

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
RANKING MEMBER

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN
OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS,
RANKING MEMBER



Nita M. Lowey
Congress of the United States
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Stephen G. Burns
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Burns:

Thank you for your response dated November 30.

I appreciate your assurances that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) shares my interest in ensuring the safety of Indian Point; conducted a rigorous analysis of risks associated with a gas pipeline running near Indian Point, employing conservative assumptions and relying on the ALOHA software; and concluded that a potential rupture of the proposed pipeline would pose no threat to the safe operation or the safe shutdown of the plant. However, with millions of lives and the heart of the local economy in jeopardy should there be an emergency related to the pipeline and Indian Point, I respectfully disagree with your conclusion that a further study is unnecessary.

While I understand NRC does not have primary jurisdiction over pipeline approvals, NRC is responsible for ensuring the safety of the nuclear facilities it regulates, which in this case requires NRC to review and confirm Entergy's conclusion that a pipeline rupture would have no significant impact on the safety or operation of Indian Point. As I'm sure you heard from local elected officials on your visit earlier this week to Westchester County, the proximity of the proposed pipeline to Indian Point and the minimal room for error warrant NRC to support the requests for rehearing to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and to require further evaluation of the project before construction of the pipeline begins near Indian Point.

The people questioning the safety of the pipeline and Indian Point surely have a right to live without fear, and an independent risk assessment of the kind they and I have requested is not too much to ask. If the Commission and Entergy are indeed confident that this pipeline poses no threat, then I believe all parties should want to reassure the public by honoring this reasonable request for an independent risk assessment.

Thank you for reconsidering this request.

Sincerely,



Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress