

CONGRESSMAN GREGORY W. MEEKS TESTIMONY BEFORE THE  
HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATURAL PARKS,  
FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS

September 15, 2011

I join my colleague Congressman Grimm in thanking Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva and the Subcommittee for giving us the opportunity to testify in support of this bill. I'd like to make four points of interest.

First, natural gas is economical, reliable, clean and domestic—and bringing more natural gas into New York City is a win not only for the City but for our nation.

Second, the proposed pipeline route avoids residential and commercial areas in one of the most densely populated parts of our country.

Third, the natural gas pipeline system serving Queens, Brooklyn and Staten Island is 40 to 60 years old. While adequate for the demand at the time, the system no longer has the capacity for the approximately 5.2 million residents of these three boroughs. Simply put, we need new natural gas infrastructure to meet our existing and growing needs.

Fourth, the pipeline project authorized in our bill is a win for Gateway at a time of severe fiscal constraints on the National Park Service. As we all know, the siting of any major energy project in a densely populated urban area is always a challenge. A key issue with respect to this much-needed project has been finding an approximately one-acre location for the meter and regulator station which is necessary to meter the gas and heat it in the winter in preparation of its entry into the National Grid distribution system.

Gateway's Floyd Bennett Field has two aircraft hangar buildings off to one side of the field along Flatbush Avenue. The hangars are historic but are in serious disrepair to the point of being in danger of collapse. Our bill authorizes the NPS to enter into a lease allowing the meter station to be inside one of these hangars with the hangar's exterior restored to its original condition coupled with a payment to

Gateway that Gateway can put towards restoration of the other hangar for other activities and for other park uses.

I respectfully request that the Subcommittee approve this bill. Thank you again for your interest. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.