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Pipeline Installation on National Mall Highlights Need for Congressional Hearings on FERC Abuses of Power

Eminent Domain, Refusal to Consider Climate Impacts among Issues Represented in Coalition's Exhibit

Washington, D.C. - A sprawling tangle of pipelines on the National Mall spanning 50' and rising 20' into the air is bringing attention to documented abuses of power by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the need for Congress to intervene. According to VOICES, a national coalition fighting natural gas infrastructure, communities across the nation are being abused at the hands of FERC. This display, featuring 10 interwoven "fracked gas pipelines", will be complemented by flyering and meetings with members of Congress and their staff.

The display was created and commissioned by the VOICES Coalition. Every member of both the House and the Senate was invited to tour the display in order to understand why VOICES is urging them to investigate FERC's misuse of its authority with a series of Congressional hearings. The installation at 3rd St. SW will be available for touring through Thursday.

"Congress says it wants to exercise oversight in order to prevent government abuses. They can prove it by including FERC amongst the government bad-actors in need of their review," **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, and a leading member of the VOICES coalition.** "As a result of FERC's biased decision-making and abuses of power, communities have been subjected to law enforcement with high powered weapons simply for engaging in peaceful protest; to their property rights being taken by private industry for profit gain; to their businesses literally being cut down for pipelines that may never be built; and to explosions that have killed, maimed and inflicted billions of dollars in damage. For three years, we have heard growing recognition from Congress that industry access to the halls of power and the misuse of authority by agencies like FERC are growing out of control. It is time for Congress to start taking action by listening to what impacted community members have to say and to put in place needed reforms."

"Congress must investigate FERC's long-standing abuses of power against communities across this country. These abuses do everything from attacking the fundamental rights to property ownership and due process to turning a blind eye to the climate impacts of the natural gas

pipelines and other infrastructure projects it ultimately rubber stamps," **said Karen Feridun, Founder, Pennsylvania-based Berks Gas Truth.**

In particular, the activists are focusing their attention towards Congress, calling on them to schedule hearings on the many abuses documented in a dossier VOICES representatives are sharing with members of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC. The ultimate purpose of the hearings, according to VOICES coalition representatives, is to identify legislative reforms, particularly to the Natural Gas Act, to prevent the ongoing FERC abuses. Materials being shared with Congressional members identify and recommend a basic set of needed reforms.

The VOICES coalition is also repeating its request that Senate members hold off on confirmations for any FERC vacancies until a Congressional investigation is complete and abuses of power are addressed through legislative reforms. The Senate confirms FERC nominees, so, with one vacancy and another anticipated this summer when Commissioner LaFleur's term ends, the announcement of nominees is likely. The coalition has documented in a dossier that is being shared with members of Congress.

The People's Dossier of FERC's Abuses of Power and Law is available at <http://bit.ly/DossierofFERCAbuse>.

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VOICES (**V**ictory **O**ver **I**n-frack-structure, **C**lean **E**nergy in**S**tead) is a national coalition of more than 200 organizations representing communities harmed by FERC fracked-gas infrastructure projects.