

PI-75-0109

September 17, 1975

Honorable J. Glenn Beall  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Beall:

This responds to your transmittal of August 15, 1975, to the Congressional Liaison Office, requesting the Department's views on a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Grayson E. Summers of Middletown, Maryland, regarding the safety of a proposed 50-inch interstate natural gas transmission line.

The Summers' are concerned that the pipeline would be located only 200 feet from their home and their daughter's home, and would like it to be located further away. While the Department has safety regulatory jurisdiction over interstate natural gas transmission lines under the Nature Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968 (NGPSA) (49 USC 1671 et. sec.) this statute does not authorize the Department to primer the location or route of an interstate transmission line. Routing is normally a matter subject to local control as well as agree ant between the landowner concerned and the pipeline company. To provide for adequate safety, however the Federal gas pipeline safety standards in 49 CFR Part 1 (copy enclosed), which are administered by the Department under the NOMA and would govern the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the 30-inch line, vary by degree in many instances according to a pipeline's location. In general, a higher degree of safety is required as pipelines approach buildings intended for human occupancy or occupied outside areas.

Further, the Summers' would like the pipeline to be buried deeper than five feet to provide adequate soil coverage in which to conduct farming activities without interfering with the pipelines. The Federal safety standard in 49 CFR 192.327 requires that if the line is buried, it must be constructed with at least 30 or 36 inches of soil cover, depending on the pipeline's location. Of course, a pipelines company may voluntarily choose to bury its pipelines deeper than the required level, and this, too, would be a matter for agreement between the landowner and the company.

I hope that this information will be of assistance to your constituents.

Sincerely,

Signed

Herbert H. Kaiser, Jr.

Acting Director