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For More Information Contact:

Kenneth Clarkson
Communications Director
kenneth@pstrust.org
360-543-5686 x104

Pipeline Safety Trust Opposes the California Senate's Bill on Hydrogen Pipeline Safety

SB 804 is fundamentally flawed: it would assign hydrogen pipeline safety to the wrong state regulator and cut the public out of the rulemaking process.

Bellingham, WASHINGTON - [June 22, 2026] – While it is important that hydrogen pipeline safety progresses, PST has submitted an official Letter of Opposition that identifies a multitude of issues with this bill that would hamper safety instead of advancing it.

Hydrogen is transported through pipelines in a gaseous state and is regulated as a gas. However, instead of giving the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), California's gas pipeline regulator, oversight of hydrogen pipelines, SB 804 would give this critical role to the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM), California's liquid pipeline regulator. Because the CPUC operates within the gas-regulatory framework, it is better positioned to oversee hydrogen pipelines than OSFM.

Additionally, hydrogen has unique safety concerns; hydrogen ignites more easily than natural gas, can leak more readily and at faster rates, and can weaken pipeline materials over time. Current regulations do not address these unique risks, and this bill does not adequately address these issues.

In addition to not granting the proper agency hydrogen pipeline oversight, the bill also strips the public of its ability to comment on this hydrogen pipeline safety rulemaking pursuant to the California Administrative Procedure Act. "This is especially concerning," Pipeline Safety Trust State Policy Advisor Amanda McKay said, "As drafted in this bill, rules governing explosive pipelines near homes and businesses would be written with no public notice or comment,

eliminating any level of transparency or trust between the public, the regulator, and pipeline operators."

"Revisions alone cannot redeem this bill," McKay said. "Any future hydrogen pipeline safety bill must provide authority to the correct agency, allow for public comment on associated rulemakings, address hydrogen-specific safety concerns, and include stronger protections for communities living and working near these pipelines."

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About Pipeline Safety Trust: The Pipeline Safety Trust is a nonprofit public watchdog promoting pipeline safety through 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.