

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA  
7TH DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
Subcommittee on Water and Power  
Subcommittee on Parks, Forests and  
Public Lands – *Ranking Member*

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE  
Subcommittee on Early Childhood,  
Elementary and Secondary Education  
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November 14, 2012

Secretary Janet Napolitano  
Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

I write today regarding the proposed Sasabe Lateral Gas Pipeline Project in Southern Arizona. El Paso Natural Gas Company has requested right of way permits to build a new 60-mile natural gas pipeline just southwest of Tucson that would export gas to Mexico. I wish to highlight the project's potentially severe national and border security implications, several of which have been raised by Border Patrol officials.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is currently preparing a draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for this project based on El Paso's two proposed pipeline routes. Both routes cut through the Altar Valley, a pristine semi-desert grassland valley home to a conservation-minded community of private landowners and the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. The area is home to a number of threatened or endangered species and is a known corridor for illegal immigration and drug smuggling.

In my view, because of these and related considerations, FERC should consider alternative routes that use existing infrastructure and avoid the Altar Valley. The construction of a pipeline along either proposed route will very likely create a corridor for illegal activity and complicate Customs and Border Patrol attempts to keep this country and its citizens safe. These concerns are shared in the attached letter from Roger San Martin, Patrol Agent in Charge of the U.S. Border Patrol's Tucson Station.

I join him and other border patrol professionals in urging you to push FERC to consider alternatives that do not include the Altar Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raúl M. Grijalva". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress