



For Immediate Release:  
Monday, June 15, 2020

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**West Virginia Chamber Applauds U.S. Supreme Court Decision in U.S. Forest Service v. Cowpasture River Preservation Association**

**Charleston, W.Va.** – This morning the U.S. Supreme Court issued a 7-2 decision in the case of *U.S. Forest Service v. Cowpasture River Preservation Association*. The justices reversed the decision of the U.S. 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit and ruled that the Department of Interior’s decision to assign responsibility over the Appalachian Trail to the National Park Service did not remove the U.S. Forest Service’s authority to issue a special use permit to the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. The West Virginia Chamber of Commerce was proud to join an amicus brief in urging the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse the decision of the U.S. 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit.

West Virginia Chamber President Steve Roberts stated, “Today’s decision is a big win for economic development and the energy security of the United States. The West Virginia Chamber of Commerce applauds the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court and is looking forward to the construction of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline.”

This case developed when Atlantic Coast Pipeline, LLC filed a petition with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to construct and operate a natural gas pipeline from West Virginia to North Carolina. A 0.1-mile segment of that pipeline needed to cross the Appalachian Trail in the George Washington National Forest. The pipe crossing would take place 600 feet below the service. In 2018, the U.S. Forest Service issued the permits for this construction, but that was challenged by the Cowpasture River Preservation Association, which contended the Forest Service lacked the authority to issue this permit. The U.S. 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit agreed with Cowpasture River Preservation Association, leading to an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Roberts concluded, “Today’s decision by a 7-member majority of the Court clears the way for construction to resume on the pipeline. We have many hardworking West Virginians who are eager to get back to work on this vital project. This decision leads to good incomes for these workers, and helps advance the cause of securing our country’s energy security.”

*Members of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce are your small business neighbors. Chamber members employ over half of our state’s workforce and are found in every county and region of our state.*

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