

1 Tuesday Evening Session
2 February 3, 2015
3 beginning at 6:35 p.m.

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5 MR. POLIT: Good evening, everyone,
6 ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much for
7 coming tonight. Good evening.

8 On behalf of the Federal Energy
9 Regulatory Commission, I would like to welcome
10 you here tonight. This is an environmental
11 scoping meeting for the Leach Xpress Project
12 being planned by Columbia Gas Pipeline. Let me
13 move this microphone. That way I can see all of
14 you.

15 As I was saying, this is for the Leach
16 Xpress Project being proposed by Columbia Gas
17 Pipeline. The primary purpose of this meeting is
18 to give you an opportunity to provide
19 environmentally related comments on the Leach
20 Xpress Project being planned by Columbia Gas.

21 Your comments and input received
22 tonight will become part of the environmental
23 record for the planned project. Let the record
24 show that the public scoping meeting began at
25 6:35, February 3rd, 2015, in Logan, Ohio.

1 My name is Juan Polit. That's J-U-A-N,
2 P-O-L-I-T. And I'm an environmental project
3 manager in FERC's Office of Energy Projects. I
4 am responsible for conducting a detailed
5 environmental analysis of the planned project and
6 for producing an environmental impact statement,
7 or EIS for short.

8 Am I loud enough back there? Little
9 more? Okay. I'll try to speak a bit louder.
10 Thank you.

11 My supervisor, Alisa Likens, is here
12 with me tonight. She's roaming around at the
13 back table. Thank you.

14 I've also asked Brian Sterner and
15 Monica Rudowski to handle signing in at the back
16 table.

17 Now, Mr. Sterner and Ms. Rudowski are
18 with our contractor who's called ERM. ERM is an
19 environmental consulting firm assisting us in the
20 production of the EIS that will be prepared for
21 this planned project.

22 We also have representatives from
23 Columbia Gas here tonight whom you have already
24 met at their information table. That's on the
25 left-hand side here.

1 As you can see, this meeting is being
2 recorded by a court reporter so that we can have
3 an accurate record of tonight's comments. A
4 transcript of this meeting will be placed in the
5 public record so that everyone has access to the
6 information discussed here tonight.

7 FERC has our own sign-in table at the
8 back of the room on the right side -- right-hand
9 side, and there's a sign-up sheet for those who
10 would like to speak or comment during tonight's
11 meeting. That table also has a number of
12 informational handouts. We encourage anyone who
13 gathers up the courage and the gumption to come
14 on up here and speak. If you could just put your
15 name down on the list, and we'll have it updated
16 and brought up here to me. You can do that
17 anytime tonight, and we'll fit you in.

18 I'll quickly run through the agenda for
19 tonight's meeting. I will start off by briefly
20 explaining FERC and our environmental review,
21 then I will have the gas -- Columbia Gas
22 representative give a brief overview of their
23 project. Following their presentation, I'll go
24 ahead and invite those in the audience who have
25 put their names on the sign-up sheet to come up

1 here and make your comments.

2 Let me begin by briefly describing
3 FERC. FERC is an independent agency that, among
4 other things, regulates interstate transmission
5 of natural gas. By interstate, we mean
6 transmission of natural gas across state lines.
7 The FERC is composed of a five-member commission
8 and as well as the regular FERC staff. The
9 five-member commission reviews proposals for and
10 authorizes construction of interstate natural gas
11 pipelines, natural gas storage terminals -- I'm
12 sorry -- natural gas storage facilities, and they
13 provide natural gas terminals. The commission
14 members are appointed by the President and
15 approved by the Senate.

16 Regular FERC staff, which includes
17 myself and Alisa Lykens, prepares technical
18 information to assist the commissioners in making
19 their decision.

20 The FERC certificate process begins
21 when a company who wants to build pipeline
22 facilities to transport and sell natural gas in
23 interstate commerce files an application before
24 the FERC. Companies are seeking a certificate of
25 public convenience and necessity, and that gives

1 them the authority to construct and operate their
2 pipeline and associated facilities.

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

9 As a federal licensing agency, FERC has
10 responsibility under the National Environmental
11 Policy Act, or NEPA, to consider the potential
12 environmental impacts associated with projects
13 under our jurisdiction, such as the current one
14 that is in or will be filed with the FERC. With
15 regard to the Leach Xpress Project, FERC is the
16 lead federal agency for the NEPA review and
17 preparation of the EIS. And we've already
18 defined the EIS as the environmental impact
19 statement.

20 Tonight's meeting is not a public
21 hearing, and we cannot debate project-related
22 issues or make any determination on the project's
23 fate. What we are here to do is to listen to
24 your concerns and comments so that we can include
25 them in our analysis of the potential

1 environmental impacts and the planned project.
2 Now, that would be impacts on the natural and
3 human environment.

4 Part of this analysis includes
5 considering how those impacts might be reduced or
6 avoided. During our review of the planned
7 project, we will assemble information from a
8 variety of sources and stakeholders. These
9 sources include Columbia Gas, state, local, and
10 federal agencies, local and state governments,
11 elected officials, Indian tribes, nongovernmental
12 organizations, and our own independent analysis
13 and fieldwork.

14 Now, about our environmental review
15 timeline. Currently FERC is in the first phase
16 of our review of the planned project, which is
17 called the pre-filing phase. Pre-filing for this
18 planned project began when Columbia Gas began the
19 FERC pre-filing process on October 9th of 2014.
20 Pre-filing is a part of the environmental
21 timeline in which FERC staff, as well as some
22 state and federal agencies, have begun the
23 environmental study even though a planned project
24 has not been filed with FERC. The purpose of the
25 pre-filing is to encourage involvement by all

1 interested stakeholders in a manner that allows
2 for the early identification of environmental
3 issues and resolution of some of them.

4 Our primary task during this early
5 stage of pre-filing is to scope the planned
6 project. By scoping, I mean the act of
7 assembling environmental information from
8 multiple sources and determining the extent of
9 our overall environmental analysis. So,
10 basically, how much land we want to include and
11 which kinds of resources we would like to include
12 in our analysis. That's what scoping is.

13 Within the pre-filing phase, FERC has
14 also initiated a formal comment period which
15 began with the issuance of our notice of intent
16 to prepare an environmental impact statement for
17 the planned project. That was issued on
18 January 13, 2015. The notice of intent, or NOI
19 for short, was mailed to over 1,400 stakeholders,
20 and it describes the environmental review
21 process, some already identified environmental
22 issues, and the steps that FERC will be taking to
23 prepare the EIS.

24 We have set an ending date of
25 February 12th, 2014 [sic] for this comment

1 period. However, this is not the end of your
2 chance to comment. We will still accept comments
3 made -- given to us after that date, but we do
4 need to set a date in order to try to get most of
5 the comments in as soon as possible.

6 I'd like to draw your attention again
7 to the sign-up table at the back that FERC has.
8 The information, handouts, and attendance sign-in
9 sheet, a speakers' list sign-in sheet, and
10 comment forms are all back there.

11 Currently we have a large mailing list.
12 If you have received a copy of the NOI, that
13 means you are already on our mailing list, and
14 you will be receiving copies of our draft and
15 final EISs. If you did not receive our NOI and
16 you would like to become a member of the mailing
17 list, please go ahead and add your name to the
18 mailing list sheets at the sign-in table.

19 Anyone should feel free to pick up
20 extra copies of the NOI and the information
21 requests that we have at the back table. So in
22 case you want to know what the NOI looks like, it
23 looks like -- something like this, starting with
24 this page. It has the scoping meeting dates
25 starting on the first page.

1 And on the back, you'll see a mailer
2 form to send back in to us. And one of the
3 questions that's asked on this is whether or not
4 you want the draft and final EIS in paper or DVD
5 form.

6 All right. So we have already begun
7 analyzing Columbia's preferred route and some of
8 the issues that we will be putting into the EIS
9 study. As we progress toward the end of the
10 scoping period, we will be constantly reviewing
11 and updating what are known as environmental
12 resource reports, and those are required to be
13 developed by Columbia Gas as part of their
14 application.

15 Resource reports contain information
16 for several different resource areas, such as
17 water resources, wildlife habitat, land use
18 impacts, air and noise quality, and public
19 safety. Some of these resource reports in draft
20 form have already been put into the public
21 record, and we are reviewing them, and they can
22 be viewed by anyone using FERC's e-library
23 system. Instructions when using that and using
24 FERC's website are located in the NOI and also
25 some of the brochures.

1 As of today, no formal application has
2 been filed with the FERC. The pre-file process
3 and parallel scoping period that I talked about
4 are scheduled to end when Columbia Gas files
5 their application with the FERC later this
6 summer.

7 At that time FERC will issue a notice
8 of application. That application that is
9 required to be filed will include, among other
10 things, a complete set of the required
11 environmental resource reports and statements
12 addressing all the nonenvironmental issues
13 identified in pre-filing. Using all information
14 collected during the scoping period, the FERC
15 staff will factor them into our independent
16 analysis of the planned project's potential
17 impacts on the human and natural environment.
18 The resulting draft and final EISs will contain
19 our assessment of the planned project's effects
20 on soils, agriculture, residences, waterways,
21 wetlands, vegetation and wildlife, threatened and
22 endangered species, cultural and historic
23 resources, noise and air quality, and public
24 safety.

25 The EIS will include a set of

1 environmental conditions required to be carried
2 out and abided by Columbia Gas during
3 construction through operation of its project.
4 The FERC has published a draft EIS which we will
5 distribute to all stakeholders for a 45-day draft
6 EIS comment period. At the end of that comment
7 period, FERC staff will prepare a final EIS that
8 specifically addresses comments received on the
9 draft and would include all necessary changes,
10 additions, modifications to the conclusions that
11 were reached in the draft EIS.

12 Now, this final EIS will be considered
13 by the commission -- that is, the five-member
14 commission -- in its determination of whether or
15 not to grant Columbia Gas its certificate
16 requesting authorization for them to go ahead and
17 construct and operate the planned project.
18 Usually a certificate comes with a set of
19 economic and environmental conditions.

20 The commission's consideration will
21 include the findings, conclusions,
22 recommendations that go into the final EIS, but
23 will also include any nonenvironmental comments
24 and issues raised, such as -- that have to deal
25 with engineering, the market need for the

1 project, rates, costs, finances, and so forth.

2 Aside from speaking into the record
3 tonight, there are three other ways to get your
4 comments to the FERC. These include handing
5 written comments to myself, Ms. Lykens,
6 Mr. Sterner, or Ms. Rudowski in the back tonight.
7 You can write a letter to the secretary of the
8 FERC, or you can use our electronic online filing
9 system. I would like to add that the FERC
10 encourages electronic filing of all comments,
11 other comments. The NOI and a brochure up on the
12 table contains instructions for filing your
13 comments in all these three methods.

14 There are two -- I'm sorry. If you
15 want to go straight to the website that we have,
16 you can go to www.FERC.gov and look under the
17 e-filing link for additional instructions on how
18 to file.

19 It is very important that if you send
20 us any comments, either electronically or by
21 traditional mail, you have to include our
22 internal docket number for the project. The
23 docket number is on the cover of the NOI, which
24 you can find copies of in the back. Please put
25 this number on your comment. That will ensure

1 that it gets to the right project. The docket
2 number for the planned project that we're using
3 is PF14-23-000.

4 This being said, I'd like to go ahead
5 and allow Columbia Gas to give a short
6 presentation on the nuts and bolts of their
7 planned project. And with that, I'll turn it
8 over to you.

9 MR. OEHLER: Thanks, everyone, for
10 coming. My name is Alex Oehler. I'm part of the
11 community relations department with Columbia.
12 We're very grateful that you're here tonight.
13 Hearing from you is one of the most important
14 aspects of this project. So we're anxious to
15 hear what you think about our project.

16 I know we had a chance to meet a lot of
17 you when we did our open houses. So we're
18 excited to continue that relationship with you so
19 that we can learn more about what you think about
20 this proposal that we have.

21 I wanted to -- before talking a little
22 bit about the company and this specific project,
23 I just wanted to recognize the Columbia team
24 members that are here so you can get to know them
25 and talk to them directly.

1 First we have Jim Barrett and Nena
2 Honaker in the back. Jim, can you raise your
3 hand? Nena? Jim and Nena work with landowners.
4 They are part of landowner relations. So they're
5 very important people to get to know.

6 Melissa Dettling, who works on the
7 environmental permitting for the project, another
8 critical aspect of the project.

9 Dave Beckmeyer. Where's Dave?

10 MR. BECKMEYER: Right here.

11 MR. OEHLER: Dave Beckmeyer and Leslie
12 Yoo are working with Melissa. They are
13 environmental specialists, helping us with
14 analyzing environmental impact, environmental
15 compliance, and helping us ultimately with the
16 application at the FERC.

17 Ted McDavitt. Ted McDavitt is in the
18 back.

19 MR. McDAVITT: Right here.

20 MR. OEHLER: Ted is the project manager
21 for aboveground facilities. There are some
22 compressor stations that are proposed with this
23 project. Ted is managing that aspect of the
24 project.

25 Elaine Coppedge, here in the front, is

1 our pipeline project manager. So for the
2 pipeline that we're proposing to build, Elaine is
3 going to be managing that aspect of the project.

4 D.J. Reza? D.J.? D.J. is associate
5 pipeline project manager.

6 And Ben Lun in the back. Ben is our
7 lead project engineer.

8 So with that said, that's the Columbia
9 team. That's the core group who are leading this
10 project. Please feel free to say hello. If you
11 have specific questions in those specific areas,
12 don't hesitate to talk to a member of our team.

13 Just a little bit about our company.
14 We are an interstate natural gas service
15 provider. So that's an essential map of our
16 system. You can see we reach from Louisiana in
17 the south up to the southern tier of New York.
18 Our job is to deliver natural gas from
19 essentially point A to point B. We're kind of
20 like UPS. We don't own the gas. We don't drill
21 for the gas or produce it. We just transport it
22 from point A to point B. We're like UPS in that
23 regard.

24 We're one of the larger pipeline
25 operators in the country. You know us probably

1 in this area -- we're part of the NiSource family
2 of energy companies. Columbia Gas of Ohio is a
3 sister company of ours. So Columbia Pipeline
4 Group has facilities in this area, and this is
5 all part of a distribution service territory.

6 We serve a lot of the eastern U.S.,
7 mostly the midwest, this area. Columbia Gas of
8 Ohio is one of our largest customers. The
9 mid-Atlantic region, the northeast, those are big
10 market areas for us.

11 More than a trillion cubic feet of
12 natural gas flows through our system each year.
13 And we're also one of the largest natural gas
14 storage providers in the country. We are able to
15 store natural gas underground so that it's close
16 to the market during high-demand periods. We can
17 bring the natural gas out of storage and make
18 sure that it gets ultimately to end users and
19 helps mitigate any price fluctuation that you
20 would see during high-demand times.

21 I mentioned that we're part of the
22 NiSource family of energy companies. I should
23 point out that we are currently going through a
24 separation -- a corporate separation.
25 Essentially we're splitting into two companies.

1 Columbia Pipeline Group, which is the sponsor of
2 this project, is going to be its own stand-alone
3 corporation the middle of this year.

4 Just a quick project overview for you.
5 There's a picture of the proposed route, which is
6 a proposal at this point. There's mapping in the
7 back that you can look at, and also Nena and Jim
8 and our land team, they can give you more of a
9 detailed look at individual sections of the
10 proposal.

11 It's designed to transport up to 1.5
12 billion cubic feet per day of gas from Marcellus
13 and Utica production areas in Ohio and West
14 Virginia essentially to the center of our system.
15 We're looking to bring that gas to the interstate
16 market. We've been analyzing this area. You all
17 are well aware that there's more and more
18 production going on in this area. What we are
19 trying to do is to help facilitate the
20 transportation of that natural gas to the
21 interstate market.

22 The pipeline's going to originate in
23 West Virginia, in Marshall County, and is going
24 to terminate in West Virginia after traveling
25 through Ohio to an existing Columbia system in

1 the center of the state, and then it will
2 terminate there in Wayne County, West Virginia.

3 We're -- it's a proposal at this point.
4 We're going through the FERC process. The FERC
5 has to approve the project. If they do approve
6 it, our plan is to begin construction in 2016,
7 with a targeted in-service date of fall 2017.

8 Now I'll turn it over to Elaine.

9 MS. COPPEDGE: All right. Thank you.

10 So as Juan and Alex both described,
11 this project is still proposed, but I'd like to
12 tell you a little bit more about that and our
13 operations and safety in general.

14 The proposed scope of this project is
15 approximately 160 miles of 36-inch pipe and a
16 half mile of 30-inch pipe. The 36-inch pipe is
17 really broken up into three sections. The first
18 one is our -- what we call the Leach Xpress
19 mainline, LEX. This pipeline starts in Marshall
20 County, West Virginia, and heads west across the
21 Ohio River, obviously into Ohio, and then towards
22 Hocking and Fairfield County.

23 In Hocking and Fairfield, it meets up
24 with an existing Columbia Gas transmission system
25 which runs from north to south, as Melissa is

1 pointing out. The second leg of the 36-inch
2 project is approximately 27 miles which will be
3 installed adjacent to our existing system that we
4 already have in place.

5 This 27 miles, it's a 36-inch pipeline.
6 It allows us to take out of service 28 miles of
7 our existing R-501 line -- about 28 miles.

8 The last piece of the 36-inch pipeline
9 is down in Wayne County, across the Ohio River,
10 and into one of our existing compressor stations.

11 So in addition to the pipeline, the
12 proposed project also has some facilities
13 involved with it. The facilities include three
14 brand-new compressor stations, one in Marshall
15 County, West Virginia, one in Noble, Ohio, and
16 one in Oak Hill, Ohio -- or Jackson County.

17 Can we go to the next slide?

18 MS. DETTLING: Sure.

19 MS. COPPEDGE: So that's kind of a look
20 at what a compressor station looks like from an
21 aerial view. So in addition to those three
22 brand-new stations, we will be doing work at our
23 existing facilities, Crawford, which is very
24 close to here, and then also Ceredo, which is
25 down in Wayne County, West Virginia.

1 In addition to compressor stations,
2 there will be some aboveground facilities
3 required. These include mainline valve
4 assemblies, launcher and receiver sites -- which
5 I'll explain that in a couple of slides, as well
6 as regulator stations which are a much smaller
7 footprint than an actual compressor station, but
8 it allows us to adjust pressures and flows if we
9 need to at those specific points.

10 So, real quick, just a look at what the
11 construction process will look like. The
12 pipeline construction is a sequence of events,
13 and it starts with surveying and staking. We're
14 anticipating starting this process in fall of
15 2016, and our surveyors will go out on site and
16 stake the center line of the pipe and the limits
17 of which we are going to stay within.

18 Followed shortly thereafter staking is
19 the clearing and grading crews. They make a safe
20 work environment for the rest of the construction
21 process. Shortly after that, we'll be welding
22 the pipe and actually digging up the trench. All
23 of our welds will be x-rayed just to ensure that
24 they're in compliance with very strict standards.

25 Finally, the pipe is put into the

1 trench, covered back up, and the last two steps
2 are to fill the pipe with water and hold a
3 pressure for a certain amount of time just to
4 make sure the pipe wasn't damaged during
5 construction. And the final step is full
6 restoration.

7 So here's a quick look at how the space
8 is utilized during construction. Typically for
9 the pipeline we require 110 feet in order to
10 complete the job safely. So if you see -- it's
11 kind of hard to see, but there's a 50-foot
12 permanent easement which will be maintained
13 during operations after construction.

14 To the left side of this is
15 five-foot -- which we call our spoil side.
16 That's usually where we store the dirt during
17 construction. And to the right side of that is
18 55 feet of additional -- or not additional --
19 just temporary workspace. And we call this our
20 working side. So that's where the equipment will
21 be and the pipe-moving material as construction
22 is going on.

23 So in some areas where we're crossing,
24 it's very steep, and in those areas we typically
25 get 125 feet. But that's more West Virginia and

1 eastern Ohio.

2 Pipeline safety is extremely important
3 to us. We adhere to the Department of
4 Transportation's strict standards when we design,
5 operate, maintain, construct these pipelines. So
6 there are certain measures that we take to make
7 sure that our pipeline is working safely. One of
8 them is underground corrosion protection.
9 Another one is around-the-clock monitoring. And
10 I'll show you this picture on the next slide.

11 In addition to that, the picture that
12 you see here is -- it's an in-line inspection
13 tool also called a smart pig. So we send this
14 tool through the pipeline at those launcher and
15 receiver sites that I described before, and this
16 tool allows us to gather millions of data points
17 so that we can analyze it and make sure that it's
18 in proper working condition.

19 So here's a look at the monitoring
20 center that I just described. We have highly
21 trained employees around-the-clock ensuring that
22 -- basically what they're doing is watching
23 specific data points on our system itself. So
24 pressures, flows, temperatures, level alarms.
25 This is what they do. And that's located in

1 Charleston, West Virginia.

2 So the last thing on safety that I
3 quickly wanted to describe, as a company we view
4 first responders, emergency responders as just an
5 extended part of our safety team. So yearly, in
6 all of the counties that we operate in, we do
7 training with mock demonstrations, a dinner.
8 It's continuing education credit for these
9 emergency responders, just to tell them a little
10 bit more about our company and, if something were
11 to happen, then they would know exactly what to
12 do.

13 MS. DETTLING: Thank you.

14 Okay. I'm going to talk a little bit
15 about environmental resources. As Juan
16 described, FERC's going to prepare an
17 environmental impact statement on this project,
18 but leading up to that, Columbia's preparing what
19 we call an environmental report that we'd be
20 filing with FERC.

21 So to do that, we go in the field to
22 capture data not only where we're proposing the
23 project but adjacent to, so that we know exactly
24 what is out there and what might be affected by
25 our project.

1 You may have seen some survey teams out
2 there. You may have been contacted by our land
3 teams to let you know that survey crews are going
4 out there. We're looking for not only civil
5 survey data but teams are going out to capture
6 biological and cultural data so that we can write
7 reports of what may be impacted by the project.

8 Biological data may include wetland
9 resources, streams, habitat for protected or
10 endangered species, different land use that's
11 being crossed. We culture all this, quantify it.
12 And also cultural data, historic data,
13 archeological data that we file with the FERC in
14 our environmental reports.

15 We started surveys June of 2014. Right
16 now we're suspended due to the weather, but we'll
17 start again, finishing up as soon as weather
18 permits this spring of 2015.

19 Here we just have a list of some of the
20 agencies to show you how thorough of a review we
21 do and how many agencies we not only consult with
22 but may be obtaining specific authorizations
23 before we can construct a project of this kind.
24 Those agencies may cover resources. As I
25 mentioned, wetlands or water body crossings that

1 would be affected by the project. Corps of
2 Engineers, West Virginia DEP, Ohio EPA.

3 We also have agencies that we consult
4 with and work with regarding environmental --
5 sorry -- protected species. So threatened,
6 endangered species that may be in the area here.
7 Also, we obtain permits for air quality at any of
8 our stations where we are proposing compression.

9 Here's just another list of some
10 agencies we might consult with. NRCS, for
11 example, may consult with us on how we're going
12 to restore the area. They have the local data
13 and recommendations for how to best do it. Park
14 Service, DNR. Also, there's Ohio State
15 Preservation Office and West Virginia. We
16 consult with them on cultural resources and
17 information they have. They know the area.
18 We're also doing surveys, so we file our reports
19 with them.

20 Here's just a little bit about --
21 Elaine mentioned an easement that we would obtain
22 for our pipelines. Now, for our facilities, we'd
23 be purchasing that land to put our facility on
24 it, but for our pipeline we would be looking to
25 just maintain a 50-foot permanent easement for

1 that pipeline when it's put in the ground and
2 restored. That's what we'll maintain and
3 operate.

4 You may have talked to some of our land
5 agents. We have an extensive land team that's
6 going to be living here in the area for the life
7 of this project, and some after that, to continue
8 through operations. And they may have already
9 contacted you. They may be contacting you.
10 Please feel free to get their information. If
11 you need to -- have any questions, we're happy to
12 work with you and continue to answer anything you
13 need.

14 Zane, do you want -- oh, sorry. Alex,
15 do you want to wrap up?

16 MR. OEHLER: Yeah. I'll just close and
17 thank everyone again for coming. Columbia has
18 been part of this community for a long, long
19 time. You know, our intent with these projects
20 is to keep everyone aware of what's going on.

21 If you have been receiving things in
22 the mail, you're on the list. If you haven't and
23 would like to receive information, please be sure
24 to sign up so we can keep you abreast of what's
25 going on. We want to make sure that all of your

1 questions are answered.

2 I also want to stress the fact that,
3 you know, we're proposing this project. We hope
4 to build this project and then turn it over to a
5 team of operation professionals who will be
6 monitoring the pipeline for the life of its
7 service. So we have employees in this area.

8 It's critical to us in all the areas
9 that we operate that we have a good relationship
10 with the local community. So we are always
11 looking to partner in various ways with the
12 community. And just those kind of relationships
13 are very valuable to us. So we're in contact
14 with elected officials in the area, landowners,
15 and other stakeholders and interest groups that
16 are concerned about this area.

17 So with that, I think we've wrapped up
18 our presentation, and I'll turn it back over to
19 Juan. Thank you.

20 MR. POLIT: Thank you much.

21 All right. Thank you very much,
22 Columbia Gas.

23 I want to go ahead and begin the
24 important part of tonight's meeting, which is
25 when we hear your comments and suggestions.

1 We're going to take them in the order that they
2 appear on the sign-up sheet, which I've copied
3 down up here.

4 Once again, feel free to go ahead and
5 put your name down. Feel free -- if you feel
6 like you want to talk, we really encourage people
7 to come up and take this opportunity to present
8 your comments.

9 It will help us most if your comments
10 are as specific as possible regarding the
11 potential environmental impacts and also
12 reasonable alternatives of the planned project.
13 This meeting is designed to provide you with an
14 opportunity to also meet with Columbia Gas
15 representatives as well as FERC, ask us and them
16 questions, and to get as much detailed
17 information as we can possibly give out tonight
18 about Columbia Gas' proposed facility locations
19 and construction plans.

20 At the very end, I'll go ahead and make
21 one more call for commenters, if you want to come
22 up at that time.

23 Now, when your name is called, please
24 come up to the podium over here. Let me know if
25 you'd like to sit down. And you need to go ahead

1 and clearly state your name, spell out your name
2 for the court reporter's benefit. Go ahead and
3 speak directly into the microphone. You will
4 have to hold it here tonight because that's what
5 we have.

6 So without any further ado, I'd like to
7 go ahead and ask Ray Hipsher to come up and start
8 off.

9 MR. HIPSHER: Thank you. My name is
10 Ray Hipsher, H-I-P-S-H-E-R. I represent the
11 20,000 hard-working men and women from Ohio of
12 LIUNA, the Laborers International Union of North
13 America.

14 We are your friends, your neighbors,
15 and in some cases your family members. I want to
16 inform you that LIUNA officially endorses and
17 fully supports the proposed Leach Xpress gas
18 transmission project that is currently in the
19 early stages.

20 It is crucial for Ohio to take
21 advantage of the benefits of the emerging and
22 quickly expanding needs for natural gas
23 infrastructure. Natural gas production out of
24 the Marcellus and Utica shale plate will continue
25 to grow for years. The Leach Xpress Project

1 assures natural gas reliability and safe delivery
2 to Ohio for decades. This project not only
3 creates local jobs today but Ohioans will
4 continue to reap the rewards for lower natural
5 gas prices and property tax revenues.

6 According to the U.S. Department of
7 Transportation, interstate transmission lines are
8 the safest mode of transportation for natural
9 gas. The work of the highly skilled LIUNA
10 members in constructing pipeline infrastructure
11 is the central part of that safety record.

12 Our members are constantly training,
13 retraining, and upgrading their credentials to
14 stay in front of the stringent and ever-changing
15 industry standards. When LIUNA members graduate
16 from the training -- the two-week pipeline
17 training program, the graduates are automatically
18 entered into a database as operator qualified.
19 We have confidence employing members of LIUNA on
20 the pipeline projects because they are well
21 trained, experienced, and take pride in the
22 finished product.

23 Again, we are in full support of the
24 Leach Xpress Project and encourage FERC for a
25 favorable consideration. Thank you.

1 MR. POLIT: Thank you very much.

2 Thank you for your comments. Our next
3 speaker is Mark Johnson.

4 MR. JOHNSON: Good evening. I'd like
5 to start out by thanking you for the opportunity
6 to give my public comments. My name is Mark
7 Johnson. M-A-R-K, J-O-H-N-S-O-N. I'm the
8 business manager for the tri-state building
9 construction trades union. Basically, the
10 construction workers of the area.

11 I live in Ross County, not very far
12 from the Hocking County line. And for you guys
13 that live outside our area here, say the people
14 from Texas or wherever, some of the most
15 beautiful drive in the state of Ohio is from my
16 home to right here. And this is a beautiful area
17 in Hocking County where we stand.

18 Talk about the natural gas line. I
19 want to -- first thing, I don't know everything
20 there is to know about natural gas distribution,
21 but what I do know is in 2014 we had what was
22 called the polar vortex, and it may have been
23 fairly warm in Houston, Texas, but it was very
24 cold here. And what a lot of people did was
25 turned their thermostats up. And if you live in

1 a municipality here in Ohio, you're most likely
2 on natural gas.

3 And another big issue is electricity
4 generation, and we're unplugging coal-burning
5 power plants and we're also doing away with some
6 nuclear power plants. And the sensible way to
7 replace it is with gas-burning power plants.
8 These things take massive amounts of natural gas.
9 And the one down in Hanging Rock takes a 24-inch
10 line just straight to that plant. It's 1,320
11 megawatts and a dual combined cycle. And the
12 people that sell natural gas love those plants.

13 But anyway, the infrastructure that we
14 have right now, when people turn their
15 thermostats up, it's an inadequate supply of
16 natural gas to Americans, how we're going to make
17 electric power. We're getting ready to convert a
18 coal-burning power plant not too far from my
19 office in Louisa, Kentucky. It's the Big Sandy
20 unit. It's American Electric Power. And that's
21 about a 75 million dollar job for our people to
22 do. It's going to burn more natural gas. Not
23 far from Ceredo where this line is.

24 But this specific -- this gas line and
25 other gas lines similar to it is a necessity for

1 the wellness -- well-being of our people. And we
2 support this project for the obvious reason.
3 It's jobs for our people. But even more
4 important, these gas lines are important for the
5 well-being of the people who live here, the
6 people in this room.

7 And anyway, I want to close thanking
8 you for allowing me to make my comments.

9 MR. POLIT: Thank you.

10 Our next speaker is Tom McFall.

11 MR. McFALL: My name is Thomas McFall.
12 T-H-O-M-A-S, M-C-F-A-L-L.

13 I am a member in good standing with the
14 international union of operating engineers. More
15 specifically, Ohio Operating Engineers Local 18
16 out of Columbus, Ohio. This area through here,
17 most of southern Ohio, is part of our district.

18 In addition to this, I am a landowner
19 that -- whose front door is within 200 feet of
20 the center of this pipeline, and I'm proud to say
21 that I'm happy that it's going to go through
22 there. And I have no qualms about the safety or
23 the integrity of this pipeline.

24 Having been afforded the opportunity to
25 work on some of these pipelines from start to

1 finish, I've seen the safety that is implemented
2 to ensure the integrity of these pipelines. And
3 I'm also proud to say that our members have
4 trained and they have trained hard to learn the
5 skills required to be an integral part of this
6 pipeline and any future pipelines.

7 And I would like to thank the Federal
8 Energy Regulatory Commission as well as Columbia
9 Gas for allowing me to speak this evening. And I
10 thank you.

11 MR. POLIT: Thank you.

12 Our next speaker is John Wehrle.

13 MR. WEHRLE: John Wehrle, W-E-H-R-L-E.

14 I'm not representing any company. I'm
15 representing myself as a landowner.

16 There are a lot of other landowners out
17 there. That's what I thought this meeting was
18 for. I appreciate you folks coming. I'm sure
19 the EPA will protect us, so the whole
20 environmental thing is not bothering me. I'm
21 sure the safety regulations will protect us. I'm
22 not concerned about that.

23 What I'm concerned about is my rights
24 as a landowner. What do we have? Who represents
25 us? And at this point the only suggestion I have

1 for us is we all get together and discuss this.
2 I mean, that's what a union is. But we won't
3 have dues.

4 The couple questions I had was, I would
5 like natural gas off the line. You said --
6 Mr. Johnson said that our community needs this
7 gas. Well, my understanding is it's a
8 transmission line going to West Virginia from
9 Kentucky. So we won't reap any of the benefits
10 from it. I might be wrong. I'm a lay landowner.
11 I'm not privy to this stuff. This is the first
12 meeting I've been to. I've heard comments about
13 town halls that I never heard about.

14 I want to be heard as a landowner, and
15 I want to be on record. I want gas to my
16 property. I want storage rights that was signed
17 in the '70s and done away with. And that's
18 really the only concerns I have.

19 I would like to talk to the landowners,
20 see if we can get something together here to just
21 make sure we're all protected. I want the gas
22 line, but I want to make sure I'm protected.

23 Sorry I don't have a union to stand up
24 for, and I appreciate you guys showing up, but I
25 really believed this was for landowners. I

1 didn't understand we were getting sales pitches.
2 That's because I just didn't understand. Thank
3 you.

4 (Applause.)

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

7 We have next up Norm Redd.

8 MR. REDD: Most of my questions have
9 been answered, and I'll get the remaining answers
10 from Columbia Gas after the meeting. So I need
11 not say anything else right now.

12 MR. POLIT: Very well. Thank you, sir.

13 Okay. Right now our last speaker
14 signed up is William Davidson. If you could come
15 forward.

16 MR. STERNER: We do have one more.

17 MR. POLIT: All right. William
18 Davidson.

19 MR. DAVIDSON: That's me. And I'm a
20 member of laborers international union. And I'm
21 just a dumb hillbilly.

22 MR. POLIT: Go ahead and please spell
23 your name for the court reporter, please, before
24 you start.

25 MR. DAVIDSON: It's William. That

1 should be pretty simple. And Davidson,
2 D-A-V-I-D-S-O-N.

3 And I work a lot of construction, been
4 in since '79. And the pipeline work is where
5 I've made the most money to help my family out.
6 I've worked on schools, hospitals, roads,
7 bridges, but I never made no real good money
8 until I worked pipeline. And that helps out me
9 and it helps out where I go to spend my money.
10 And that's basically all I want to say. So thank
11 you. I want to thank everybody for listening to
12 me.

13 MR. POLIT: Thank you very much.

14 We've got one more speaker. Two more.
15 Our next speaker is Allen Brand. Could you
16 please come up?

17 MR. BRAND: My name is Allen Brand.

18 A-L-L-E-N, B-R-A-N-D. I also represent myself.

19 This mailer -- I think we were given
20 some incorrect information at the beginning of
21 the meeting. Your -- according to what's inside,
22 you only fill this out if you do not want to
23 receive a CD of the draft EIS. If you fill this
24 out, you can get the draft EIS as a written
25 document mailed to you.

1 In terms of the environmental comments
2 that were supposed to be made about this meeting
3 or hearing, Columbia Gas is supposed to be
4 submitting draft resource reports. It's my
5 impression that, at a minimum, the FERC agency
6 should require that Columbia Gas also submit as
7 part of their reports detailed reports from
8 environmental opposition, such as the -- what may
9 come forth from someone like the Sierra Club or
10 NRDC as part of their resource reports, not just
11 those things that they may think favors what they
12 want done.

13 And it's not exactly on point, but one
14 of the handouts from Columbia Gas said they had
15 5,700 jobs lined up for this project. And to the
16 extent that that's accurate, I think they should
17 also be providing more information about what
18 types of jobs they are and for how long they will
19 last. Many -- seems like many of these public
20 relations efforts also describe how many
21 permanent jobs will be part of the project.

22 That's all. Thank you.

23 MR. POLIT: Thank you very much.

24 We also have Hart Van Horn signed up.

25 Would you please come up, please?

1 MR. VAN HORN: Thanks. Do you need the
2 spelling of my name? First name is Hart,
3 H-A-R-T. Last name, Van Horn, V like Victor,
4 A-N-H-O-R-N.

5 Particularly where the homeowners are
6 concerned, thanks for your comments. I did not
7 come tonight with the expectation to speak. But
8 because of your comments, it brought me up here.
9 I'm with some fellow Farm Bureau members. I'm on
10 the county board in Fairfield County. We have a
11 board member here from Hocking County and one
12 from Perry County tonight basically for the same
13 reasons that most of the homeowners here are here
14 for.

15 And I wanted to simply comment on this,
16 as you talked about getting the homeowners
17 together. Know this, that it's not -- well,
18 homeowners, property owners, I'm sure you really
19 meant to say. Agriculture and the farming
20 industry is our largest industry here in Ohio.
21 Okay? Without it -- without it, we all wouldn't
22 be here.

23 The Farm Bureau takes a specific and
24 personal interest in what's going on with
25 programs such as this.

1 If you're looking for the information,
2 I just wanted to encourage you to contact any of
3 the Farm Bureau offices or Farm Bureau boards in
4 your counties for the kind of information that
5 you might be looking for.

6 Our offices are located -- the offices
7 for our counties in this area are located in
8 Circleville. Okay? There's five counties that
9 are managed out of Circleville or operated out of
10 Circleville, and that's Pickaway, Ross, Hocking,
11 Fairfield, and Perry counties. And obviously
12 where we're talking about this pipeline, most of
13 those counties are being affected. Most of our
14 farmers have had some type of vested interest in
15 it.

16 And I just wanted to let you know that
17 that information is there along -- I hope he
18 doesn't mind it, but along with us here tonight
19 is one of our staff members out of the state
20 office of the Farm Bureau, Dale Arnold. Dale's
21 here because he's our -- he's an expert in many
22 areas and an advocate for the property owners. I
23 just wanted to make mention of that.

24 Take advantage of the fact that we have
25 a volunteer-based organization out there that is

1 looking out for the rights and welfare of all the
2 property owners and our neighbors throughout the
3 state. Thank you.

4 MR. POLIT: Thank you very much.

5 While we wait for a few more
6 last-minute speakers to go ahead and sign up, let
7 me just try to clarify the point raised by
8 Mr. Allen -- Allen Brand, about the instructions
9 on the NOI.

10 They are probably a little bit
11 confusing. We just want to make sure you know
12 that if you return the mailer to us, on the back,
13 and you check the box, that box says, "Send me a
14 paper copy of the NEPA document." That's what
15 the EIS is going to be. You will get a copy
16 either way. So if you check this box, you will
17 get a paper copy. If you don't check the box,
18 you'll get the DVD/CD copy.

19 All right. Thank you very much for
20 bringing that up.

21 As of this time, we don't have any more
22 speakers, and I'd like to thank people for coming
23 tonight. We really appreciate it. We will
24 definitely consider all the comments given
25 tonight. I'll go ahead and -- I want to thank

1 you again for coming, and I will go ahead and
2 adjourn the meeting. Thank you.

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(Thereupon, the proceedings were

5

adjourned at 7:28 p.m.)

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