

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 24, 2015

The Honorable Gregory H. Friedman  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Friedman:

Thank you for your timely response to our July 2015 letter regarding the interstate natural gas permitting process administered by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). We also appreciate the conversations you had with our staffs about this very important issue, and are pleased that your Fiscal Year 2016 audit plan includes a review of FERC's permitting process. However, the written response we received from your office did not address the five specific questions we asked in our recent letter.

New Hampshire residents and stakeholders remain concerned with how public input is considered during FERC's permitting process for energy infrastructure projects. Since the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity issued by the Commission authorizes the construction of a project, preempting any state or local law, it is imperative that the public play a prominent role in the permitting process.

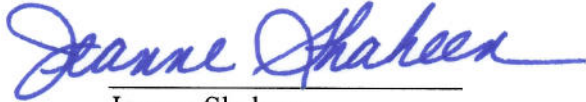
For this reason, we respectfully request a written response detailing how your review of FERC's permitting process will incorporate the questions below previously posed by the New Hampshire congressional delegation:

1. What actions is FERC taking to ensure that it fully complies with its statutory mandate to ensure all interstate natural gas infrastructure projects permitted by the Commission are consistent with public interest?
2. Has FERC put in place proper tools and conducted sufficient outreach efforts to ensure that all affected stakeholders have accurate information and instruction on the ways in which they can participate in the interstate natural gas permitting process?
3. Does FERC have in place performance measures and controls to provide reasonable assurance that it fully meets its obligations under Executive Order 13604 and other applicable statutes to promote the exchange of information among stakeholders?
4. In what way does FERC ensure that the opportunities for public comment currently required in the interstate natural gas permitting process allow for all stakeholders to meaningfully express their concerns about the potential impacts (environmental and otherwise) of a proposed pipeline project?

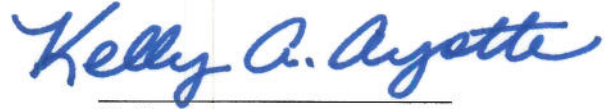
5. In what manner are comments from state and local officials and agencies considered during the permitting process?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



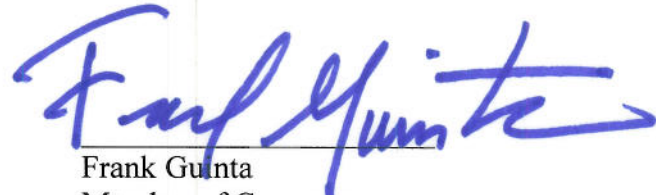
Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



Kelly Ayotte  
United States Senator



Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



Frank Guinta  
Member of Congress