



**For Immediate Release**  
**Distribution Contractors Association**

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## **DCA Encourages Expedited Pipeline Permitting Process Delays in Permitting Process Hamper Economic Growth**

**July 10, 2013**

Washington, D.C. – Yesterday, a witness from the Distribution Contractors Association (DCA) appeared before the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Subcommittee on Energy and Power at a hearing in support of the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act (HR 1900). Introduced by Rep. Mike Pompeo (R-KS), the legislation attempts to expedite and modernize the federal review process for natural gas pipeline permits.

DCA member Alex Paris, president and CEO of Alex E. Paris Contracting Company in Atlasburg, Pennsylvania, described the significant job creation and economic benefit that result from natural gas construction projects. Rep. Tim Murphy (R-Penn.) introduced Mr. Paris as a panel of industry and environmental organizations prepared to testify. Referring to Paris as a “good friend and a constituent,” Rep. Murphy described him as “as Southwestern Pennsylvania success story” and said his firm is a “full-service heavy construction firm, employing hundreds of workers and laying thousands of miles of pipeline.”

Mr. Paris’ testimony focused mainly on his experience working on pipeline transportation projects made possible by the gas-rich Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania. In addition to the 20 percent annual employment growth his company has seen in recent years, Mr. Paris added that the “economic benefits that accompany natural gas pipeline projects aren’t limited to hiring workers. Last year my company purchased an additional \$16 million in new trucks and equipment, and I can honestly attribute all of this to the recent boom in natural gas production and transportation.”

Mr. Paris went on to underscore the problems his company encounters in the field with regard to permitting delays. “Unfortunately, important pipeline projects are often mired with extended reviews while they acquire federal and state permits, grants of rights-of-way and approvals from various federal,

state and local agencies. These delays often result in missed in-service dates and increased project costs, and hamper the vast economic benefits that accompany gas pipeline construction.”

Paris concluded his remarks saying “the bottom line is that delays in acquiring pipeline permits regularly cause downstream delays, which in the end hurts the consumer.”

Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Ed Whitfield (R-KY) agreed there is an urgent need to expand the nation’s gas pipeline network, and that these benefits are enjoyed by everyday Americans. “There are endless examples of why more natural gas pipelines are needed but suffice it to say that it affects Americans in the two places that matter most right now – in the consumer’s wallets and in the job market.”

HR 1900 would bring certainty to the pipeline permitting process by setting firm timelines for review by federal agencies involved in the process. Specifically, the legislation requires the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to approve or deny a pipeline application within 12 months after the application was filed. The legislation would also codify FERC’s 90-day deadline for other relevant agencies to approve or deny a permit application or the permit shall become effective. DCA fully supports quick passage of the bill and is actively working to advance it through the legislative process.

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*The Distribution Contractors Association represents contractors, suppliers and manufacturers who provide install, replace, and rehabilitate natural gas pipelines, water and wastewater infrastructure, as well as fiber optic, cable and duct systems in communities across the country.*