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**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

David Ross, Assistant Administrator  
Office of Water  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1301 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Oct. 21, 2019

**RE: Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2019-0405 Updating Regulations on Water Quality Certification**

Dear Acting Administrator Ross,

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry (PA Chamber), the largest, broad-based business advocacy organization in the Commonwealth, representing nearly 10,000 member companies of all sizes and commercial and industrial categories, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed rulemaking to update regulations governing applications and approvals for projects requiring Section 401 authorizations. This proposal stems from President Trump's Executive Order 13868, Promoting Energy Infrastructure and Economic Growth. We appreciate the administration's focus and attention on this matter, and thank EPA leadership and staff for their consideration of our comments.

The PA Chamber's broad membership includes companies involved in the production, exploration and generation of natural resources and energy, the transmission and distribution of those commodities through pipeline and electric infrastructure, the manufacturing and logistical delivery of component parts throughout the supply chain, and a host of ancillary and induced jobs in support and service sectors. An efficient and predictable regulatory environment is necessary to ensure these commercial and industry sectors continue to be able to compete globally and have access to reliable and affordable energy. Further, the increased production and use of natural gas produced in Pennsylvania has aided the state and region in securing significant reductions in NAAQS criteria emissions. These dramatic improvements in air quality mean a better protected environment, an improvement in public health and the opportunity for economic growth.

Despite this progress, we have seen too often neighboring states that border Pennsylvania use the Clean Water Act's Section 401 permitting process as a one-party veto of a federally approved, interstate infrastructure project. In some instances, such obstruction on the part of these states has resulted in moratoriums on new gas utility connections, and businesses and consumers having to rely on imported foreign energy despite being a few hours away from Pennsylvania's prolific energy resources.

The language of the statute makes clear that Congress' intent was for states to certify if a project will comply with water quality requirements to protect the environment and public health – not as an avenue to bar development. On behalf of its members, the PA Chamber strongly supports this rulemaking and encourages its final adoption as expeditiously as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Sunday".

Kevin Sunday  
Director, Government Affairs