

# Opening Remarks & Perspectives on Research

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Good morning and welcome to our Research Forum! I'm PHMSA's Chief Counsel and glad to see such a commitment by you to furthering research that can solve mutual pipeline safety challenges. PHMSA sponsors these forums in order to capitalize on your expertise in managing wide ranging technical challenges to address public safety. Our goal here is to leverage the collective expertise, which have produced numerous successes to date, both in research and in the partnerships we have fostered in the pipeline technology community. If we're successful in that, we will accelerate the development of new knowledge and technology out to the market and end users. The results of these forms have been demonstrable successes, and we are all appreciative of the commitment everyone has made to participate.

I'm here representing Skip Elliott our Administrator. Skip is a tremendous advocate for working together on technology solutions so we can progress beyond current capabilities and limitations. Skip sees innovation and new technology as a major component of the Administration's focus to both improve safety and to reduce regulatory and economic burdens. Within the department, the R&D Forum process you are engaged in is held up as a paragon of public and private collaboration.

We have a growing participation of universities here to learn from the collective expertise and more about the many challenges of pipelining. This presents an opportunity for commercial firms to benefit from the bleeding edge of innovative research, and academic partners to see new implementations of the work they are doing. With those universities come students who are eager to contribute their growing expertise, and we'll see student posters later this morning detailing that experience. Innovation many times begins in the academic world but requires champions in industry to apply those learnings appropriately so that technology can transfer to the market. The commercial and academic partnerships we are developing in this program will continue to shrink the specter of pipeline safety unknowns, working to ensure that the place where threats to safety loom may someday vanish altogether.

So, in closing I'd like to say thank you and good luck to your efforts over the next 2 days. It will be exciting to receive the solutions the working groups arrive at. So, on behalf of the leadership team at PHMSA, we are very pleased to receive your input into our national research agenda which will soon follow. Thank you!

