

House Judiciary Committee
Hearing on SB 172 – Critical Infrastructure
Wednesday, March 17th, 2021
Submitted by J. Kent Eckles on behalf of the American Petroleum Institute

The American Petroleum Institute (API) is the only national trade association representing all facets of the oil and natural gas industry, which supports 10.3 million jobs and 8 percent of the U.S. economy. API's more than 625 members include large integrated companies, as well as exploration and production, refining, marketing, pipeline, and marine businesses and service and supply firms.

Pipelines are one of the safest ways to deliver the energy American families and consumers use every day. However, recent illegal attacks on oil and natural gas infrastructure have pointed out the need for increased awareness of pipeline infrastructure, the impacts of damage to it, and the importance of enforcement against perpetrators of such attacks. Illegal disruptions to critical infrastructure can have impacts on local populations and the economy. While we respect the first amendment right to free speech and peaceful protest, an individual that criminally trespasses onto private property to then endanger their own life, the life of others and the environment is conducting an act that goes beyond the right provided by the first amendment.

For the safety of the people and the communities, Critical Infrastructure legislation such as SB 172 does more to prevent threats to critical infrastructure like oil and natural gas pipelines by strengthening the breadth of protections around pipelines and facilities and expanding the scope of actions under criminal provision.

Our members recognize that the industry is a target for both criminals and nation states who are working to steal intellectual property, disrupt operations and undermine our economy. They take the threats very seriously and continue to prioritize the protection of their assets from both physical and cyber-attacks. Companies in the oil and natural gas industry have made and continue to make considerable investments in defending their networks, bolstering their cyber security defenses, and participating in organizations and partnerships where they can share and receive threat information. Specifically, up to the board level, they are making important investments in time, people and resources to defend themselves, so they can continue to deliver the products Americans rely on every day. While threats continue to evolve, so do industry's defenses, by working with government partners, including TSA, DHS, FBI and others to understand the threat. We believe the industry's record of delivering products safely and efficiently 99 percent of the time is indicative of the actions our members take to protect themselves in the face of very real and serious threats.

Recently in just the Midwest, similar legislation has passed in Iowa (2018), Indiana (2019), Missouri (2019) and Wisconsin (2019).

Safety of the public and the environment is our industry's top priority, and collaboration with state and federal government agencies only strengthens our ability to transport our products across America with the fewest possible number of incidents. We are committed to promoting safety in all of our operations, helping to ensure that American families and businesses can efficiently access affordable and reliable energy.

Again, thank you the opportunity to file comments in support of SB 172.