



May 16, 2019

The Honorable Tim Kaine  
231 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner  
703 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kaine and Senator Warner:

We, the undersigned **52** organizations, with hundreds of thousands of members in Virginia, are writing to express our concern about possible federal legislation that would allow the highly controversial Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) to be built across the Appalachian Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway. The ACP epitomizes many of the problems you sought to fix with your 2017 pipelines bill. In addition to threatening significant environmental resources, this project is costly and unnecessary, and it will burden property owners and ratepayers for the benefit of private interests. Legislation may also allow the equally controversial Mountain Valley Pipeline—which has already done significant damage to streams and rivers in Virginia—to cross the Appalachian Trail. We ask that you oppose any legislation that would bypass the developers' serious permitting problems and change existing law to allow pipelines to cross the Appalachian Trail on federal lands or cross the Blue Ridge Parkway.

We understand that Dominion Energy is pressuring some members of Congress to consider legislation that could make it easier to build the ACP along the developers' preferred route. Such legislation would be inappropriate given the ongoing review of the project by agencies and the courts. So far, a federal court or the federal agencies themselves have vacated, stayed, or suspended *seven* federal permits required for ACP construction, and the case challenging FERC's certificate of public convenience and necessity—the permit that approved the proposed route—is still pending. A bill like this could circumvent the normal regulatory process that determines where pipelines should be located and set the troubling precedent that developers can call on Congress to fix permitting problems for controversial projects that run afoul of the law. Our organizations continue to participate in the review process in good faith, as do many of our members, Virginia landowners, and other affected citizens and stakeholders.

Adding to our concern, Dominion Energy has failed to adequately describe the public need for the pipeline, and it is increasingly evident that the project is unnecessary. First, Dominion has not produced a study demonstrating that the ACP is a public necessity, instead relying on vague statements about "growing energy needs" in Virginia. But in December 2018, the Virginia State Corporation Commission rejected the utility's Integrated Resource Plan, finding that the company has consistently overstated its energy demand forecasts. And in March 2019, Dominion submitted its newly revised Plan confirming Virginia's trajectory away from fossil fuels—both coal *and* gas—towards clean, low-cost solar power. The revised Plan cuts the number of gas-fired peaking power plants nearly in half compared to the original Plan, further undermining the need for the ACP.

Dominion recently raised the projected cost of the ACP to \$7.5 billion. Even though the project is now \$3 billion more than when it was proposed, the company intends to recover its costs, plus an exorbitant 15% yearly profit, from ratepayers regardless of whether gas ever flows through the pipeline. Until the serious, fundamental questions about the need for the project are resolved, there is no reason for Congress to jeopardize sensitive, scenic, and treasured natural resources such as the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Congress should not legislate the permits or routes for gas pipelines through national parks in Virginia. Please protect the Appalachian Trail, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and the interests of our many members in Virginia by opposing any federal legislation that would exempt the Atlantic Coast or Mountain Valley pipelines from normal process or clear the path for the building or siting of these controversial projects.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance  
Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley  
Appalachian Citizens' Law Center  
Appalachian Mountain Advocates  
Appalachian Voices  
Audubon Naturalist Society  
Augusta County Alliance  
Blue Ridge Land Conservancy  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Central Virginia Land Conservancy  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Chesapeake Climate Action Network  
Chesapeake Conservancy  
Cowpasture River Preservation Association  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Dominion Pipeline Monitoring Coalition  
FracTracker Alliance  
Friends of Buckingham  
Friends of Nelson  
Friends of Wintergreen  
Highlanders for Responsible Development  
Jackson River Preservation Association  
Land Trust of Virginia  
Mothers Out Front  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
New River Land Trust  
Piedmont Environmental Council  
Pipeline Education Group  
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Charlottesville Chapter  
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter  
Potomac Riverkeeper Network  
Rachel Carson Council  
Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection

Rockbridge Area Conservation Council  
Rockfish Valley Foundation  
Scenic Virginia  
Southern Environmental Law Center  
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation  
Sierra Club, Virginia Chapter  
SouthWings  
The Wilderness Society  
The Friends of the Middle River  
Virginia Conservation Network  
Virginia Interfaith Power & Light  
Virginia League of Conservation Voters  
Virginia Native Plant Society  
Virginia Society of Ornithology  
Virginia Wilderness Committee  
Waterkeepers Chesapeake  
Wild Virginia  
Yogaville Environmental Solutions