# AMERICAN PUBLIC GAS ASSOCIATION

December 1, 2023

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Troy Nehls
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Chairman, Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials
1104 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Donald M. Payne Jr.
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials
106 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Introduction of H.R. 6494 "Promoting Innovation in Pipeline Efficiency and Safety Act" (PIPES Act)**

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen and Chairman Nehls and Ranking Member Payne,

The American Public Gas Association ("APGA")[1] is the trade association representing more than 730 communities across the U.S. that own and operate their retail gas distribution entities. These include not-for-profit gas distribution systems owned by municipalities and other local government entities, all accountable to the citizens they serve. Public gas systems focus on providing efficient, reliable, and affordable energy to their customers and support their communities by safely delivering fuel to be used in homes, businesses, and small industries.

APGA commends your collaborative efforts within the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to introduce H.R. 6494 "Promoting Innovation in Pipeline Efficiency and Safety Act" ("PIPES Act"). Public gas utilities' chief priority is to deliver energy safely to their thousands of customers. The provisions in the PIPES Act will further the efforts of APGA members to maintain and operate their assets, as well as support appropriate collaboration with other stakeholders in the mission of delivering energy safely.

Public gas utilities recognize there is still opportunity to further enhance pipeline safety, whether it is learning from other pipeline operators or coordinating with excavation contractors. So, APGA is glad to see Congress propose actions that will ensure the continued safety of America's pipeline infrastructure via several practical measures included in the PIPES Act. Excavation damage is a leading cause of pipeline incidents across the country. The inclusion of leading practices for state one-call programs to consider implementing[2] will assist in the mitigation of future excavation damage. Also, unfortunately, there are individuals looking to damage our nation's critical infrastructure, including the pipeline network. As these

[1] For more information, visit apga.org.
[2] Section 18. Excavation Damage Prevention

threats intensify, public gas operators appreciate the introduction of legislation that will increase criminal penalties for knowingly and willfully damaging these energy delivery systems.[3]

As the US embraces the benefits offered by alternative energy sources, like hydrogen, studies on its transportation via our existing and resilient pipeline infrastructure are pivotal. Informed investments are needed to ensure hydrogen can be safely delivered in support of our country's sustainability goals.[4] Public gas utilities are experts in the safe and efficient delivery of energy to thousands of homes and businesses, and information should be gathered to support effective operation of their systems that will now carry emerging energy sources.

Thank you for your leadership in advancing this legislation and ensuring that pipeline safety is a priority within the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. APGA looks forward to assisting the committee in this bipartisan effort further.

Sincerely,

Stuart Saulters

Vice President of Government Relations
American Public Gas Association

[3] Section 21. Penalty for Causing a Defect in or Disrupting Operation of Pipeline Infrastructure
[4] Section 20. Hydrogen Study