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**Energy and Commerce Subcommittee Examines Pipeline Safety In Light of Recent San Bruno Explosion**

*Rep. Matsui Says 'Public Safety Must Come First'*

**WASHINGTON, DC**— Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-05) participated in the House Energy and Commerce Energy and Environment Subcommittee hearing on “Pipeline Safety Oversight and Legislation.” The hearing comes shortly after the recent pipeline explosion in the San Bruno, California community. As the representative of Sacramento, California, Congresswoman Matsui urged our nation’s utility companies – and the agencies that oversee them – that “public safety must come first.”

Congresswoman Matsui’s remarks, as prepared for delivery at today’s hearing, are below:

“The recent explosion that devastated a San Bruno neighborhood captured the nation’s attention, but it was hardly the first tragedy involving a natural gas pipeline in Northern California. I want to express my sympathy to the families of those who lost their lives, and the many who were injured, or have had their livelihoods severely impacted by this accident.

“I will never forget being alerted on Christmas Eve of 2008 about another natural gas pipeline leak that caused an explosion and a fire in Rancho Cordova – and that killed one of my constituents, Wilbert Paana – and hospitalized five others.

“As the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the California Public Utilities Commission continue their investigations into the cause of the San Bruno accident, it is critical that we ensure that the pipeline safety program protects consumers and meets the needs of our nation’s energy requirements. To be clear: public safety must come first. Failure to take the necessary steps to do so will significantly endanger public health and our economy.

“As oversight of pipeline safety and security continues, we should question the manner in which safety corresponds with ongoing efforts to secure the nearly half a million miles of oil and natural gas transmission pipeline nationwide and other infrastructure. Moreover, it is important that we examine the effectiveness of existing regulatory authorities and the current pipeline safety regulations and enforcement mechanisms.

“This Committee is well positioned to scrutinize these matters and has already received a proposal from the Administration suggesting ways in which we address them. I look forward to

hearing from the panelists before us today and working with the Committee and stakeholders on these important endeavors.”

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