

As a concerned Virginian, I write to express my concern about possible federal legislation that would allow the highly controversial Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) to be built across the Appalachian Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway. In addition to threatening the pristine headwaters of the Shenandoah River and other significant environmental resources, this project is costly and unnecessary, and it will burden property owners and ratepayers for the benefit of private interests. I ask that you oppose any legislation that would bypass the developers' serious permitting problems and change existing law to allow pipelines to cross the Appalachian Trail on federal lands or cross the Blue Ridge Parkway.

We understand that Dominion Energy is pressuring some members of Congress to consider legislation that could make it easier to build the ACP along the developers' preferred route. Such legislation would be inappropriate given the ongoing review of the project by agencies and the courts. So far, a federal court or the federal agencies themselves have vacated, stayed, or suspended seven federal permits required for ACP construction, and the case challenging FERC's certificate of public convenience and necessity—the permit that approved the proposed route—is still pending. A bill like this could circumvent the normal regulatory process that determines where pipelines should be located and set the troubling precedent that developers can call on Congress to fix permitting problems for controversial projects that run afoul of the law.

Adding to my concern, Dominion Energy has failed to adequately describe the public need for the pipeline, and it is increasingly evident that the project is unnecessary. First, Dominion has not produced a study demonstrating that the ACP is a public necessity, instead relying on vague statements about "growing energy needs" in Virginia. But in December 2018, the Virginia State Corporation Commission rejected the utility's Integrated Resource Plan, finding that the company has consistently overstated its energy demand forecasts. And in March 2019, Dominion submitted its newly revised Plan confirming Virginia's trajectory away from fossil fuels—both coal and gas—towards clean, low-cost solar power. The revised Plan cuts the number of gas-fired peaking power plants nearly in half compared to the original Plan, further undermining the need for the ACP.

Dominion recently raised the projected cost of the ACP to \$7.5 billion. Even though the project is now \$3 billion more than when it was proposed, the company intends to recover its costs, plus an exorbitant 15% yearly profit, from ratepayers regardless of whether gas ever flows through the pipeline. Until the serious, fundamental questions about the need for the project are resolved, there is no reason for Congress to jeopardize sensitive, scenic, and treasured natural resources such as the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Congress should not legislate the permits or routes for gas pipelines through national parks in Virginia. Please protect the Appalachian Trail, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and my interest as a concerned Virginian by opposing any federal legislation that would exempt the Atlantic Coast Pipeline from normal process or clear the path for the building or siting of these controversial projects.