



June 2016

## Summary of the House Amendment to S. 2276

### SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE ENERGY: PROTECTING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE OF PIPELINES AND ENHANCING SAFETY ACT OF 2016

#### Committee on Energy and Commerce, Democratic Staff

The House Amendment to S. 2276 reauthorizes the federal gas and hazardous liquid pipeline safety program that is overseen by the Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) through fiscal year 2019. The legislation is the product of bipartisan, bicameral negotiations between the House Energy and Commerce Committee, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the Senate Commerce Committee. Highlights include:

**Emergency Order Authority:** The House amendment provides PHMSA with emergency order authority to address dangers to public health, safety and the environment on a comprehensive basis. Currently, PHMSA can only take major action on a pipeline-by-pipeline basis.

**Pipeline Safety Information Grants:** Includes changes to the existing Pipeline Safety Information Grant program to help ensure that pipeline safety technical assistance grants to communities and non-profit organizations are adequately funded.

**Gas Facility Safety:** Requires PHMSA to set federal minimum safety standards for underground natural gas storage facilities, and allows states to go above those standards for intrastate facilities. Additionally, the House Amendment requires PHMSA to update safety regulations for certain liquefied natural gas facilities and account for national security considerations.

**Protecting Coastal Areas:** Improves protection of coastal beaches, marine coastal waters, and the Great Lakes by explicitly designating them as areas unusually environmentally sensitive to pipeline failures. Oil and other liquid pipelines in unusually sensitive areas are more strictly regulated, including requiring inspections at least once every five years.

**Congressional Updates:** Requires PHMSA to update Congress on outstanding statutory mandates, including each mandate's status, reasons why it is incomplete, and its estimated completion date.

**Integrity Management Study:** Directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the effectiveness of integrity management programs for both natural gas and hazardous liquids pipelines, including requiring more frequent inspections for some pipelines.

**State Participation:** Authorizes states to participate in interstate pipeline inspections.

**Improve PHMSA Hiring:** Provides tools to enhance PHMSA's efforts to hire pipeline safety personnel and requires the Inspector General to study and make recommendations to Congress to address PHMSA's hiring challenges and training needs.

**Reauthorization:** Reauthorizes PHMSA's major components and the user fees that pay for them.