**Student Handout 1**

**Persuasion Power**

**Bellringer Activity**

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With a partner read the following article from the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee. Highlight or underline the main idea/topics from each paragraph. Be ready to discuss the article with the entire class when time is called.

Consumers Desperate for New Natural Gas Pipelines

*February 5, 2014*

As Winter Storm Nika is wreaking havoc across much of the nation today, families and businesses are turning up the heat to stay warm. And despite America’s abundant energy supplies, many consumers are facing unusually high energy costs this winter, particularly across New England. Old Man Winter is not the only culprit responsible for the recent surge in prices, as much of the blame also lies in our country’s inadequate energy infrastructure. Our ability to move American natural gas supplies to homes and manufacturers has been held back by pipeline constraints.

New Hampshire’s Concord Monitor summed up this problem and its effects on the region’s economy in a recent editorial, “Wanted: new natural gas pipelines.” The editors wrote, “The handful of pipelines serving the region are too few and too small to move as much gas as the region needs when temperatures plummet. By law, and common sense, residential users who heat and cook with natural gas get first dibs when supplies are short. That leaves little for the utility industry, manufacturers and other big users. That has to change. … The high cost of energy is strangling New Hampshire’s economy. It’s preventing the return of manufacturing, which is creating good jobs in states where costs are lower, and it’s taking a fortune out of the pockets of consumers, whose spending is needed to keep Main streets healthy. …” –

During the Weekly Republican Address, House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) urged the president to work with Congress in a bipartisan fashion to help build the infrastructure that is desperately needed to deliver affordable and reliable energy to American homes and factories. He stated, “The president talked about how natural gas production is good for our economy and for our jobs. We couldn’t agree more. And in a bitterly cold winter, in my home state of Michigan and across much of the nation, where the demand for electricity is high and heating bills even higher, the time is ripe for action. But our infrastructure has not kept pace, which is why we must build an Architecture of Abundance to help create jobs today and keep energy affordable tomorrow.” –

Chairman Upton highlighted the House-passed H.R. 1900, the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act, which will help get natural pipelines in the ground quicker by cutting red tape and modernizing the permitting process. A broad coalition of groups representing American workers, job creators, and consumers support the commonsense legislation. The New England Ratepayers Association stated, “The ratepayers of New England desperately need more access to natural gas. H.R. 1900 will streamline the permitting process, reduce current inefficiencies and ultimately lead to greater natural gas pipeline infrastructure in the region.” With support from the Senate and the president, America could achieve real progress toward building the Architecture of Abundance and provide relief from high energy prices while encouraging job creation and new investment. - See more at: http://energycommerce.house.gov/press-release/consumers-desperate-new-natural-gas-pipelines#sthash.rvvRRx57.dpuf