Committee Members
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Washington State Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety

March 14, 2011

The Honorable Phil Rockefeller
23rd Legislative District
218 John A. Cherberg Building
PO Box 40423
Olympia, WA 98504-0423

Dear Senator Rockefeller:

RE: Support of Engrossed Second Substitute HB 1634 - 2011-12

We would like to take this opportunity to tell you of this Committee's support of E2SHB 1634. This bill is scheduled for public hearing March 15, 2011. The Committee also supports the UTC's direction towards enforcement clarity and unity.

This Committee was put together by Legislative action following the Bellingham Pipeline explosion in 1999, to bring all stakeholders in pipeline safety to the table.

Damage to pipelines, indeed damage to any underground facility is dangerous, expensive and disruptive to communities. Most damage is done by third parties and is preventable.

While Washington State has one of the best pipeline safety programs in the country, our underground damage prevention is not.

"Call Before You Dig" is an essential element to protecting our families, our workers and our underground facilities. House Bill 1634 makes Call Before You Dig more effective and meaningful.

We feel that by clarifying and strengthening our laws, aligning our RCW with new federal guidelines and allowing an enforcement body to investigate, educate and track underground damage and near-misses; our state will be one of the safest places for utility work in our Nation.

This is why the Committee supports Engrossed Second Substitute HB 1634.

Sincerely,

Ron Schmitt
Chair, Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety

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