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STATEMENT FOR CHAIRMAN STAGGERS ON  
H. R. 15205, THE NATURAL GAS  
PIPELINE SAFETY ACT AMENDMENT  
OF 1974

H. R. 15205 authorizes appropriations to implement the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968. Natural gas pipeline safety standards have been prescribed and are administered under that Act.

As requested by the Administration, the legislation would have provided open-end authorizations for the administrative expenses of the Office of Pipeline Safety, and fixed amounts for four years of authorizations for grants-in-aid to the States to pay up to 50 percent of the cost of their pipeline safety activities.

As I understand it, the Subcommittee on Communications and Power is somewhat

critical of the performance of the Office of Pipeline Safety and intends to carry out further oversight hearings with respect to its activities in the near future. The Subcommittee has also scaled back H. R. 15205 to a two-year fixed amount authorization under which there would be authorized \$2 million for fiscal year 1975 and \$2.8 million for fiscal year 1976 for administrative expenses of the Office of Pipeline Safety, and <sup>75</sup> \$1.8 million for fiscal year 1975 and <sup>74</sup> \$2.5 million for fiscal year 1976 for grants-in-aid to the States. The authorization for grants-in-aid to the States are somewhat higher than those proposed by the Administration and reflect the fact that the amounts requested by the

Administration would be insufficient to reimburse the States for up to 50 percent of their pipeline safety activities.

It should be noted that the Department of Transportation appropriations bill (H. R. 15405) passed by the House on June 19, 1974, carried appropriations for the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety program for fiscal year 1975.