

June 12, 2002

The Honorable W.J. Tauzin, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) applauds your effort, along with Ranking Member Dingell, to craft a bi-partisan pipeline safety bill. The IBEW supports H.R. 3609, as marked up last night by the Energy and Air Quality Subcommittee, and encourages your committee to pass that product on to the full House of Representatives.

The IBEW represents approximately 780,000 workers, twenty thousand of which work for utilities and contractors in the natural gas and oil industries. Our members have first-hand experience and expertise in how the pipeline industry operates. We agree that this bill will improve the safety and security of our nation's gas and liquid transmission and distribution systems. We strongly support the provisions in the bill that provide meaningful whistleblower protections; require periodic inspections of pipelines (with priority going to those lines that are the greatest threat to life and property); establish uniform standards and criteria for training workers in positions that are essential to the safety of the pipelines; and acknowledge the importance of protecting the safety and security of pipeline workers.

H.R. 3609, as reported out of the Energy & Air Quality Subcommittee, is not only an important component of America's national security, but also aims to protect the working men and women who dedicate their lives to the safe operation our nation's pipeline infrastructure.

The IBEW encourages the Energy and Commerce Committee to report out the Subcommittee product, HR. 3609.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,


Edwin D. Hill
President

CC: Energy and Commerce Committee Members

