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April 16, 2018

**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, Filing Room  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Petition of the Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission for the Issuance of an Ex Parte Emergency Order; Docket No. P-2018-3000281; **SUNOCO PIPELINE L.P.'S ANSWER OPPOSING INTERVENTION OF THORNBURY TOWNSHIP**

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Enclosed for filing with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission is Sunoco Pipeline L.P.'s Answer Opposing Intervention of Thornbury Township in the above-referenced matter. Copies of this document have been served in accordance with the attached Certificate of Service.

If you have any questions regarding this filing, please contact the undersigned.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas J. Sniscak".

Thomas J. Sniscak  
Kevin J. McKeon  
Whitney E. Snyder  
*Counsel for Sunoco Pipeline L.P.*

TJS/WES/das  
Enclosures  
cc: Per Certificate of Service

**BEFORE THE  
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Petition of the Bureau of Investigation and :  
Enforcement of the Pennsylvania Public : Docket No. P-2018-3000281  
Utility Commission for the Issuance of an :  
Ex Parte Emergency Order :

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**SUNOCO PIPELINE L.P.'S ANSWER OPPOSING  
INTERVENTION OF THORNBURY TOWNSHIP**

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Pursuant to 52 Pa. Code § 5.66,<sup>1</sup> Sunoco Pipeline L.P. (“SPLP”), by and through its attorneys, Hawke McKeon & Sniscak LLP, submits this Answer in Opposition to the Petition to Intervene of Thornbury Township served on March 27, 2018 seeking intervention in the Commission’s March 7, 2018 *Ex Parte* Emergency Order (“Emergency Order”).

**SUMMARY**

The Petition should be denied because Thornbury Township, Delaware County does not have any requisite direct interest sufficient to grant standing, any alleged interest is already adequately represented by BI&E and its Pipeline Safety Division in this proceeding, and allowing intervention will unnecessarily broaden the narrow issues involved in this proceeding, cause unnecessary time and expense, invites delay, is contrary to the interest of SPLP’ shipper customers whose service has been interrupted, and will prolong an injunction that is necessarily limited to

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<sup>1</sup> SPLP notes that it is not required to specifically answer the allegations within a petition to intervene, and any such allegations are not deemed admitted by SPLP’s non-response. *Compare* 52 Pa. Code § 5.66 (“party may file an answer to a petition to intervene within 20 days of service, and in default thereof, may be deemed to have waived objection to the granting of the petition. Answers shall be served upon all other parties.”) with § 5.61(b)(3) (as to form of answers to complaints, answers must “Admit or deny specifically all material allegations of the complaint”). Given the lack of standing of the party discussed herein, the lack of technical basis or explanation or verifiable expert support for the allegations contained in the Petition, and SPLP’s ongoing cooperation with the Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement and Pipeline Safety and their experts in this matter, SPLP will not respond to unsupported and incorrect assertions and allegations of the Petition. For example, Petitioner makes various assertions as to geology and the integrity of the MEI line, which are highly technical issues, yet the Petition is verified solely by Jeff Seagraves, Township Manager, and provides no information that he is qualified to provide verification for such allegations.

the circumstances of the Emergency Order, which are in West Whiteland Township, Chester County not Thornbury, Delaware County.

This proceeding is limited by the geography of the emergency conditions in the Lisa Drive Area of West Whiteland Township, and in the context of an *ex parte* Emergency Order proceeding that granted an injunction, that cannot be extended to other geographical regions, especially where, as here, there are no emergency circumstances beyond the Lisa Drive Area. This proceeding is not and procedurally cannot be transformed by a petition to intervene into a general safety investigation of the entire ME1 line or right-of-way with an injunction preventing operation of the line and requiring testing and remediation because there is no allegation, indication, or evidence of any conditions that could satisfy the “emergency” standard outside of the Lisa Drive Area in West Whiteland Township. *See* 52 Pa. Code § 3.2 (requiring, *inter alia* clear right to relief and immediate need for relief). A party seeking intervention must take the proceeding as it currently stands and cannot broaden the scope of what is at issue in the proceeding<sup>2</sup> and this principle is crucial here, in the context of an *ex parte* Emergency Order proceeding involving an injunction, because injunctive relief must be narrowly tailored to the emergency circumstance because such relief is ordered without hearing.<sup>3</sup>

Petitioner here is Thornbury Township, Delaware County, which is a political municipal corporation having corporate boundaries outside the area at issue in this proceeding, and thus cannot meet the Commission’s intervention standard. In particular, Thornbury Township, Delaware County, does not have a sufficient interest to have standing, any interest it alleges is

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<sup>2</sup> See *Com., et al. v. Energy Services Providers, Inc. d/b/a PaG&E*, Order Granting Petition to Intervene, Docket No. C-2014-2427656, 2015 WL 1957859 (Order entered Apr. 23, 2015) (Cheskis, J.) (“In granting intervention, however, Mr. Sobiech will be required to take the case as it currently stands. PaG&E is correct that intervenors generally take the record as they find it at the time of intervention.”)

<sup>3</sup> See *Woodward Twp. v. Zerbe*, 6 A.3d 651, 658 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2010) (“Even where the essential prerequisites of an injunction are satisfied, *the court must narrowly tailor its remedy to abate the injury.*”) (emphasis added).

more than adequately represented by BI&E and its Pipeline Safety division, and Thornbury Township will neither be the subject of nor bound by the Commission's decision in this proceeding.

Moreover, given the lack of interest and that any alleged interests are already sufficiently represented in this proceeding, allowing Thornbury Township and the multiple other petitioners to intervene will unnecessarily prolong the injunction beyond what is required to address circumstances the Emergency Order raised, thereby harming SPLP's shippers, their customers, and SPLP, which is a public utility providing a service in the public interest. Accordingly, the Petition to Intervene should be denied.

## **ARGUMENT**

### A. Legal Standard

Standing to intervene is governed under 52 Pa. Code § 5.72(a) and “pertinent case law discussing the types of interests sufficient for purposes of intervention.” *Joint Application of Commonwealth Telephone Company, CTSI, LLC and CTE Telecom, LLC d/b/a Commonwealth Long Distance Company For All Approvals Under the Public Utility Code for the Acquisition By Citizens Communications Company of All Stock of the Joint Applicants’ Corporate Parent, Commonwealth Telephone Enterprises, Inc.*, Docket No. A-310800F0010, Order Granting Exceptions (entered Feb. 8, 2007) (“Commonwealth Telephone”).

52 Pa. Code § 5.72 states:

#### § 5.72. Eligibility to intervene.

- (a) Persons. A petition to intervene may be filed by a person claiming a right to intervene or an interest of such nature that intervention is necessary or appropriate to the administration of the statute under which the proceeding is brought. The right or interest may be one of the following:

...

(2) An interest which may be directly affected and which is not adequately represented by existing participants, and as to which the petitioner may be bound by the action of the Commission in the proceeding.

(3) Another interest of such nature that participation of the petitioner may be in the public interest.

Pertinent case law provides that:

one who seeks to challenge governmental action must show a direct and substantial interest and, in addition, must show a sufficiently close causal connection between the challenged action and the asserted injury to qualify the interest as "immediate" rather than "remote." Consequently, in order to have standing, a person must be "aggrieved" or adversely affected by the matter he seeks to challenge. [A] party must have an interest in the controversy that is distinguishable from the interest shared by other citizens. To surpass that interest, the interest must be substantial, direct, and immediate.

*Commonwealth Telephone* (citing and quoting *William Penn Parking Garage v. City of Pittsburgh*, 464 Pa. 168, 202, 346 A.2d 269, 286 (1975); *Parents United for Better Schools, et al., v. School District of Phila.*, et al., 684 A.2d 689 (Pa. Commw. 1994); *Sierra Club v. Hartman*, 529 Pa. 454, 605 A.2d 309 (1992)).

Accordingly, to have standing to intervene, petitioner must show (1) a direct, substantial, and immediate interest meeting the legal standards discussed above, (2) that is not adequately represented by existing participants, and (3) that the petitioner may be bound by the action of the Commission in the proceeding. Petitioner here meets none of those three standards. Likewise, while Petitioner fails to assert that its intervention would be in the public interest, in fact such intervention is not in the public interest.

B. Petitioner's interest is not direct, immediate, or substantial

Petitioner cannot show, as it is required to, a direct, immediate and substantial interest because Petitioner is not within the geographic region to which this limited *ex parte* Emergency

Order proceeding pertains, and thus cannot show any aggrievement to Petitioner that bears a close causal connection to this proceeding and is distinguishable from the interest of the general public in compliance with the law. “[T]he requirement that an interest be ‘direct’ means that a person claiming to be aggrieved must show causation of the harm by the matter of which he or she complains.” *In Re Peco Energy Co.*, A-110550F0160, 2005 WL 1959191, at \*2–6 (July 18, 2005). “An ‘immediate’ interest involves the nature of the causal connection between the action complained of and the injury to the party challenging it and is shown where the interest the party seeks to protect is within the zone of interests sought to be protected by the statute or the constitutional guarantee in question. Both the immediacy and directness requirements primarily depend upon the causal relationship between the claimed injury and the action in question.”

*George v. Pennsylvania Pub. Util. Comm'n*, 735 A.2d 1282, 1286–87 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 1999) (citing *Wm. Penn Parking Garage, Inc. v. City of Pittsburgh*, 464 Pa. 168, 346 A.2d 269 (1975)).

“The requirement of a ‘substantial’ interest means there must be some discernible adverse effect to some interest other than the general interest in having others comply with the law.” See *William Penn Parking Garage*, 464 Pa. at 195, 346 A.2d at 282; see also *Friends of the AtGlen-Susquehanna Trail, Inc. v. PA. PUC*, 717 A.2d 581 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1998), appeal denied 559 Pa. 695 (1999).

First, Petitioner essentially admits that its interests are neither direct or immediate because *the Emergency Order does not pertain to Thornbury Township*, but instead the Lisa Drive area in West Whiteland Township, where the Commission expressly found the emergency circumstances exist. There is no causal connection between what was ordered to occur in this proceeding, solely in West Whiteland Township, and any alleged harm to Thornbury Township.

Instead, the Petition attempts to improperly expand the proceeding to include Thornbury Township to create an interest. This it cannot do.

This proceeding is limited by the geography of the emergency conditions, and in the context of an *ex parte* Emergency Order proceeding that granted an injunction, cannot be extended to other geographical regions, especially where, as here, there are no emergency circumstances beyond the Lisa Drive Area. This case is an *ex parte* Emergency Order proceeding specific to addressing concerns of geological and pipeline conditions in the Lisa Drive area of West Whiteland Township, Pennsylvania. *See* Emergency Order at Ordering Paragraph 1. This proceeding is not and procedurally cannot be transformed by a petition to intervene into a general safety investigation of the entire ME1 line or right-of-way with an injunction preventing operation of the line and requiring testing and remediation because there is no allegation, indication, or evidence of any conditions that could satisfy the “emergency” standard outside of the Lisa Drive Area in West Whiteland Township. *See* 52 Pa. Code § 3.2 (requiring, *inter alia* clear right to relief and immediate need for relief). The bases for BI&E’s Petition are the subsidence issues near Lisa Drive and how they may affect the ME1 line in that area. *See e.g.*, BI&E Petition at PP 1, 4, 5-11, 26.

A party seeking intervention must take the proceeding as it currently stands and cannot broaden the scope of what is at issue in the proceeding, especially here, where in BI&E’s Petition and in the Commission’s March 7, 2018 Order, there is no indication of emergency circumstances at issue outside of the Lisa Drive area of West Whiteland Township. *See Com., et al. v. Energy Services Providers, Inc. d/b/a PaG&E, Order Granting Petition to Intervene, Docket No. C-2014-2427656, 2015 WL 1957859 (Order entered Apr. 23, 2015) (Cheskis, J.)* (“In granting

intervention, however, Mr. Sobiech will be required to take the case as it currently stands. PaG&E is correct that intervenors generally take the record as they find it at the time of intervention.”).

This principle is especially important in the context of an Emergency Order proceeding involving an injunction because injunctive relief must be narrowly tailored to the emergency circumstance because such relief is ordered without hearing. *Pye v. Com., Ins. Dep’t*, 372 A.2d 33,35 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1977) (“An injunction is an extraordinary remedy to be granted only with extreme caution”); *Woodward Twp. v. Zerbe*, 6 A.3d 651, 658 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2010) (“Even where the essential prerequisites of an injunction are satisfied, *the court must narrowly tailor its remedy to abate the injury.*”) (emphasis added).

Since Thornbury cannot show a direct or immediate interest, its interest is necessarily not substantial. A substantial interest means an interest greater than that of all citizens in compliance with the law. Since there is no causal connection between Petitioner and the Emergency Order or the alleged harm to Petitioner and the Emergency Order, Petitioner is left with solely a general interest in compliance with gas safety regulations, an interest that all citizens share. Accordingly, Petitioner has not shown an interest adequate to fulfill standing requirements to intervene.

### C. BI&E Adequately Represents Petitioner’s Alleged Interest

Assuming arguendo Petitioner could show an interest, that interest is more than adequately represented by BI&E and Pipeline Safety. BI&E initiated this proceeding pursuant to its statutory and regulatory mandates to prosecute and investigate “violations of the Public Utility Code and Commission regulations.” BI&E Petition at 13. The Commission’s Pipeline Safety section likewise is responsible for enforcing safety laws and regulations and providing technical expertise in this proceeding pursuant to the Emergency Order. See Emergency Order at Ordering Paragraph 1. BI&E’s authority to enforce the gas safety laws on behalf of the general public takes into

account the broad public interest in providing safe pipeline transportation service and adequately represents any alleged interest Petitioner may have. *See In Re Peco Energy Co.*, A-110550F0160, 2005 WL 1959191, at \*2–6 (July 18, 2005) (finding individual’s interest adequately represented by public advocates representing the public interest).

Petitioner’s unsupported assertion that BI&E does not adequately represent its interests is meritless. Petition at P 26. Since Thornbury has no interest greater than that of the public, and BI&E expressly represents the public interest in enforcing safety laws and regulations, BI&E adequately represents Thornbury’s interests.

**D. Petitioner Will Not Be Bound by This Proceeding**

Again, since this *ex parte* Emergency Order injunction proceeding is necessarily limited in scope to emergency conditions alleged in West Whiteland Township, there is no binding effect on Thornbury Township. Petitioner fails to even assert it could be bound by the Commission’s actions in this proceeding. As such, Petitioner likewise fails to meet this prong of the intervention standard.

**E. Granting Intervention is Not in the Public Interest**

Allowing intervention of entities outside the geographic region of the *ex parte* Emergency Order is not in the public interest because those parties have no direct interest and thus their intervention and the time needed for their participation will unnecessarily extend the time of the injunction beyond what is necessary to ensure the safety of the ME1 pipeline, harming SPLP’s shippers, the shippers’ customers, and SPLP, which is a public utility. Entities outside the geographic region at issue in regions where there is no emergency attempting to intervene and unnecessarily prolong the injunction causes harms that clearly outweigh any public interest in

participation of such entities, especially where, as here, BI&E and Pipeline Safety adequately represent the public interest in compliance with pipeline safety laws and regulations.

## **CONCLUSION**

**WHEREFORE** Sunoco Pipeline L.P. respectfully requests the Commission deny the Petition to Intervene.

Respectfully submitted,



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DATED: April 16, 2018

*Attorneys for Sunoco Pipeline L.P.*

## **VERIFICATION**

I, Chris Lason, certify that I am Vice President - Pipeline Integrity, Corrosion Services, materials QA/QC at Energy Transfer Partners, and that in this capacity I am authorized to, and do make this Verification on behalf of Sunoco Pipeline L.P., an Energy Transfer Partnership, that the facts set forth in the foregoing document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, and that Sunoco Pipeline L.P., expects to be able to prove the same at any hearing that may be held in this matter. I understand that false statements made therein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904, relating to unsworn falsifications to authorities.



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Chris Lason  
Vice President - Pipeline Integrity, Corrosion  
Services, materials QA/QC  
Energy Transfer Partners  
On behalf of Sunoco Pipeline L.P.

DATED: 4/16/18

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that I have this day served a true copy of the foregoing document upon the entities, listed below, in accordance with the requirements of § 1.54 (relating to service by a party). This document has been filed electronically on the Commission's electronic filing system.

**VIA FIRST-CLASS MAIL**

Michael L. Swindler, Esquire  
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DATED: April 16, 2018