Pipeline Safety TRUST

Credible.
Independent.
In the public interest.

February 2, 2026

Brian Rybarik, Chair
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
621 Woodland Square Loop SE
Lacey, WA 98503

Dear Chair Rybarik:

I am writing on behalf of the Pipeline Safety Trust to request that the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration (PHMSA) require bp Pipelines (North America) Inc. ("bp Pipelines") to make a permanent repair on the section of the Olympic Pipeline that failed in Snohomish County during November 2025. We respectfully request that this permanent repair is required to be completed by April 1st, 2026. We have concerns that allowing the temporary repair to remain in place for a long duration will impede the operator and regulator's ability to do a thorough investigation, leaving potentially similarly susceptible areas along the pipeline to remain unchecked, risking another spill.

Pipeline Safety Trust (PST) is a nonprofit watchdog organization dedicated to protecting people and the environment from the devastating impacts of pipeline disasters. We pursue our mission of education and advocacy by increasing access to information, and by building partnerships with residents, safety advocates, government, and industry, that result in safer communities and a healthier environment.

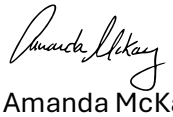
It is our understanding, based on information provided by the Washington UTC at the most recent Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety (CCOPS) meeting, that Olympic has installed a temporary clamp on the source of the leak, a 1.5-inch crack. According to Olympic's own internal procedures, it may use that temporary clamp for up to a year. Importantly, until Olympic performs a permanent repair, the section of pipe that leaked cannot be cut out and thoroughly examined for a root cause investigation. This prevents both the operator and the regulator from determining what caused the leak, and whether it might occur elsewhere along the pipeline due to similar materials and contributing conditions.

It is also our understanding that Olympic ran an in-line inspection (ILI) tool sometime in 2024, which identified the spot where the pipeline leaked as a potential issue; however, the operator decided it did not rise to the level of concern to dig up the pipeline to investigate. If the ILI tool run the prior year flagged this exact spot as an area of concern, and the operator touts its leak detection technology as working effectively, why did this leak occur and go unnoticed by the operator for an undetermined amount of time before a member of the public became the real leak detection system? This seems to be a trend on the Olympic pipeline.

PST is aware that the recent flooding in Western Washington affected the excavated area around the pipeline leak site, and that this may create challenges for re-excavation, permanent repair, and the ongoing investigation by both PHMSA and the Washington State Department of Ecology. However, PST's analysis of the publicly available incident data from PHMSA found that Olympic has had 26 reportable incidents in the last 13 years, resulting in 28,525 total gallons spilled.[1]Given this concerning trend, we believe that the UTC and the operator owe it to the public to make this permanent repair and initiate a root cause investigation immediately.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please contact me at amanda@pstrust.org or (360) 543-5686 x106 if you have any questions or would like to discuss this letter.

Sincerely,



Amanda McKay
State Policy Advisor
Pipeline Safety Trust

CC: Ann Rendahl, Commissioner, UTC
Milt Doumit, Commissioner, UTC
Dennis Ritter, Acting Director and Chief Engineer, UTC Pipeline Safety Program
David Barrett, Central Region Director, PHMSA

[1] PHMSA Incident and Milage Data, https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/data-and-statistics/pipeline/pipeline-incident-20-year-trends. PST analysis of this data available upon request.