

For Immediate Release  
August 8, 2019

Contact: Kelly Darby  
(512) 771-8276  
[kelly@iando.com](mailto:kelly@iando.com)

## **Hill Country Landowner Vindicated by Commission Kinder Morgan Ordered to Pay Fair Market Value for Land**

BLANCO COUNTY, TX – Hill Country landowner Matthew Walsh is breathing easier today after a three-panel special commission of real estate professionals ordered pipeline developer Kinder Morgan to pay damages to his land in the amount of \$233,500. This award comes despite Kinder Morgan's claims that there would be zero damages to the whole property.

The ruling by the commission happened Tuesday as part of condemnation proceedings related to Kinder Morgan's planned Permian Highway Pipeline, a 42-inch, 430-mile natural gas pipeline slated to travel from West Texas to Houston via the Texas Hill Country.

"I feel like I've been living in a nightmare since I heard about the pipeline coming through my land last October," said Walsh. "Kinder Morgan's initial offer was insultingly low. I hope that other landowners will hear my story and join me in fighting for fair compensation."

Walsh owns 53 acres near the city of Blanco and was planning to build a home when he learned that the pipeline will bisect his land. As a result, the Walsh family will have to wait three years for the construction to finish and Kinder Morgan's temporary easement lease on the land to sell the property.

"I do not feel safe living within a few hundred feet of such a massive natural gas pipeline," said Mr. Walsh.

After being contacted by Kinder Morgan about the pipeline, Walsh consulted with land appraisers, who took into consideration the significant impact the pipeline would have on the resale value of the land. The appraisers determined the land value was reduced by \$261,663 - much closer to the value decided by the commission. Walsh rejected Kinder Morgan's initial offer because it did not reflect damages to the land value; as a result, the company forced him into the legal proceeding and testified that his damages were only \$16,707 for the 50 foot easement – a tactic that was rejected by the Commission.

"We are not surprised that a panel of Blanco County Special Commissioners intimately familiar with the Texas Hill Country real estate understood the very real and significant damages the pipeline will do to land and land values in the area," said Patrick Reznik, condemnation attorney for Mr. Walsh. "Kinder Morgan has failed to recognize this fact because it must be inconvenient to their bottom line, although Hill Country landowners have been saying for months that the

presence of the 42" natural gas pipeline on their property may devalue their land by roughly 20-40%."

"When you compare the two numbers - Kinder Morgan's initial offer versus what was awarded to Mr. Walsh - it really makes you question whether they ever intended to fairly compensate landowners, as they have repeatedly promised," said Sean Haynes, executive director of the Texas Real Estate Advocacy Defense (TREAD) Coalition. "If landowners hold firm and demand fair compensation, it will be interesting to see if Kinder Morgan continues to believe that the Hill Country still holds the 'best route' for the PHP."

Walsh, a member of TREAD, is one of the first landowners to go through condemnation proceedings associated with the Permian Highway Pipeline in the Hill Country. Many more are expected to commence in the coming months.

###