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March 17, 2026

The Honorable Stephen M. DeFrank, Chairman
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
400 North Street, Keystone Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: Proposed extension of bi-directional service on the Laurel Pipeline
PUC Docket No. C-2025-3053018
Monroe Energy, LLC, Lucknow-Highspire Terminals, LLC, Sheetz, Inc. and PBF Holding Company LLC v. Laurel Pipeline Company, LLC

Dear Chairman DeFrank:

I am writing to express our profound concern for the residents, consumers and businesses of our districts and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania regarding the above-referenced matter. The Initial Decision, issued by a PUC Administrative Law Judge on January 14, 2026, is dismissive of local interests and the need for regulatory oversight, both of which will leave Pennsylvanians to suffer the consequences. I therefore respectfully submit that the Commission reject the ALJ decision in its entirety or, if possible, approve a plan agreed upon by both sides.

The Laurel Pipeline is the last remaining large-volume pipeline capable of transporting petroleum products from Eastern Pennsylvania to the major Central and Western Pennsylvania markets. Currently, Buckeye Partners, through its local affiliate Laurel Pipeline (collectively, "*Laurel-Buckeye*") offers mostly East to West (one-way) shipments with bi-directional service provided only between Pittsburgh and Altoona. Although seemingly neutral, the existing 110-miles of bi-directional service has resulted in inconsistent service, including unreasonable delays and logistical challenges for shippers on a consistent basis. As such, the proposed extension of bi-directional service by another 147 miles (133% of the current bi-directional operations) will likely give rise to even worse outcomes for Pennsylvania shippers, refiners and consumers across the Commonwealth. It is critically important that the Commission rigorously examine the alleged benefits and actual feasibility of Laurel-Buckeye's new proposal to convert almost the entire pipeline into bi-directional operations.

Contrary to a measured approach, the ALJ's decision recommends granting the extension prematurely and unconditionally. Changing the historic operations of such an important public utility asset should require a thorough review by the Commission to ensure the proposed operational changes do not exacerbate the operational concerns I have heard from the affected shippers, including concerns that:

- A much longer and complicated bi-directional service with new unproven systems will lead to deterioration of service over the entire pipeline.
- Fuel transit times will be radically variable leading to missed/delayed shipments or even product shortages and resulting price impacts on consumers.
- Heating oil, a fuel produced almost exclusively by Eastern refineries and still widely used in homes across Pennsylvania, will not be readily available if the direction of flow on the pipeline can be dictated solely by out-of-state markets rather than local needs.
- Thousands of Pennsylvania jobs within and outside of the petroleum industry will be at risk if shippers, refiners and retailers who rely on the pipeline are forced to reduce their operations or shut down for lack of adequate service on the pipeline.

In conclusion, the eventual result of the ALJ decision, if upheld, is that Laurel-Buckeye will cease providing consistent and reliable West-bound fuel to Pennsylvania residents, contrary to the pipeline's use since the 1950s. I trust this Commission will consider the benefits of subjecting Laurel-Buckeye to a comprehensive Application review process rather than authorizing them to press ahead and leave refiners, shippers and consumers with the burden of filing Complaints when things inevitably go awry after such a major operational upheaval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas Kutz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thomas" and last name "Kutz" clearly legible.

Thomas Kutz
State Representative
Pennsylvania 87th Legislative District

CC: Vice-Chairman, Kimberly M. Barrow
Commissioner Kathryn L. Zerfuss
Commissioner John F. Coleman, Jr.
Commissioner Ralph V. Yanora
Secretary Mathew L. Homsher