

Whereas, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline is critical to the economic and energy future of the State of West Virginia, providing our state's natural gas production with unprecedented access to new markets in the Southeast; and

Whereas, studies indicate construction and operation of the pipeline will generate massive economic benefits for West Virginia, including almost \$478 million in additional economic activity during the construction period and more than \$15 million in additional economic activity each year after the facility begins operating; and

Whereas the Atlantic Coast Pipeline will create thousands of new job opportunities for the working men and women of West Virginia and significant new tax revenues for many West Virginia counties; and

Whereas, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline will help promote our nation's energy independence, helping make the burgeoning natural gas production in West Virginia and adjacent states more available to millions of consumers and reducing the need for energy imports;

Whereas, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline's environmental impact has been repeatedly and thoroughly analyzed by state and federal agencies, including the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and the U.S. Forest Service, among others, with all of the agencies finding that the project can be built and operated in a manner that protects the natural resources of West Virginia and the other states in its path; and

Whereas, despite these enormous energy and economic benefits, as well as the positive findings from a broad range of environmental regulatory agencies, some extremist environmental groups have launched an all-out assault on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline project, with the ultimate aim of forcing its cancellation; and

Whereas, these attacks are not based on the facts regarding the Atlantic Coast Pipeline but are part of what the U.S. Chamber of Commerce describes as a nationwide "keep it in the ground" strategy by some extreme environmental groups to end all uses of fossil fuels in power generation; and

Whereas, these unwarranted attacks have resulted in regulatory and legal proceedings that have repeatedly delayed both the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and the related Supply Header Project; and

Whereas, in response to court orders stemming from these attacks, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and Supply Header Project have been forced to lay off or delay hiring thousands of skilled construction workers in West Virginia and also in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia and North Carolina, posing significant hardships for working families and depriving them of paychecks and steady work; and

Whereas, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce report estimates that these delaying tactics, through August 2018, have already resulted in the loss of \$2.3 billion in the U.S. Gross Domestic product as well as \$500 million in lost tax revenue for U.S. states and localities; and

Whereas, the Chamber's study also found that the delays have already deprived U.S. consumers of \$377 million in energy cost savings; and

Whereas, the General President of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) recently said obstructions to the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and other vital energy infrastructure "from activist groups is costing our members jobs and the entire country opportunities;" and

Whereas, the LIUNA general president also emphasized that the economic damage caused by this opposition to new energy projects is "being shouldered by the hard working men and women who build our nation's energy infrastructure;"

Whereas, these assaults and delaying tactics are also a direct threat to West Virginia's energy production industry, which directly employs more than 22,000 men and women and pays more than \$6 billion in wages annually; and

Whereas, although the current employment and payroll figures are impressive, further growth will be severely hampered unless new infrastructure such as the Atlantic Coast Pipeline is built to transport West Virginia's energy production to market; and

Whereas, in addition to this economic damage, the attacks on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and other interstate natural gas projects have great potential to harm the environment, since natural gas-powered electric generation is needed to back up the expansion of intermittent generation based on renewable resources such as solar and wind energy;

Therefore, be it resolved by the Senate of West Virginia, the House of Delegates concurring, that the West Virginia Legislature:

- Categorically condemns these irrational, counterproductive and economically damaging assaults on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and other urgently needed energy infrastructure;
- Notes that these attacks are denying steady employment and income to thousands of West Virginia workers and their families who would otherwise be employed in the construction and operation of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and the related Supply Header Project;
- Finds that the attacks are also damaging West Virginia's energy production industry, the source of more than \$6 billion annually in wages to our state's working men and women;
- Also finds that the assaults on these projects have great potential to damage the environment by hindering the deployment of electric generation powered by solar power, wind and other renewable resources, all of which must be backed up with natural gas-powered capacity; and
- Strongly urges the groups spearheading these assaults to stop their attacks and delaying actions and in the process help pave the way for a cleaner and stronger energy future, for West Virginia and for the entire nation.

(Draft 1 [1-7-2019])