

Molly Walker

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I am here today, speaking on behalf of the West Texas region of Big Bend, one of the last regions of Texas and US, that is not defined and scarred by pipelines. West Texas is keeper of dark skies and wind whispered silences found only in the isolation from industry. Until recently, natural gas pipelines were the unfriendly things that only happened elsewhere- the distant thing that threatened private property rights, access to due process, the environment, public safety, water right has now come to Big Bend. Against the will of many residents of the area, and with a great lack of oversight or access to appeal or any the threats and fears of natural gas pipelines are now present in Big Bend in form of Energy Transfer Partner's Trans Pecos Pipeline.

The Sunset Commission's review of the Railroad Commission is commendable, but must extend further. I urge both commissions and state legislature to move forward with scrutiny. Stronger oversight, restructuring and dramatic legislative changes are dire for this outdated and all too powerful, and misleading agency.

To encourage exposure, public engagement and agency transparency, the RRC should be forced to conduct basic forms of due process in par with other public utility agencies that require more open and accessible filing and application process that allow for public input and appeal

Upon reviewing the RRC website concerning environmental standards and permitting- the terms- hazardous waste, discharge, site remediation, cleanup, test water discharge, plugging, reclamation plants, waste facilities are available. Although there is seemingly no comprehensive mission that involves conservation, or proactive environmental incentives and unfortunately no agency standard or state law exists that requires environmental assessment prior to permitting or construction..

The co-opting of environmental oversight and responsibility between TCEQ and the RRC has allowed for misleading and indifferent roles of responsibility. The fractured responsibility often leads to costly delays, confusion and is a great dis service and operates counter active to Texas and Federal environmental standards. TCEQ needs to seed environmental standards and responsibility and must be empowered by law to hold RRC accountable to environmental standards that are not driven by the industry or simply limited to the job of cleaning up hazardous messes"

In terms of safety standards, RRC is yet again driven by industry rather than any body of law. As outlined in Issue 3 of the report, the RRC continues to operate in a manner that it not transparent nor cohesive in an outdated and incompetent system that repeatedly does not hold operators accountable and is in the service of appealing to oil and gas operators rather than

effectively regulating safety standards. The RRC must be held accountable to holding operators accountable. The lack of responsibility, enforcement of repercussions is rampant across the board and deliberately negligent. Although the report consistently expressed concern, this level of negligence should be considered criminal.

legislative law must hold this industry and this agency accountable to the obvious abuse of power and privately motivated agenda.

Power is prone to abuse as proven by the current practice of the Railroad Commission. Commissioners- Tighten the Reigns. Hold oil and gas to a standard that is fit for the state of Texas, we must do better than this.