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PEIA Members Urge DEP to Approve Permits to Move Mariner East 2 from ‘Concept to Construction’

HARRISBURG, Pa. – Members of the Pennsylvania Energy Infrastructure Alliance (PEIA) want the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to move swiftly and finally approve the permits needed to construct the Mariner East 2 pipeline project.

The project has been in planning and review phases for more than two years, and the subject of numerous municipal and state-sponsored public hearings and forums during that time. In August, dozens of PEIA members testified in person and submitted comments for the record to DEP when it convened five separate hearings along the path of Mariner East 2 project.

“It’s time to move from concept to construction,” said Delaware County Chamber of Commerce President Trish McFarland, who is among PEIA’s founders. “We continue to see news about companies wanting to send our natural gas out of state to the Gulf Coast. This should serve as a warning that we need to build this critical infrastructure now, or risk losing out on all the benefits.”

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration identifies pipelines as the safest mode of energy transportation.

A recent independent analysis commissioned by a southeastern Pennsylvania township confirmed that Mariner East 2 “has incorporated additional processes in excess of minimal pipeline safety regulations that should assure the safety of this proposal,” adding to reviews about the state-of-the-art technologies and round-the-clock monitoring that will ensure safe construction and long-term operation.

That report was compiled by Accufacts Inc., which has more than 40 years of experience in the energy industry and is run by a certified safety management engineer with a special focus on proper design and operation in areas of unique population density or of an environmentally sensitive nature.

Pennsylvania is facing a huge budget shortfall and is in need of an economic boost. The Mariner East 2 project represents a \$4.2 billion investment in Pennsylvania’s economy. The pipeline will create around 30,000 new direct and indirect jobs during construction, relying on union labor, and approximately 300 to 400 permanent positions throughout Pennsylvania once the pipeline is operational.

Jim Kunz, business manager for the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 66 in western Pennsylvania, said without the shale gas industry, his local would have anywhere between 10 percent to 20 percent higher unemployment. Mariner East 2 has the potential to create even more opportunities.

“We understand that beyond the development of these energy resources, their safe movement from the fields to market is critical,” Kunz said. “Using local trades on pipeline infrastructure ensures that the most qualified, best-trained professionals are hired to safely build the pipeline. And, it also ensures that the pipeline will meet and exceed federal regulation safety requirements. The Mariner East 2 pipeline has received ample input by regulators, officials and the general public since it was first proposed more than two years ago. It’s time to get to work.”

PEIA is a broad-based coalition of labor, agriculture, manufacturing and other business interests that support private investment in pipeline and other energy infrastructure developments. The alliance has more than 30 members statewide.

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The [Pennsylvania Energy Infrastructure Alliance](http://www.paallianceforenergy.com) was launched June 8, 2015 by the Washington County Chamber of Commerce and Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, along with the Laborers International Union of North America and the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 66. Visit www.paallianceforenergy.com for more information, or go to Twitter [@PAllies4Energy](https://twitter.com/PAllies4Energy).