

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

November 2, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

As Ranking Members of the House Committees and Subcommittees with jurisdiction over our nation's hazardous liquid pipeline system, we write to respectfully request that you immediately undertake a comprehensive examination of the Colonial Pipeline Company (Colonial), its liquid pipeline system, and the company's management as it relates to the maintenance and integrity operations of the system.

As you know, Monday evening, a fire and explosion were reported on Colonial's Line 1 in Shelby County, Alabama, which had been the source of a major spill and refined product supply disruption less than two months ago. According to accounts from your Department's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and media reports, one person was killed in Monday's incident and at least five others were transported to area hospitals.

Monday's explosion marks the third major incident on Colonial's system in just over a year and at least the seventh in less than five years. These incidents occurred in a variety of locations throughout Colonial's system including South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia and Alabama. While the most recent incident was the first to result in a human fatality, these other incidents caused significant, direct harm to local communities and the environment, while the failure of Line 1 in September also had clear national implications in the form of considerably increased prices for refined petroleum products throughout many U.S. markets.

This is an unacceptable situation, and we are concerned that the number, frequency and severity of significant incidents on Colonial's system over the past five years could be symptomatic of severe underlying problems with the system and the company's management of that system.

Therefore, we urge you to immediately undertake a full and thorough investigation of the safety of the Colonial system, including Colonial's management, as well as the robustness of its maintenance and integrity oversight activities for the pipelines in the system over the past five years. We also request that you provide an initial briefing on the safety of the Colonial system and any root causes related to these failures to our Committees as soon as you are reasonably able, but in any event, by no later than December 1, 2016. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Rick Kessler with the House Committee on Energy and Commerce at

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(202) 225-3641 or Jennifer Homendy with the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure at (202) 225-3274.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this request and for your efforts to ensure the safety of the Colonial system and its workers, the protection of our environment, and the security of our liquid fuel markets.

Sincerely,



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure



Bobby L. Rush
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Power



Michael Capuano
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Railroads,
Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials



Diana DeGette
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight and
Investigations