

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT & REFORM
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4321

July 6, 2020

The Honorable Brian Birdwell
P.O. Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711

Chairman Birdwell,

Thank you for your dedicated public service and commitment to the preservation of liberty. Since taking office in January 2018, my duties have afforded me the opportunity to spend a large amount of time with constituents and communities directly impacted by Kinder Morgan's Permian Highway Pipeline. As you know, the proposed 430-mile pipeline route is entirely intrastate, running from Waha in West Texas to the Gulf of Mexico. The PHP passes through the Congressional district which I represent in the heart of the Texas Hill Country: specifically, Gillespie, Blanco, and Hays Counties.

For the last year and a half, I have heard directly from hundreds of Texans concerned with this project. Many of them are property owners or have property near the pipeline route. The proposed path is full of rivers, historic sites such as chapels, old ranches, family cemeteries, as well as homes and businesses. Many of the landowners in the district felt throughout the route selection and eminent domain process there were not adequate legal measures in place to secure their property rights, encourage public transparency, ensure water sources are fully protected, and protect them from "lowball" offers.

It has come to my attention that the Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee will be examining current eminent domain laws during the Interim in anticipation of the next Legislative Session. Protecting property rights is critically important issue and legislation previously introduced by Senators Kolkhorst and Buckingham (SB 421, 552-555) are practical starting points for those conversations.

Texas is blessed with abundant natural resources, and I fully support their development and production. Our State will require robust infrastructure to keep up with global and domestic demands for clean and affordable energy. For that reason, it is critical that Texans maintain confidence in the processes conducted to develop pipelines and other common carriers. I believe Texas can ensure property rights, including water, are protected while continuing to lead the country in economic growth with energy at the forefront. It is for this reason, I hope the committee and Texas legislature will take up and debate legislation as appropriate to ensure that is the case.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters with you. If I can be of any additional help to you, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Legislative Assistant, John Fletcher, in my Washington Office.

Sincerely,



Chip Roy
Member of Congress