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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Leads Coalition of 13 State Attorneys General Supporting Federal Rules to Improve Pipeline Safety and Protect the Environment

BALTIMORE, MD (August 18, 2023) - Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown co-lead, along with Attorney General Letitia James of New York, a coalition of 13 attorneys general in comments supporting the U.S. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's (PHMSA) proposed Gas Pipeline Leak Detection and Repair Rules. The rules largely implement the bipartisan PIPES Act of 2020 and would require the use of commercially available leak detection technology and common-sense operational controls to minimize both intentional and unintentional releases from gas pipelines.

“Every leak from gas infrastructure poses a direct threat to our communities and fuels global warming, which we know disproportionately impacts already overburdened families and communities. This proposal is a commonsense approach to eliminate leaks and needless environmental waste,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “It’s a win for both the safety of our citizens and the protection of our environment.”

America’s gas pipeline system is used primarily to transport methane-based gases for home heating, electricity generation, and industrial uses. Leaks along this system can present a significant threat to public safety because methane is both flammable and explosive. Additionally, methane is a potent greenhouse gas with 25 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide over a 100-year period. Thus, any leaks from gas pipelines present an unnecessary contribution to climate change.

The Attorneys General support the proposed rule which would greatly improve public safety and significantly reduce emissions of climate altering methane gas by:

- Increasing the minimum survey frequencies for detecting leaks on gas infrastructure and requiring more of those surveys to be conducted using commercially available leak detection equipment. Current regulations allow many surveys to rely on human senses – sight and smell – alone, despite the wide availability of methane detecting technologies.

- Requiring all Grade 2 and Grade 3 leaks – those that do not pose imminent threats to public safety – to be repaired within reasonable timeframes. Currently, only leaks posing immediate public safety concerns face any federal repair requirement.
- Requiring operators of transmission pipelines, some gathering lines, and LNG facilities, to take proven steps to minimize the intentional releases associated with pipeline maintenance and repair.
- Establishing design requirements for pressure relief devices on new and modified pipelines and requiring the prompt repair of such devices if they are venting more gas than is necessary for safe pipeline operations.

In addition to Maryland and New York, the comments are joined by the attorneys general of Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Oregon, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia.

A copy of the comments can be found [here](#).

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/081823a.pdf>