



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
Washington, DC 20590

DEC 27 2011

The Honorable John D. Rockefeller, IV
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) commissioned the study titled, "Studies for the Requirements of Automatic and Remotely Controlled Shutoff Valves on Hazardous Liquids and Natural Gas Pipelines with Respect to Public and Environmental Safety," to help provide input for considerations in the context of the requirements of Section 4 of the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011 (Act).

The Act directs the Secretary of Transportation, if appropriate, to require by regulation the use of Automatic Shut-Off Valves (ASVs) or Remote Controlled Valves (RCVs), or equivalent technology, where it is economically, technically, and operationally feasible, on transmission pipeline facilities constructed or entirely replaced after the date on which the Secretary issues the final rule containing such requirement.

PHMSA has been working on addressing the use of ASVs and RCVs on hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines prior to the Act. For hazardous liquid pipelines, an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) that was issued on October 18, 2010, indicated that RCVs could reduce the impact of a pipeline line accident if activated in a timely manner. For gas transmission pipelines, an ANPRM that was issued on October 25, 2011, requested public comment on the requirements of ASV and RCV installation and use to help consider regulations for ASV and RCV installation.

The independent study that was performed, while not mandated by the Act, will help to determine the effectiveness of block valve closure swiftness in mitigating the consequences of natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline releases on the safety of the public and the environment. This information will assist in providing additional input for potential rulemaking.

To gather sufficient input for this independent study, PHMSA took the following measures to conduct analyses on ASV/RCV feasibility:

- PHMSA and the National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives sponsored a public workshop on March 28, 2012, entitled "Understanding the Application of Automatic Control & Remote Control Valves."

- PHMSA commissioned an independent study on the feasibility and effectiveness of ASVs and RCVs on hazardous liquid and natural gas transmission pipelines.

Public comments and workshop input were used to develop the commissioned study, including the original scope of work. A public web-based seminar (webinar) and public comment period was also held for input on the draft report. The final report addressed the submitted comments and incorporated substantive technical recommendations.

The final report of the study, which is 344 pages, has been posted electronically for review at the following website: <https://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/meetings/MtgHome.mtg?Mtg=80>. A hardcopy of the report can be obtained by contacting Patricia Klinger, Deputy Director of Governmental, International, and Public Affairs, at (202) 366-4831 or by e-mail at patricia.klinger@dot.gov.

PHMSA will use all of the input gathered from the above initiatives when considering rulemaking in line with Section 4 of the Act. PHMSA anticipates progressing with a rulemaking related to ASV and RCV installation and use on hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines in 2013.

An identical letter has been sent to the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

If I can provide further information or assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Regards,



Cynthia L. Quarterman



U.S. Department
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1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
Washington, DC 20590

DEC 27 2012

The Honorable John Thune
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thune:

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1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
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030 27 11

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) commissioned the study titled, "Studies for the Requirements of Automatic and Remotely Controlled Shutoff Valves on Hazardous Liquids and Natural Gas Pipelines with Respect to Public and Environmental Safety," to help provide input for considerations in the context of the requirements of Section 4 of the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011 (Act).

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Cynthia L. Quarterman



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Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
Washington, DC 20590

PLC 27

The Honorable Nick Joe Rahall, II
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Rahall:

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U.S. Department
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Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
Washington, DC 20590

10/27/12

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
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DEC 27 2011

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Waxman:

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