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Senate of Pennsylvania

August 29, 2011

TO: All Senators  
FROM: *LB* Senator Lisa Baker  
SUBJECT: Gas Pipeline Safety Bills

I plan to introduce two measures regarding gas pipeline safety.

- The first bill is a freestanding act to give the Public Utility Commission the authority to conduct safety inspections of rural Class 1 gathering lines.

A gathering line is a pipeline that transports gas from a well site to a transmission or distribution line, which then transports it to the customer. The classes are based upon location of the line and the number of buildings intended for human occupancy over a continuous mile. A single pipeline often has several different classes of lines on it depending on the areas it traverses. Class 1 lines are located in very rural areas which make up a substantial portion of my Senate district.

As background, Senate Bill 325, approved 49-1 by the Senate on April 6, gives the PUC safety jurisdiction over Class 2, 3, and 4 lines, the only classes of lines under the safety jurisdiction of the federal government. The PUC currently only has safety jurisdiction over pipeline facilities that are defined as public utilities under the law. It does not have statutory jurisdiction over gathering and non-public utility pipelines. Out of 31 gas producing states, Pennsylvania is the only one, other than Alaska, that does not have a state agency dedicated to safety jurisdiction over non-public utility lines within its state.

Prior to passage, an amendment was adopted to provide for a registry of Marcellus Shale Class 1 lines. The bill I am now introducing would extend the safety inspection authority for Class 2, 3 and 4 lines included in Senate Bill 325 to Class 1 lines. (A similar bill without the Class 1 registry, House Bill 344, was passed unanimously by the House on April 4.)

- The second bill would bring natural gas production and gathering lines or facilities located in the Marcellus Shale region under the Underground Utility Line Protection Law, or the Pennsylvania One Call system.

If you wish to co-sponsor either proposal, please contact Liz Clancy at [LClancy@psen.gov](mailto:LClancy@psen.gov) or by phone at 787-7428. Thank you.