



1                   Tuesday Evening Session  
2                   January 27, 2015  
3                   beginning at 6:30 p.m.

4                   - - -

5                   MR. POLIT:  If we could have everyone  
6                   find a seat, I'd like to start the meeting.  
7                   Could I see -- in the back, am I audible?  Am I  
8                   loud enough?

9                   - - -

10                  (A discussion was held off the record.)

11                  - - -

12                  MR. POLIT:  Okay.  I'll try to talk not  
13                  too quietly.  If anyone wants to hear, just raise  
14                  your hand.  Because I know I'm getting to be a  
15                  little more difficult hearing, and it helps.  So  
16                  without any further ado, let's go ahead and start  
17                  the meeting.

18                  Good evening, everyone.  On behalf of  
19                  the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, I would  
20                  like to welcome you here tonight.  This is an  
21                  environmental scoping meeting -- I want to  
22                  emphasize that -- for the Leach Xpress Project  
23                  being planned by Columbia Gas Transmission.

24                  The primary purpose of this meeting is  
25                  to give you an opportunity to provide

1 environmentally related comments on the Leach  
2 Xpress Project that is being planned by Columbia  
3 Gas. Comments and input received by the public  
4 will become part of the environmental record for  
5 the planned project. Let the record show that  
6 the public scoping meeting in Moundsville, West  
7 Virginia began at 6:30 -- well, let's make that  
8 6:34 p.m., January 27th, 2015.

9 My name is Juan Polit. That's  
10 P-O-L-I-T. I am with the FERC, and I'm an  
11 environmental project manager in the Office of  
12 Energy Projects. So I would be responsible for  
13 conducting detailed environmental analysis of  
14 Columbia Gas' planned project and producing the  
15 environmental impact statement, or EIS for short.

16 Christine Allen, also with FERC, is in  
17 the back. You may have met her at the sign-up  
18 table. With me to my left I have Brian Sterner.  
19 And Monica Rudowski is also in the back. These  
20 last two people I mentioned are with ERM, which  
21 is our contractor. And we've hired them to help  
22 us prepare the EIS and to help run some of these  
23 meetings.

24 We also have representatives from  
25 Columbia Gas here tonight which you've probably

1 met already. They have an information table. If  
2 you haven't seen, it's the one on the left. If I  
3 look back, it's on the left. And FERC has one on  
4 the right side.

5           As you can see, this meeting is being  
6 recorded by a court reporter so we can have an  
7 accurate record of tonight's comments. A  
8 transcript of this meeting will be placed in the  
9 public record so that everyone has access to the  
10 information presented tonight.

11           I mentioned our sign-up table. That's  
12 FERC's sign-up table in the back. We have a sign  
13 up for speakers. We also have one for -- just to  
14 sign in and have your name recorded as being  
15 here. We also have a number of informational  
16 handouts there as well.

17           I will quickly run through the agenda  
18 for tonight's meeting. What I'm going to do  
19 tonight is I'll start off by briefly explaining  
20 FERC and our environmental review process. Then  
21 I'll have Columbia Gas give a brief overview of  
22 the planned project. And following that, we are  
23 going to invite those who are in the audience who  
24 are on the speakers list and also who have not  
25 yet put their names down to begin to come up and

1 make your comments. And that will be right up  
2 here at the microphone in the aisle.

3           So let me begin by describing FERC a  
4 little bit for you. FERC is an independent  
5 agency that, among other things, regulates  
6 interstate transmission of natural gas. So, by  
7 interstate, we mean transmitting natural gas  
8 across state lines.

9           FERC is comprised of a five-member  
10 commission, and then we have the regular FERC  
11 staff. The five-member commission reviews  
12 proposals for and authorizes construction of  
13 interstate natural gas pipelines, natural gas  
14 storage facilities, and natural gas terminals.  
15 These five commission members are appointed by  
16 the President and approved by the Senate. The  
17 commission staff, which myself -- which includes  
18 myself and Mrs. Allen in the back, prepare  
19 technical information to assist the commissioners  
20 in making their decisions.

21           When a company wants to build pipeline  
22 facilities to transport and sell natural gas in  
23 interstate commerce, a company will file an  
24 application before the FERC. What they are  
25 seeking is a certificate of public convenience

1 and necessity that gives them the authority to  
2 construct and operate their pipeline facilities.

3 Columbia Gas plans to file their  
4 application around June of this year and is  
5 requesting the certificate next year, if I'm not  
6 mistaken. It's important for everyone to  
7 understand that Columbia Gas' planned project is  
8 not proposed by FERC and it's not conceived by  
9 FERC.

10 As a federal licensing agency, the FERC  
11 has responsibility under the National  
12 Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA for short, to  
13 consider the potential environmental impacts  
14 associated with the project such as this one  
15 which is under its jurisdiction.

16 With regard to the Leach Xpress Project  
17 that is being planned, FERC is the lead federal  
18 agency for the NEPA review and, of course, we  
19 will be preparing the EIS, which I mentioned  
20 earlier.

21 So tonight's meeting is not a public  
22 hearing. We don't describe it that way. We  
23 cannot debate the project or issues related to it  
24 or make any determinations on the fate of the  
25 project. What we are here to do tonight is to

1 listen to your concerns and comments so that we  
2 can consider them in our analysis of the  
3 potential environmental impacts of the planned  
4 project. We are going to consider environmental  
5 impacts on the natural and human environment.

6           During our review of the project, we  
7 will assemble information from a variety of  
8 sources and stakeholders, aside from the public  
9 and the landowners. So let me back up and just  
10 make it clear that when I say stakeholders,  
11 that's everyone -- landowners, state agencies,  
12 local and state governments, elected officials,  
13 Indian tribes, nongovernmental organizations, and  
14 that's what I mean by the stakeholders.

15           Now, just a little bit about the  
16 environmental review process. Currently where  
17 FERC is right now is that we are in the first  
18 phase of our review of the planned project, and  
19 we call that the scoping phase. And it's  
20 synonymous with the scoping period. The scoping  
21 period is when the FERC staff assembles  
22 environmental information from all of the sources  
23 that I stated above, from the stakeholders, from  
24 our own independent analysis, fieldwork, and  
25 review.

1           We assemble that environmental  
2 information and we determine the extent of the  
3 overall environmental analysis. So we scope out  
4 the extent of what we want to study in the  
5 environmental analysis. Scoping for this planned  
6 project began when Columbia Gas entered into the  
7 FERC pre-file process on October 9th of last  
8 year.

9           Now, let me take a step back and  
10 briefly define what is the pre-filing process.  
11 Pre-filing is a part of an environmental timeline  
12 in which the FERC staff will actually begin an  
13 environmental study even though a planned project  
14 has not been filed with FERC. The purpose of  
15 pre-filing is to encourage involvement by all  
16 interested stakeholders in a manner that allows  
17 for the early identification of environmental  
18 issues and resolution of some of them. As of  
19 today, no formal application has been filed with  
20 the FERC.

21           However, FERC, along with other  
22 federal, state, and local agency staff, have  
23 begun the review of the planned project. The  
24 pre-file process and the scoping period will both  
25 end when the Columbia Gas Company files their

1 applications to FERC. And as I mentioned, that's  
2 expected somewhere in June of this year. At that  
3 time, FERC will issue the notice of application.

4           So our informal commentary began on  
5 January 13, 2015, and that's the date when FERC  
6 issued its notice of intent to prepare an  
7 environmental impact statement for the Leach  
8 Xpress Project.

9           So it looked something like this. We  
10 have copies on the back table. We encourage you  
11 to pick up, for those of you that don't have one.  
12 The notice of intent, which we call the NOI for  
13 short, was mailed to approximately 1,400  
14 stakeholders, and it describes the environmental  
15 review process, some of the issues that have  
16 already been identified, and the steps that FERC  
17 and the cooperating agencies will take to prepare  
18 this EIS document, which I'm in charge of.

19           We have set an ending date of  
20 February 12, 2015, for this comment period.  
21 However, this is not the end of your chance to  
22 file comments on the project with us. We will  
23 still accept comments after the date of  
24 February 12th, but we just needed to set a date  
25 so that we can try to collect as many of the

1 comments as possible for the whole process to  
2 move along.

3           We have already begun analyzing  
4 Columbia's preferred route and some routes that  
5 have been out there, which we call alternative  
6 routes, and some of the issues that we've  
7 received out in the field. As we progress toward  
8 the end of the scoping period, we will constantly  
9 be reviewing and updating what are known as  
10 environmental resource reports. And we require  
11 these to be developed by Columbia Gas.

12           Now, these resource reports are going  
13 to be uploaded to the e-library website,  
14 maintained at the commission, for the public to  
15 look at, and they contain information for several  
16 different resource areas; for example, water  
17 resources, wildlife habitat, land use impacts,  
18 residential impacts, and also impacts on air  
19 noise quality.

20           Some of these resource reports are  
21 already out there on the public record; namely,  
22 numbers 1 and 10. And as I said, you can already  
23 view them.

24           FERC's environmental staff will examine  
25 the proposed facility locations as well as

1 alternative sites contained in Columbia Gas'  
2 filed resource reports. So the resource reports  
3 will be a key and important source of information  
4 that we'll be using to analyze the whole project.  
5 And they're beginning to be coming in onto the  
6 record in draft form.

7           Using all information collected during  
8 the scoping period, FERC staff will factor them  
9 into our own independent analysis of the  
10 project's potential impacts on the human and  
11 natural environment. The EIS will contain a  
12 summary that includes our assessment of the  
13 planned impacts on many different resource areas,  
14 including agriculture, residences, water bodies,  
15 wetlands, vegetation, wildlife, endangered  
16 species, cultural resources, soils, land use,  
17 noise and air quality, and public safety.

18           The EIS will also include a set of  
19 environmental conditions that we will require  
20 Columbia Gas to carry out and abide by if they do  
21 get the authorization to construct and operate  
22 the project.

23           FERC will publish a draft EIS which we  
24 will distribute to all the identified  
25 stakeholders for a 45-day draft EIS comment

1 period. Now, that distribution will be to pretty  
2 much the same list as who received the NOI, that  
3 list of 1,400 that I mentioned before.

4 At the end of the draft EIS comment  
5 period, FERC staff will prepare a final EIS that  
6 specifically addresses each comment received on  
7 the draft. That includes all necessary changes,  
8 additions, modifications to conclusions reached  
9 that we had already put in the draft.

10 Now, that final EIS is the document  
11 that will be considered by the five-member  
12 commission when it determines whether or not to  
13 grant Columbia Gas its certificate request.

14 The commission's consideration will  
15 include findings, conclusions, and  
16 recommendations. Now, in the final EIS, we will  
17 also include stakeholder comments on  
18 nonenvironmental issues, including engineering  
19 needs, market need, rates, finances, tariffs, and  
20 costs associated with the natural gas industry.

21 So what I'm saying is we have a  
22 two-part source of information that the  
23 commissioners use. One is environmental, and one  
24 is the economic and engineering. That relates to  
25 getting natural gas out to the customer.

1           I'd like to draw your attention again  
2 to the sign-in table. Let's see. For those of  
3 you that haven't -- or that have come in late, if  
4 you received a copy of the NOI, you are already  
5 on our mailing list, that 1,400 that I mentioned  
6 before. However, if you did not receive the NOI,  
7 you can get on that mailing list, and you'll be  
8 on there for the duration of the process. In  
9 order to do that, please go ahead and sign your  
10 name on the attendance sheet in the back. Thank  
11 you.

12           Now, aside from speaking into the  
13 record tonight, there are three other ways that  
14 you can get your comments to FERC. Those include  
15 handing written comments tonight to myself,  
16 Ms. Allen, or Mr. Sterner, or Ms. Rudowski in the  
17 back. You can mail that in to the secretary,  
18 using the address that's on the NOI. Or you can  
19 write a separate -- just a letter to the  
20 secretary, according to the instructions in the  
21 NOI. Or the third way is that you can write your  
22 comments in using our electronic online filing  
23 system. We would always like to encourage  
24 electronic use, but that may not be possible for  
25 everyone, or convenient, so we recognize that.

1           We have several brochures also at the  
2 sign-up table in the back, and one of them is --  
3 has instructions for filing electronically with  
4 FERC. So I mention that right now. What is very  
5 important is that in any comments that you send,  
6 either electronically or by written letter or to  
7 us tonight, including our docket number for the  
8 project. So we have a single docket number right  
9 now for the whole project which contains the  
10 record for the project. That docket number is on  
11 the -- should be on the cover or inside the NOI.  
12 It's on the back cover, actually. You can get  
13 the docket number from any one of us. We also  
14 have it written down at the sign-up table. That  
15 number is very important so we know which of the  
16 many projects that FERC deals with to put that  
17 comment into.

18           I'll go ahead and tell you the docket  
19 number right now. It's PF14-23-000.

20           So I tried to give you a little bit  
21 about FERC and our process, and we've asked  
22 Columbia Gas to give a presentation. And so  
23 without further ado, Zane --

24           MR. DANIELS: Yes, sir.

25           MR. POLIT: All right. Zane will start

1 that off.

2 MR. DANIELS: Good evening, everyone.  
3 My name is Zane Daniels, and I am manager of  
4 community relations and stakeholder outreach for  
5 Columbia Pipeline Group. Regardless of if you're  
6 here in support of this project or to voice  
7 specific concerns, on behalf of our entire  
8 project team, I'd just like to say thank you for  
9 taking the time to be here tonight. Your  
10 comments and concerns will help us build the  
11 safest, most reliable, and environmentally sound  
12 project as possible.

13 We're going to give you a brief  
14 overview of who we are as a company and a little  
15 overview of the project itself. Before we do, I  
16 would like to introduce our team members that are  
17 here tonight. So if you don't mind, when I  
18 announce your name, if you'd please raise your  
19 hand to be -- to be seen here.

20 Again, my name is Zane Daniels, manager  
21 of community relations and stakeholder outreach.  
22 Unfortunately our manager of landowner relations,  
23 Nena Honaker, was unable to be here tonight. But  
24 we do have Jim Prince, who is our contract  
25 right-of-way manager. There's Jim.

1           Melissa Dettling, who is our natural  
2 resource permitting project manager.

3           David Beckmeyer, environmental  
4 permitting consultant with Perennial  
5 Environmental Services. Dave's in the back.

6           Leslie Yoo, principal biologist for  
7 Perennial Environmental Services.

8           Ted McDavitt, who is our faculty  
9 project manager, unfortunately, will not be here  
10 tonight.

11          Elaine Coppedge, who is our project  
12 manager in the back.

13          D.J. Reza, associate pipeline project  
14 manager.

15          Ben Lun, project engineer, lead project  
16 engineer.

17          And Stone Broadway, who is our  
18 construction manager.

19          MS. DETTLING: Sorry. The screen --  
20 the power went off.

21          MR. DANIELS: Just a little overview  
22 about who we are. Columbia Guideline Group owns  
23 and operates more than 15,000 miles of  
24 international natural gas pipeline and one of the  
25 largest underground natural gas storage systems

1 in North America.

2 Our system connects premium natural gas  
3 supplies with some of the nation's strongest  
4 energy markets and service customers in 16  
5 states.

6 We transport more than one trillion  
7 cubic feet of natural gas through our pipeline  
8 and storage systems each year.

9 We are currently owned by NiSource, but  
10 we announced late last year that we will become a  
11 stand-alone publicly traded company by mid-2015.

12 Now for a brief project overview. Over  
13 the last year and a half, Columbia Pipeline Group  
14 has been in this area evaluating the energy  
15 infrastructure needs of the Appalachian basin.  
16 What we found is there is a significant need for  
17 new natural gas transmission pipeline due to the  
18 constrained production areas that we see here.

19 The proposed Leach Xpress pipeline is  
20 designed to safely transport 1.5 billion cubic  
21 feet per day of natural gas from the Marcellus  
22 and Utica production areas in Ohio and West  
23 Virginia.

24 This pipeline will link local energy  
25 supplies with regional markets and provide

1 natural gas users with a reliable and affordable  
2 new gas supply. The pipeline is projected to  
3 originate here in Marshall County and travel  
4 through southeastern Ohio and end in Wayne  
5 County, West Virginia.

6 Our pipeline construction is slated to  
7 begin in the fall of 2016, with a projected  
8 in-service date of late November 2017.

9 MS. COPPEDGE: So the scope of Leach  
10 Xpress is approximately 160 miles of 36-inch  
11 pipe. The pipeline begins in Marshall County and  
12 goes west for about 130 miles, where it meets up  
13 with our existing Columbia system in Hocking and  
14 Fairfield County just south of Columbus. From  
15 there, the pipeline will -- the new proposed  
16 pipeline will go south for about 27 miles, and  
17 that pipeline is 36-inch as well.

18 In addition to those two lines, there  
19 is a three-mile what we call loop, which is  
20 basically a pipeline that is installed next to  
21 some of our existing systems. That three-mile  
22 loop is in Wayne County, West Virginia. And what  
23 I forgot to mention was the 27-mile pipeline is  
24 also a loop. But, here, we're more focused on  
25 the Marshall County pipeline itself. So that is

1 kind of the kick-off of where the Leach Xpress  
2 line begins.

3 Part of what we're doing in Ohio with  
4 the 27-mile loop is replacing one of our older  
5 pipelines with this brand-new Leach Xpress line.

6 In addition to the pipeline, we will  
7 have some aboveground facilities. We are  
8 installing three brand-new compressor stations.  
9 One here in Marshall County, one in Noble County,  
10 Ohio, and one in Jackson County, Ohio. In  
11 addition to the compressor stations, we have some  
12 regulator stations, which are smaller in size,  
13 and aboveground mainline valve facilities. So  
14 compressor stations -- usually we will purchase a  
15 larger area of land than the actual footprint  
16 will be once it's finalized and installed. These  
17 compressor stations have vent silencers. They  
18 have remote-start capabilities and, like I said,  
19 the security fencing that is on the outside of  
20 the compressor stations.

21 MS. DETTLING: We just added this to  
22 show where Loan Oak is in relation to  
23 Moundsville.

24 MS. COPPEDGE: So this is -- Loan Oak  
25 compressor station is the one compressor station

1 that is in Marshall. It's kind of hard to see  
2 where it's at, but it's closer to Pennsylvania.  
3 It's in what's popularly known as the Majorsville  
4 area. Melissa snuck that one in on me.

5           So what the construction process looks  
6 like is a sequence of events which we're  
7 anticipating will start in November of 2016. And  
8 the first step is a survey crew which will come  
9 to the property and mark the pipeline itself and  
10 the work area that our construction crews will  
11 stay within. And this is all what has been  
12 previously agreed to with the landowners.

13           After the survey crew, it will be  
14 closely followed by a clearing and grading crew,  
15 which basically just makes it a safe environment  
16 for the construction workers to do their job.

17           Once the pipeline is welded, we test  
18 the welds with an x-ray to make sure that the  
19 weld meets strict standards. And the pipeline is  
20 installed in the ground and covered back up.  
21 Once it's covered up, the two final steps are to  
22 test the pipeline with water that's pressurized  
23 and held for a certain amount of time just to be  
24 one last final check to make sure there was no  
25 damage to the pipeline during construction. And

1 the final step is full restoration of the  
2 property.

3           So this picture -- the lines are kind  
4 of hard to see, but it's just a high-level  
5 overview of the workspace that we will be using  
6 during construction. Typically we get 110 feet,  
7 except in areas of steep terrain. So Marshall is  
8 steep terrain.

9           So in areas where it's a little bit  
10 more dangerous to construct, we typically try to  
11 get 125 feet. This creates a safer work  
12 environment for the construction workers  
13 themselves. And if you can see -- it's kind of  
14 hard -- there's a 50-foot permanent easement,  
15 which is maintained throughout the life of the  
16 project and operations so that it's safe.

17           Pipeline safety is the utmost important  
18 thing to Columbia. The pipeline industry itself  
19 is -- we design, construct, and maintain our  
20 systems to the Department of Transportation  
21 safety standards.

22           A couple of things that we do to keep  
23 the pipeline safe is visual monitoring of the  
24 pipeline itself. We do around-the-clock  
25 monitoring, which I'll talk about on the next

1 slide. We have underground cathodic protection  
2 which prevents the pipeline from corrosion.

3           And the last thing is this tool here,  
4 which is called a smart pig. And what this tool  
5 does is it allows us to collect data about the  
6 pipeline itself without having to see it. So  
7 it -- you run it through the pipeline system, and  
8 it brings back all this data and it can tell you  
9 that your pipeline has full integrity.

10           Okay. So this is what I was talking  
11 about earlier. This picture here is our  
12 Charleston, West Virginia gas monitoring center.  
13 It's state of the art. We have highly trained  
14 employees around-the-clock, 24/seven, always  
15 monitoring the pipeline system. They receive  
16 realtime data from our facilities that tell them  
17 pressures, temperatures, flows, everything they  
18 need to know to ensure that it's operating  
19 safely. And what this allows them to do is make  
20 quick decisions and respond to issues that are  
21 happening out in the field.

22           And one last thing on pipeline safety.  
23 We work very closely with emergency responders in  
24 all of our operating areas. We did not introduce  
25 Scott Durbin, but he is in the back. He is one

1 of our operations personnel here in this area.  
2 So if you have any questions -- I'm going to  
3 volunteer you, Scott. But after the meeting,  
4 he's a great person to talk to about the day to  
5 day.

6 MS. DETTLING: So as Zane said when he  
7 was introducing, my name's Melissa Dettling. I'm  
8 the environmental project manager. So as Juan  
9 was explaining, we put together environmental  
10 reports from all the data we collect and  
11 consultations we did with agencies, and our team  
12 works on doing that.

13 We obviously -- we believe that the  
14 environmental is a huge -- just as big as safety.  
15 Environmental is huge as well. We are always --  
16 oh, a little louder? Okay.

17 We design our projects so that we can  
18 construct the pipeline in a safe manner but also  
19 in a way that we can minimize environmental  
20 impacts. Right now you might have gotten --  
21 Elaine spoke about the survey process. You may  
22 be here or you may have gotten letters in the  
23 mail requesting or letting you know that we're  
24 going to be out on the land conducting surveys.  
25 Some of that is collecting civil data, and some

1 of that is collecting biological and cultural  
2 data.

3           We have a survey corridor that's much  
4 bigger than what we're planning to use for our  
5 proposed project, so we collect data not only  
6 where we may impact but also adjacent to. We're  
7 looking for environmental resources, such as  
8 protected species habitat, land use, wetlands,  
9 water bodies, and then if there's any cultural  
10 resources that may exist on the properties.

11           We started our surveys last year in  
12 June, wrapped up for the winter, and as soon as  
13 weather permits we will be back out there to  
14 finish up this year.

15           Through the process -- as Juan said,  
16 we're in pre-filing. We're reaching out to  
17 agencies. Several agencies regulate activities  
18 that we do when we construct a pipeline project.  
19 Not only do some of these agencies just consult  
20 with us on what our impacts might be and what  
21 their recommendations are, but some of them issue  
22 authorizations to do the work.

23           So here's just a list of some of those  
24 agencies which range from federal and state,  
25 ranging from permits we might need for water

1 resource impacts, protected species  
2 consultations, and then permitting that we may  
3 need on our authorizations for air quality.

4           We also have a list here of some other  
5 agencies we may consult with, as I said, on any  
6 of the lands we might be crossing. NRCS, we  
7 certainly consult -- there are several levels,  
8 but also a big part is for our restorational  
9 requirements. The National Park Service, DNR.  
10 We have cultural resource agencies that we  
11 consult with and send in all of our survey data  
12 and work with them throughout our process.

13           I want to go a little bit into land.  
14 So as Elaine showed a cross-section, we will have  
15 a construction -- a project that we're  
16 constructing which will have a workspace, a  
17 smaller subset of that. We will maintain an  
18 easement to operate our pipeline so we can do our  
19 monitoring and make sure that our pipeline is in  
20 good working order. That easement, as she said,  
21 is 50 feet.

22           These, we'll be working with landowners  
23 to acquire these easements. They are not -- it's  
24 not a land purchase wholly. You'll be able to  
25 keep the ownership of that land, but we will have

1 a real property interest to the land above the  
2 pipeline to enable us to construct, replace,  
3 operate, and maintain that system.

4 As I was saying, there's requirements  
5 for that right-of-way, that they'll have to be  
6 kept free of obstructions so that we can safely  
7 monitor, patrol, and inspect our right-of-ways.  
8 Line markers are put into place for safety  
9 measures and so that we can control, and so that  
10 other people are aware that our system is there.

11 MR. DANIELS: And, finally, as far as  
12 community relations are concerned, you know, the  
13 Columbia Pipeline Group, we take great pride in  
14 the relationships that we've built here in the  
15 local community. We've been a part of Ohio and  
16 West Virginia for over 100 years. We are  
17 committed to the growth and vitality of the  
18 communities in which we operate.

19 Middle of November, we held six open  
20 house meetings over a two-week period -- one was  
21 held at this very location -- to educate  
22 landowners and interest groups on the project.  
23 And those went -- those were very successful, we  
24 believe.

25 We are committed to making sure you are

1 all updated on this project. One of the ways  
2 that we are going to do that is we will keep you  
3 informed through quarterly newsletters, and we've  
4 already been reaching out to local elected  
5 officials about this project and our operations.

6 Our long-term commitment includes  
7 supporting local non-profit and civic  
8 organizations, sponsoring at community events,  
9 and volunteering within the community.

10 Again, we can't thank you enough for  
11 being here tonight. And we look forward to  
12 hearing your comments, and thanks for taking the  
13 time.

14 MR. POLIT: Thank you very much.

15 Thank you very much. We appreciate  
16 Columbia Gas being able to give us some  
17 project-specific details.

18 All right. What I want to do now is go  
19 ahead and begin the important part of tonight's  
20 meeting where we hear your comments. We're going  
21 to take them in the order that they appear on the  
22 speaker sign-up sheet, which we had at the back  
23 sign-up table. And I encourage any one of you  
24 who is still considering to speak, go ahead and  
25 get back there and sign up, and we'll make sure

1 we get you in.

2           If you want to wait until the end and  
3 make comments and decide, that's fine, too. Just  
4 make sure you let us know in time to catch you.  
5 It will help us the most if your comments are as  
6 specific as possible regarding potential  
7 environmental impacts on the human and natural  
8 environments concerning this planned project.  
9 You can also make comments about alternative  
10 locations of the pipeline or the compressor  
11 station facilities.

12           Now, sometimes we may get issues that  
13 you want to bring up that are not environmentally  
14 related. What we're trying to do is focus on the  
15 environmental comments tonight. We're not really  
16 in too much of a position to be able to answer  
17 questions in detail or issues that come up, but  
18 we can talk to you about the process. For  
19 example, what's FERC's process, if you want more  
20 clarification, the timeline for the project, the  
21 environmental study, and also construction and  
22 beyond.

23           Issues like that, we can answer those,  
24 but we don't want to get into discussions of  
25 whether the project has a need or not or whether

1 it's going to discuss whether -- you know, the  
2 harsher impacts that we can sometimes study and  
3 find associated with these projects. But we want  
4 to take comments. So sometimes if you want to  
5 ask us a question, that can be a comment, if you  
6 know what I mean.

7 Now, we also want to stress that at the  
8 end of the meeting, if you still have questions  
9 that you think Columbia Gas, with their maps and  
10 experts who are here, may be able to assist you  
11 on, feel free to gather with them after the  
12 meeting. We're going to try to close it down  
13 between the hour of 9:00 and 10:00 o'clock.

14 And I'll tell you this because we have  
15 about three speakers so far, so I'm hoping that  
16 we get some more to sign up.

17 Now, if you don't want to give your  
18 comments tonight, as I said, there's the three  
19 methods that I mentioned to you before. Okay.  
20 So when your name is called, please come up to  
21 the center microphone in the center aisle, and  
22 state your name and if you're affiliated with  
23 anything, anyone.

24 We actually ask you to spell out your  
25 name for the benefit of our court reporter to

1 ensure that your name is accurately recorded. Go  
2 ahead and speak directly into the microphone. I  
3 wouldn't be too afraid of speaking too loudly.

4           So let's go ahead and begin with your  
5 comments tonight. And I would like to ask if  
6 Steve McDiffitt would like to come up. Sir,  
7 thank you.

8           MR. McDIFFITT: As he said, my name's  
9 Steven McDiffitt. Born and raised here in  
10 Camden, West Virginia. Name is spelled Steven,  
11 S-T-E-V-E-N, McDiffitt, M-c-D-I-F-F-I-T-T. I was  
12 born and raised here in Camden, West Virginia.  
13 Still a resident here.

14           And I'm here to speak in support of the  
15 Columbia Leach project. As an operating  
16 engineer, I also know that pipelines are the  
17 safest, most economical, and environmentally  
18 friendly way to transport our resources.

19           I'm also here to -- that I would like  
20 to thank Columbia. I believe they're committed  
21 to using the local tradesmen and women in the  
22 area. We appreciate that. And I'm also here to  
23 thank Columbia and FERC for their efforts in  
24 constructing a safe and environmentally conscious  
25 project on this.

1           It's in all of our best interests to  
2 have these pipelines in here moving this stuff  
3 safely and economically. Thanks for your time.  
4 Thanks for being here this evening.

5           MR. POLIT: Thank you for your  
6 comments.

7           Our next speaker is Dennis Moore.

8           MR. MOORE: Yeah. My name's Dennis  
9 Moore. It's M-O-O-R-E. I live in Marshall  
10 County, and the pipeline's proposed to go against  
11 our property.

12           First, I'd like to know who forces us  
13 to be able to -- you can just tell people that  
14 they have to let surveyors come across and do  
15 their work that they are without our right to say  
16 no? Okay. Because we've been told through these  
17 letters that the surveyors are going to come and  
18 mark out this pipeline and that it might go under  
19 eminent domain. Is that right?

20           MR. POLIT: I'll take that as a  
21 comment.

22           MR. MOORE: Okay. You told me I could  
23 have questions. Okay?

24           MR. POLIT: Sure.

25           MR. MOORE: And if we don't like the

1 pipeline, is it going to be forced down us  
2 through eminent domain? Okay. And if it is, why  
3 should we have, as landowners, have to let you  
4 put a pipeline across us, destroy our property,  
5 take some prime locations, prime property, and  
6 then give us whatever price that you want to give  
7 us -- Columbia Gas wants to give us?

8           And then in return you want us to pay  
9 the taxes for eternity on this property while I  
10 can't do nothing with it? I can't build on it?  
11 I can't cross it without coming across public  
12 utilities and things like that? And it's just  
13 kind of upsetting that you can force something  
14 down the landowner's throat that's really not  
15 right.

16           And is it going to go under eminent  
17 domain? That's another comment or question. Or  
18 is it going to go that way?

19           And how -- who determines what eminent  
20 domain is? Is it the politicians? Is it the  
21 county? Who determines eminent domain, and how  
22 can Columbia Gas determine eminent domain and all  
23 the other companies have to negotiate with you  
24 for a price and stuff like that? How can they do  
25 that? Okay.

1                   And we're really not happy with it. Me  
2 or -- I've talked to some of my neighbors. And  
3 for them to come across us and just say, hey,  
4 we're sending surveyors out, and then when you  
5 don't answer their leaflets and let the surveyors  
6 come on, they send you a certified letter saying  
7 the surveyors are coming whether you like it or  
8 not and you can't do nothing about it.

9                   And that's going to be the same way  
10 with the pipeline. If we don't like where  
11 they're putting the pipeline and they put it  
12 under eminent domain, then they're going to put  
13 the pipeline wherever they want, how close they  
14 want to our houses and stuff like that.

15                   And I really don't feel safe with a  
16 36-inch pipeline running behind my house. I'm  
17 sorry. That's like living on top of a bomb.  
18 That's like putting your propane tank,  
19 1,000-gallon tank, in your basement or something  
20 like that. You know, I'm just not really happy  
21 with it. Thank you.

22                   MR. POLIT: Thank you, sir, for your  
23 comment.

24                   Next up is Lloyd Lewis.

25                   MR. LEWIS: Good evening. My name is

1 Lloyd Lewis, L-L-O-Y-D, L-E-W-I-S. And I'm here  
2 with the -- representing the operating engineers.

3 And I support this line because all of  
4 the jobs that are created in the area are  
5 economical for all the businesses in the area.  
6 And we have a lot of operators that lives in the  
7 area that is experienced, and I think they'll do  
8 a good job. Thank you.

9 MR. MOORE: I bet it's not going behind  
10 his house.

11 MR. POLIT: Thank you again for your  
12 comment. Thank you for your comment.

13 Again, I'd like to invite anyone else  
14 to speak. Seeing as we don't have too many, just  
15 stand up and speak, or come on up. As long as  
16 you just spell your name.

17 While you're deciding that, I'll go  
18 ahead and take a stab at one of two of these  
19 issues that was brought up by Mr. Moore.

20 I know there are quite a variety of  
21 state and federal laws that are affecting eminent  
22 domain and survey rights, and I'm not up to speed  
23 on all of them. But I can tell you that eminent  
24 domain -- we always describe that in our EIS. So  
25 we talk about that comment, that issue. And it's

1 an authorization -- it's a right of whoever holds  
2 the certificate that is granted by the FERC.

3           So if they get the certificate that  
4 they're asking for, they can use eminent domain.  
5 They'll probably try to use more negotiations  
6 and -- they can only use eminent domain as a last  
7 stop measure. However, that's a federal law that  
8 comes with the certificate that was determined by  
9 Congress sometime in the past, that FERC should  
10 have that authority to give that eminent domain  
11 authority to a company along with the  
12 certificate.

13           Now, this is an interstate project, so  
14 it's under FERC's jurisdiction. And, you know,  
15 interstate means it goes from one state to  
16 another. It's outside the boundaries of the  
17 states. And so for, you know, national security,  
18 economic reasons, sometime a long time ago  
19 Congress decided to give FERC the authority for  
20 eminent domain to give to a company to enable  
21 these important interstate natural gas pipeline  
22 facilities to be constructed because it has  
23 nationwide impacts and benefits for getting  
24 natural gas to as many places as they -- as the  
25 market will bear.

1           When we have smaller projects that are  
2 intrastate, they don't cross the state line, then  
3 those go under the purview of the state  
4 commission, and they have their own set of -- use  
5 of eminent domain and requirements that the  
6 companies have to abide by. And many times  
7 companies will have two kinds of projects going  
8 on at once, even in the same area.

9           So I just want to point out that that's  
10 a decision made by Congress to have eminent  
11 domain be part of the FERC certificate that is --  
12 that could be granted to a company for this  
13 project.

14           If you want to come up, please come up  
15 and speak into the microphone so everyone can  
16 hear you.

17           MR. MOORE: Yes. If you're saying that  
18 this project's under eminent domain, why didn't  
19 the Keystone pipeline go under eminent domain?  
20 It's going from state to state, also. Why isn't  
21 that one under eminent domain?

22           MR. POLIT: I don't know about the --  
23 the details on that one.

24           MR. MOORE: Okay. And if you're going  
25 to force eminent domain on a landowner to put a

1 36-inch pipeline across them, why is it -- where  
2 is it right for you to make me pay taxes for  
3 eternity on a piece of property that you're going  
4 to take care of, you're going to maintain?  
5 You're saying it's your piece of property, and  
6 you're forcing me into paying taxes on it for  
7 eternity. How is that right?

8           You know, I mean, I just don't see --  
9 this sounds like communism to me. I mean, if you  
10 come in and you negotiate with us, you give us a  
11 proper price or something, that's different. But  
12 just come in and tell me, hey, you're going to  
13 take this property for X amount of dollars  
14 whenever you think -- I don't think that's the  
15 right price and then you say, hey, you got to pay  
16 the taxes on it for eternity, where's that right  
17 at? Okay. It just doesn't sound right to me.  
18 I'm sorry.

19           MR. POLIT: I hear you. I hear you.  
20 Thank you.

21           I know it's difficult to have companies  
22 come on and do the surveys. We encourage  
23 landowners, even if they oppose a project, to  
24 cooperate and get that environmental information  
25 underway.

1                   And we also are always behind the  
2 scenes trying to push the companies to try and  
3 make the pipeline crossing location on a  
4 particular parcel of property the best that it  
5 can be for that particular landowner. So to the  
6 extent that you can cooperate with them, we --  
7 we're also seeing and witnessing route changes  
8 that could be made that will take care of safety  
9 concerns that you may have, where it is that you  
10 would rather to have it, if you have to have it.

11                   So always keep that in mind; that if  
12 the project goes forward and if it's  
13 certificated, it's good if the landowner has  
14 something in their back pocket to be able to say  
15 that we cooperated with the company and I got the  
16 best of this deal that I could get, even though  
17 it may be harmful to them. I know that sounds  
18 crass, but --

19                   MR. MOORE: It sounds like crap to me.

20                   MR. POLIT: We're always asking for the  
21 most amount of cooperation, but we can't really  
22 push it. It's really a landowner-negotiated  
23 contract that we don't talk about very much in  
24 the environmental process. We touch on it.  
25 There's this issue related to it, but it's not

1 something here that I can speak too much about,  
2 unfortunately.

3           So I think we have plenty of  
4 opportunity to continue discussions after the  
5 meeting ends. We're going to stay around, both  
6 the FERC people and the company people. Are  
7 there -- can I ask, are there any more people  
8 that have signed up to speak? Christine, are  
9 there any more speakers?

10           I really appreciate you coming out here  
11 tonight. I was a little bit surprised at the  
12 amount of interest from all angles. We're going  
13 to definitely consider all of your comments in  
14 the EIS. Again, thank you for coming tonight.  
15 We really appreciate it. And I'm going to go  
16 ahead and adjourn this meeting.

17   - - -

18           (Thereupon, the proceedings were  
19   adjourned at 7:28 p.m.)

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