

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 10, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In light of your decision to revoke the Keystone XL pipeline permit, we the undersigned Members of Congress write to express our deep concerns regarding reports of pressure campaigns from pipeline opponents to shut down additional petroleum and natural gas pipelines that deliver vital products used to heat homes and businesses, fuel vehicles, and power industry throughout North America.

Specifically, we are concerned about the consequences that would result from halting operations of Enbridge's Line 5 in the Straits of Mackinac. The adverse economic and environmental impacts this would have on the region in which Line 5 operates cannot be overstated. Thousands of jobs across Ohio, Michigan, northwest Pennsylvania, western New York, and Wisconsin could be eliminated and billions of dollars in economic activity would be severely diminished at a time of great economic uncertainty.

The reduced fuel supply from shutting down Line 5 would permanently shutter refineries in Ohio and Michigan, resulting in the loss of billions of dollars in annual economic output, tens of thousands of jobs, and the elimination of 15 percent of northwest's Ohio's fuel supply and 43 percent of southeastern Michigan's fuel supply. Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula would be especially harmed, as Line 5 supplies 65 percent of the propane used to heat homes in the region. Transportation hubs in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania would also be adversely affected, including Detroit Metropolitan Airport, which would lose at least 50 percent of its jet fuel supplies from refineries served by Line 5.

Despite unjustified hostile actions toward Line 5 in recent years, most notably Michigan Governor Whitmer's legal challenges seeking to revoke and terminate the easement granted by the state in 1953, Line 5 has earned all the necessary permits and environmental reviews at both the state and federal levels. As recently as this past summer, the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) completed an independent review of Enbridge's inspection data on Line 5 and concluded it is safe and fit for purpose. Similar reviews and conclusions also were conducted in 2019 and 2016.

On January 29, Line 5 reached an important milestone in the Great Lakes Tunnel Project as the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) approved permit applications necessary to construct a utility tunnel under the Straits of Mackinac¹. EGLE stated that its "review concluded that the proposed construction of the tunnel can be done in compliance with state environmental laws, and confirmed that the project would have minimal impact on water quality in the Great Lakes and would not affect protected public uses of Michigan's water resources."

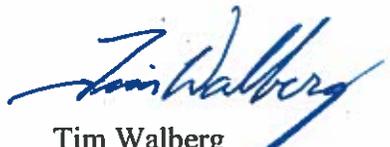
¹<https://www.michigan.gov/line5/0,9833,7-413-99507-550860--,00.html>

In addition to enormous economic impact, shutting down Line 5 would cause extensive environmental harm to the region. According to DOT and NSTB data, pipelines are the safest and most efficient way to transport energy products, making up only 0.01 percent of all transportation accidents in the United States. Further, if Line 5 was taken out of service, 540,000 barrels of oil and natural gas liquids would still need to be transported across the region, resulting in a minimum of 2,000 trucks or 800 rail cars a day to satisfy the region's demand for fuel.

Across America, pipeline construction and maintenance projects account for tens of thousands of family-supporting, skilled trade union jobs. It is estimated that the Great Lakes Tunnel project alone will need more than 2,000,000 work hours over the course of construction. Shutting down Line 5 and ultimately the Great lakes Tunnel project would have devastating consequences, threatening thousands of jobs, billions in economic output, and the safe supply and affordability of resources necessary to meet families' and businesses' most basic needs.

We respectfully request that you consider these ramifications when making future decisions that ultimately affect the American economy, the environment and our immediate national energy needs. With the nation, and the world, focused on defeating the coronavirus and recovering our economies, now is not the time to a cause regional and international energy crisis by shutting down pipelines such as Line 5 that serve as essential parts of our states' and this nation's infrastructure and economies.

Sincerely,


Tim Walberg
Member of Congress


Jack Bergman
Member of Congress


Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress


Fred Upton
Member of Congress


Bill Johnson
Member of Congress


Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Member of Congress


Troy Balderson
Member of Congress


Lisa McClain
Member of Congress



Kelly Armstrong
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress



Peter Meijer
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Bob Gibbs
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Mike Kelly
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Tom Tiffany
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Mike Gallagher
Member of Congress