
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Steve Chabot
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Randy Weber
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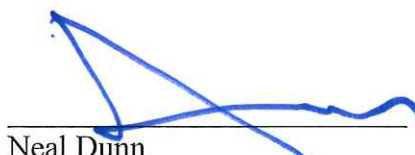

Andy Biggs
Member of Congress


Blake Farenthold
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Pete Sessions
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Mark Meadows
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Rob Bishop
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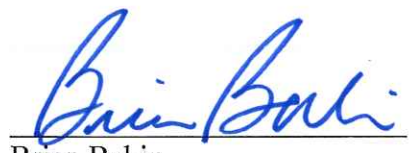

Neal Dunn
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Doug LaMalfa
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Ralph Norman
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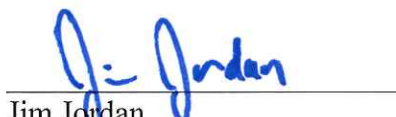

Jeff Duncan
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Bob Gibbs
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Brian Babin
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Adrian Smith
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Jim Jordan
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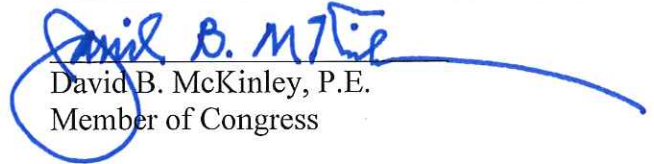
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Michael T. McCaul
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Greg Gianforte
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John R. Carter
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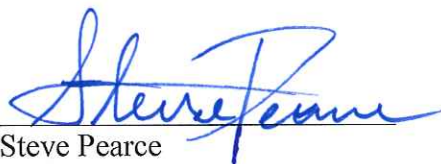
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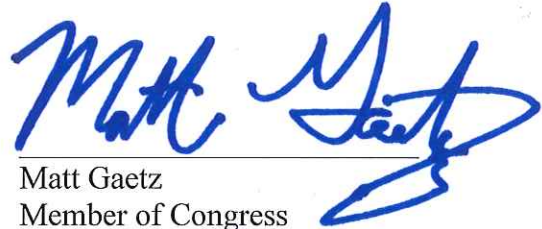
Barry Loudermilk
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Kristi Noem
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Bruce Westerman
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Matt Gaetz
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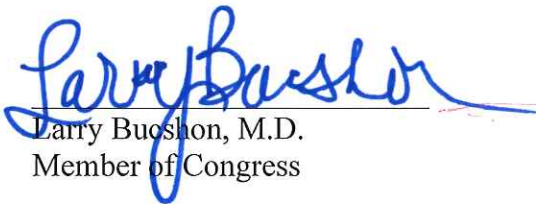
Mike D. Rogers
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Vicente Gonzalez
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Henry Cuellar
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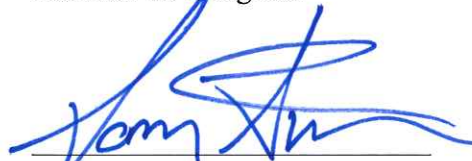
Larry Bucshon, M.D.
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Louie Gohmert
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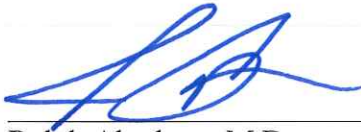
Sam Graves
Member of Congress



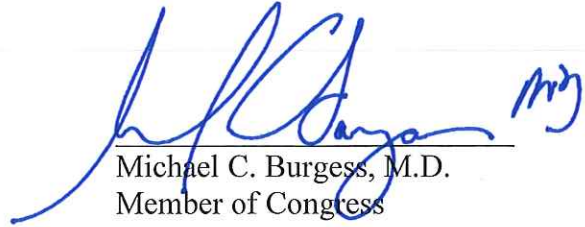
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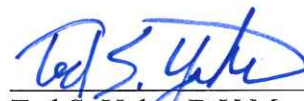
Filemon Vela
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Jody Hice
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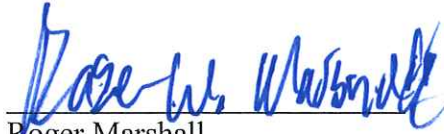
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Ted Budd
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Roger Marshall
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Ron Estes
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Rick Crawford
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Daniel Webster
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Glenn 'GT' Thompson
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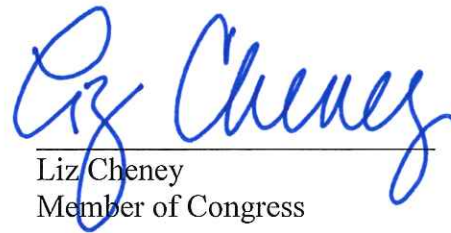
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Clay Higgins
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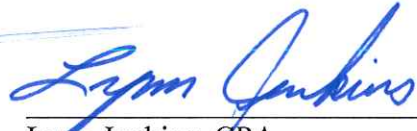
Mike Johnson
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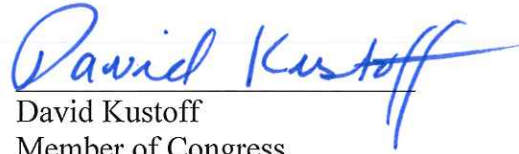
Scott Perry
Member of Congress



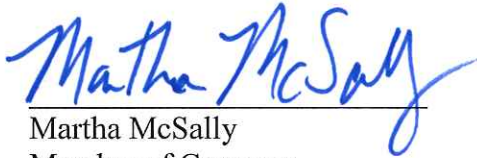
Lynn Jenkins, CPA
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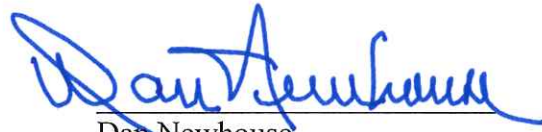
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