

April 28th, 2026

Office of Governmental, International, and Public Affairs
U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
United States

Via email to: phmsa.publicaffairs@dot.gov

Re: 24 Organizations call on PHMSA to protect communities following the Delfin LNG Pipeline explosion

PHMSA Administrator Roberti,

Following the Delfin LNG pipeline explosion on February 3rd, 2026, residents of Gulf Coast communities and partnering organizations write on behalf of our millions of neighbors and supporters to urge the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to ensure a thorough, transparent, and timely pipeline failure investigation into the incident and the safety of the entire length of the pipeline. The recently issued Corrective Action Order has identified this project as hazardous to life, property, or the environment, which underlines the severity of the failure and the need for a more comprehensive and careful approach to this pipeline.

The explosion occurred while the pipeline, built in 1978 and decommissioned in 2012, was undergoing ‘pigging,’ or cleaning the pipeline to prepare for its return to service for use in the [Delfin LNG deep water port project](#). The explosion of this 42-inch wide, 28-mile gas pipeline owned by Delfin LNG took place near Holly Beach and Johnson Bayou, Louisiana, just six miles from a nearby high school. According to reporting, the explosion created a fire 50 to 80 feet wide and released an estimated 56 million cubic feet of natural gas, burning for hours and injuring an operator on site so severely that he has since filed a [lawsuit against Delfin LNG and affiliated companies](#) for \$1 million in damages for medical care, pain and suffering, disfigurement, and more.

Habitat Recovery Project air monitors stationed 2.5 miles from the pipeline [recorded](#) a “steep spike” in particulate pollution at the time of the explosion and a “substantial increase in volatile organic compounds” (VOCs) four hours after the blast. This level of pollution stayed high for days after the initial spike. Particulate matter pollution is [linked](#) to cardiovascular disease, breathing problems, and increased risks for cancers. Exposure to VOCs can lead to increased risks of [cancers](#), damage to the liver, kidneys, and nervous system, and a wide array of serious medical problems. Further compounding concerns about emergency response, community members primarily found out about this incident from their neighbors and social media, rather than through a defined emergency protocol.

In 2024, federal regulators [refused to grant a license](#) to the Delfin LNG project, pointing out “widespread” recent changes in the project’s ownership, design, financing, and operations that required further review and evaluation. Despite these concerns, an executive order from

President Trump hastened the project's permit and the U.S. Export-Import Bank is now [considering](#) providing billions of taxpayer dollars for the project.

For years, we have expressed deep concerns about the risks of living, working, and recreating near LNG export terminals and the waterways now dominated by LNG tankers and LNG pipelines. The Delfin LNG export terminal and its associated pipeline will supply LNG to other countries, while our communities are polluted by the infrastructure and our energy prices rise from international price volatility. Based on our lived experiences and the [long history of LNG explosions](#), accidents, and safety incidents, [our communities have been warning](#) that another disaster was [foreseeable](#). Meanwhile, LNG companies and federal and state oversight agencies have not shared risk analyses and safety plans with the public and community stakeholders, and many first responders in the region are not equipped or allowed to respond to these disasters when they happen. When Freeport LNG [exploded](#) in 2022, following years of safety violations and understaffing, community members seeking information about their safety received only a heavily redacted report and vague answers.

PHMSA has already issued a Corrective Action Order, however, given these facts, we urge PHMSA to take the following actions before allowing any use of the Delfin pipeline:

1. Maintain the shutdown of the entire pipeline and deny any request by Delfin to restart pipeline operations until PHMSA conducts a comprehensive safety review. The review should cover the entirety of the nearly 50 year old pipeline, and the pipeline should only restart if the review finds that its operation would not be hazardous to life, property, or the environment.
2. Require Delfin LNG to refrain from any activities preparing for future pipeline operations until the report is released to the public without any unnecessarily redacted language. The report should examine whether similar conditions exist in other pipeline segments, in addition to sharing the mechanical and metallurgical testing and root cause analysis already required in the Corrective Action Order.
3. Host a public town hall in Cameron Parish, Louisiana, to facilitate transparency and community input on concerns, as well as to allow residents to hear directly from PHMSA, ask questions, and better understand what caused this explosion to occur, how safety determinations will be made, and steps PHMSA is taking to ensure this does not happen to other aging pipelines.
4. Closely scrutinize Delfin LNG's emergency response plans and identify gaps in communication, coordination, preparedness, and training. Require Delfin LNG to address any gaps in these areas and, at a minimum, provide and/or source resources and data to allow local emergency responders near the Delfin LNG pipeline to create public emergency response plans and adequately prepare for and address future failures.

This incident raises serious concerns about the safety of resuscitating aging, out of commission pipeline infrastructure. A comprehensive and transparent response to the Delfin LNG pipeline explosion is essential for protecting our communities.

Sincerely,

Better Brazoria: Clean Air and Water

BFFP Petchem Working Group
Carrizo Comecurdo Tribe of Texas
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Oil & Gas Organizing
Climate Conversation Brazoria County
Earth Ethics, Inc.
Earthjustice
Earthworks
For a Better Bayou
Friends of the Earth U.S.
GreenFaith
Habitat Recovery Project
Hip Hop Caucus
Leave it in the Ground initiative (LINGO)
Oil and Gas Action Network
Oil Change International
Port Arthur Community Action Network
Public Citizen, Inc.
Save RGV
Sierra Club
South Texas Environmental Justice Network
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Vessel Project of Louisiana