

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Senator Marcus Introduces Bill to Improve Pipeline Safety



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Senator Marcus Introduces Bill to Improve Pipeline Safety

Raleigh, NC – Yesterday, March 16, 2023 Senator Natasha Marcus filed Senate Bill 328, "Improve Pipeline Safety." Senate District 41 experienced the worst pipeline leak in North Carolina history in Huntersville. Since the leak was discovered in August, 2020, Senator Marcus has followed the situation at the leak site closely, keeping nearby residents informed, and making sure the gasoline is cleaned up with as little impact to neighbors and the environment as possible.

Senator Marcus also advocated for the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Water Resources to hold a public hearing about Colonial Pipeline's wastewater treatment permit application. The hearing was held yesterday and was well attended by residents, elected officials and press. Senator Marcus spoke at the hearing: "The residents whose lives have been disrupted by this massive leak near their homes deserve to have their questions answered and to know that water will be safe before its released into the nearby creek. It impacts not just Huntersville residents, but everyone downstream too."

Key elements of the bill include:

- Gives authority to the Department of Environmental Quality to study the condition, safety, and environmental impact of pipelines that transport petroleum products in and through the State for the purpose of providing recommendations to the General Assembly's Joint Legislative Commission on Energy Policy on the changes needed to improve pipeline safety and protect the State's land and waters from pollution caused by leaking or poorly maintained petroleum product pipelines.
- Appropriates \$100,000 in nonrecurring funds in FY 2023-24 for the study authorized by this act.
- Gives the Department the authority to create time-limited positions related to the study.

Senator Marcus, said, "This bill will give NC DEQ the resources it needs to look out for our health and safety in light of the risks posed by aging hazardous liquid pipelines. We cannot allow a tragic mess like this to happen again. Our state can and should monitor aging hazardous liquid pipelines, rather than rely solely on the pipeline company and the federal government to be our watchdogs."

The bill can be found at this link: <https://ncleg.gov/BillLookup/2023/S328>

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