

Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

February 24, 2025

Acting Administrator Ben Kochman
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Acting Administrator Kochman,

Nearly three weeks ago, our Upper Makefield Township community was impacted by the discovery of a Sunoco Pipeline leak that resulted in the widespread contamination of jet fuel in the wells of our constituents. In the time since, three resident forums have occurred in an effort to clarify the role of our State and Federal agencies in stopping and addressing the contamination. While we appreciate the involvement of PHMSA and the Department of Transportation thus far, our community continues to seek full and transparent answers, which they rightfully deserve. Until the investigation into this leak is complete, and it can be conclusively proven that there are no remaining risks of further leaks, we are requesting that PHMSA act to keep the pipeline fully offline.

The February 13th, 2025 Notice of Proposed Safety Order from PHMSA has brought to light a series of alarming facts that cast serious doubt on the rationale underlying continued operation of the pipeline. Some of the most concerning revelations include:

- The jet fuel leak likely began 16 months ago at a Type A Sleeve – around the time when the first reports surfaced and were investigated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.
- There are 44 other Type A Sleeves, all of which were installed over 30 years ago.
- The pipeline in question had a 14-inch diameter with a crack spanning 2.5 inches.
- Energy Transfer lacks the technology and systems necessary to detect its own leaks which resulted in wells with as much as 12 feet of jet fuel floating on top of the water.
- Benzine and lead have been reported¹ at a wider circumference surrounding the leak.
- No final investigation report on the leak has been issued, yet the pipeline has resumed operation.

While we recognize that many of the Proposed Corrective Measures outlined in the PHMSA report are reasonable, we strongly believe it is unjustifiable for the pipeline to remain operational, even at a 20% reduced capacity, under these circumstances. PHMSA has previously cited its lack of jurisdiction to shut down the pipeline unless it poses an imminent threat to public health and safety. However, with the leak reportedly ongoing for 16 months and with the issues listed above still unresolved, it is evident that Energy Transfer cannot confirm, with certainty,

¹ See "The once-leaking Sunoco pipeline in Bucks County is operational again. Some are worried," Philly Blurbs, 2/18/2025
<https://www.phillyburbs.com/story/news/local/2025/02/17/bucks-county-pa-sunoco-pipeline-leak-shut-down-energy-transfer-investigation-poisoned-wells/78550925007/>

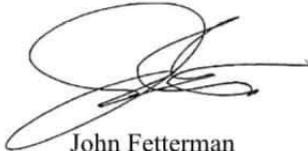
that there are no additional leaks at this time, as was demonstrated during the February 13th residential meeting.

Given the serious nature of these findings, we, as the federal delegation representing the residents of Upper Makefield Township, believe that it is necessary to temporarily suspend this pipeline's operations until a full and thorough investigation is completed, all aspects of the Proposed Safety Order have been fully satisfied, and no further threats to public safety remain.

We believe this action is necessary to guarantee the health and safety of our constituents. These families have been thrust into a state of fear and uncertainty, without reliable access to clean water. We ask that you take all possible steps to right this wrong and protect their health, in the immediate aftermath of the discovery of this leak and in the long term.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this critical matter and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



John Fetterman
United States Senator



Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress