

Bill to Stop Eminent Domain for Bluegrass Pipeline Goes to House Floor

By Stu Johnson WEKU News



Credit courier-journal.com

Opponents of the proposed Blue Grass Pipeline got a victory of sorts Wednesday in the Kentucky general assembly. By the thinnest of margins, the House Judiciary Committee approved a bill that would prohibit eminent domain action for the transmission of natural gas liquids.

It's the so called NGLs that are proposed to flow through the pipeline in sections of northern, central, and western Kentucky.

Jane Marie Watts is a Woodford County resident who lives near the proposed line. Watts is convinced the project will not come to fruition, saying, "They can't get customers to sell N-G-L's on the pipe because they need such an expensive up-front commitment."

Watts says the pipeline companies are suffering from negative economic news. "I don't think they're gonna be able to do it with two other competing pipelines in the area and our opposition, we're gonna stop it," said Watts.

The legislative committee room was packed for the second straight week. Interested onlookers included Andrew McNeil with the Kentucky Oil and Gas Association. He admits work to find a suitable route for the pipeline could still continue. "If this bill moves forward, there's certainly gonna be the process to continue to negotiate with landowners. But, clearly what we're thinking about and concerned about are the long term ramifications," said McNeil. When asked if passage of the eminent domain measure would kill the pipeline project, McNeil said he couldn't speculate on that.

Supporters of the bill claim the pipeline company has come with lower offers and still maintains condemnation court action is possible. Bill Sponsor and Committee Chair John Tilley says some changes could be sought on the House floor where there is the possibility of an amendment. "I still feel like most feel this is a clean way to approach it and again fills a hole that has been left by this entry into the market, this natural gas liquids entry into the market," said Tilley. The eminent domain measure passed out of committee with eleven "Yes" votes, the exact number required to get it to the floor