

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2469

To amend title 49, United States Code, to require the use of advanced leak detection technology for pipelines, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To amend title 49, United States Code, to require the use of advanced leak detection technology for pipelines, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Methane Emissions
5 from Transmission Harm American Neighborhoods and
6 the Environment Act” or the “METHANE Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. LEAK DETECTION REQUIREMENTS AND METHANE**
 2 **EMISSIONS FROM PIPELINES.**

3 (a) LEAK DETECTION REQUIREMENTS.—Section
 4 60109 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by add-
 5 ing at the end the following:

6 “(h) LEAK DETECTION REQUIREMENTS.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years
 8 after the date of enactment of this subsection, and
 9 as part of the minimum standards for integrity man-
 10 agement programs for distribution pipelines under
 11 subsection (e), to the maximum extent practicable,
 12 operators of distribution pipelines shall use advanced
 13 leak detection technology described in paragraph (2).

14 “(2) ADVANCED LEAK DETECTION TECH-
 15 NOLOGY.—

16 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Advanced leak detec-
 17 tion technology referred to in paragraph (1) in-
 18 cludes—

19 “(i) a high sensitivity methane detec-
 20 tor mounted on a vehicle or aircraft, in-
 21 cluding a drone, equipped with Global Po-
 22 sitioning System technology, if that high
 23 sensitivity methane detector and Global
 24 Positioning System technology meet the
 25 minimum performance standards described
 26 in subparagraph (B); and

1 “(ii) any other technology or combina-
 2 tion of technologies that meet the min-
 3 imum performance standards described in
 4 subparagraph (B).

5 “(B) MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STAND-
 6 ARDS.—The high sensitivity methane detector
 7 and Global Positioning System technology re-
 8 ferred to in subparagraph (A)(i) shall, at a
 9 minimum—

10 “(i) collect latitude and longitude co-
 11 ordinates and methane concentration data
 12 simultaneously;

13 “(ii) measure methane concentrations
 14 in parts per billion; and

15 “(iii) collect data points at a rate of
 16 at least twice per second.

17 “(3) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year
 18 after the date of enactment of this subsection, the
 19 Secretary shall promulgate regulations to carry out
 20 this subsection.”.

21 (b) METHANE EMISSIONS FROM PIPELINES.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 601 of title 49,
 23 United States Code, is amended by adding at the
 24 end the following:

1 **“§ 60142. Methane emissions from pipelines**

2 “(a) IN GENERAL.—To the maximum extent prac-
3 ticable, the owner or operator of a pipeline facility shall—

4 “(1) use the best available technology to cap-
5 ture natural gas when making repairs to the pipeline
6 facility;

7 “(2) use the best available technology, includ-
8 ing, as applicable, advanced leak detection tech-
9 nology described in section 60109(h)(2), to search
10 for and identify leaks in the pipeline facility;

11 “(3) develop or participate in a replacement or
12 repair program for pipeline facilities that—

13 “(A) are of a design, age, or material
14 known to be leaky; or

15 “(B) are known to be leaky based on oper-
16 ating history; and

17 “(4) report to the Secretary any event that in-
18 volves a release of gas from a pipeline facility that
19 results in an unintentional estimated gas loss of
20 50,000 cubic feet or more.

21 “(b) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the
22 date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall pro-
23 mulgate regulations to carry out this section.”.

24 (2) REPORTING THRESHOLD.—Not later than
25 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the
26 Secretary of Transportation shall amend section

1 191.3 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to
2 ensure that the quantity of unintentional estimated
3 gas loss necessary to be considered an “incident”
4 under that section is 50,000 cubic feet or more.

5 (3) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-
6 tions for chapter 601 of title 49, United States
7 Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating
8 to section 60141 the following:

“60142. Methane emissions from pipelines.”.

