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Unjust Compensation: Allowing a Revenue-Based Approach to Pipeline Takings

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COMMENT

Unjust Compensation: Allowing a Revenue-Based Approach to Pipeline Takings

Kelianne Chamberlain*

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* Candidate for J.D., University of Wyoming College of Law, 2014; Student Director, University of Wyoming College of Law Rural Law Center Legislative Research Service [LRS], 2012-2013. This paper grew out of an LRS project for the Wyoming Stock Growers Association [WSGA] to identify legislative reforms which would enable rural landowners in Wyoming to better negotiate with pipeline companies for pipeline easements, but it is meant to apply to all natural resource-rich states. Special thanks to Jim Magagna, Executive Vice President of WSGA, who originally proposed the topic to LRS, and who has been an invaluable sounding board for ideas. Thanks also to Kermit C. Brown, of the Wyoming House of Representatives, who has supported my research and asked probing questions about the adequacy of compensation in pipeline takings. Finally, thanks to my husband, Dr. Judd Chamberlain, and to our sweet little girls, Dani and Leila, for their patience and support.
I. INTRODUCTION

“[A]ny system of weak property rights will necessarily lead to political mischief.”1

Since the United States Supreme Court decided *Kelo v. City of New London* in 2005, most scholarly criticism and state-level legislative reform regarding governmental takings has focused on narrowing the definition of “public use” for which land may be taken.2 These reforms have been beneficial to landowners, but they represent only part of the solution.3 Little reform has focused on “just compensation;” as a result, the concept remains substantially where it stood a hundred years ago.4 Because the concept has not kept pace with the times, landowners generally do not receive just compensation for takings.5 The problems are especially stark in natural resource-rich states.6 Owners of a mineral estate benefit financially from partnering with extraction companies by negotiating to receive a percentage of production.7 Landowners negotiating a pipeline easement,

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3 Id.

4 Fegan, supra note 2, at 269; Matthew Cory Williams, Note, *Restitution, Eminent Domain, and Economic Development: Moving to a Gains-Based Conception of the Takings Clause*, 41 Urb. Law. 183, 192 (2009) (“[W]hat needs to be fixed is not the interpretation of the ‘public use’ clause, but the amount of the ‘just compensation’ paid to condemnees.”).


however, are restricted in their negotiations by the threat of eminent domain. This looming threat results in undercompensation.

To provide context, the Background first briefly explains the oil and gas production process. Second, the Background outlines the history of constitutional takings and current valuation methodology for determining just compensation. Third, the Background explores the growing unrest with takings valuations and select psychological aspects of compensation. Finally, the Background provides information on compensation structures under the Federal Telecommunications Act (FTA).

By way of argument, the Analysis first demonstrates how current compensation for pipeline easements fails to fully compensate landowners and is therefore “unjust.” Next, the Analysis emphasizes how revenue-based payments—payments based on a percentage of the value of the material flowing through a pipeline—for pipeline easements represent a “just” alternative approximation of a landowner’s loss in a condemnation situation. Third, the Analysis explains the policy benefits to allowing revenue-based compensation. Fourth, the Analysis demonstrates why critics’ likely arguments against revenue-based payments fail. Finally, the Analysis suggests avenues for implementation at the state level.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Oil and Gas Production Process

Getting oil and gas to market involves more than just extraction. At the wellhead, raw oil and gas contains sediments, impurities, and water from the

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8 See Chalk & Harrison-Fincher, supra note 5, at 21 (“Eminent domain law presently allows the landowner few choices when challenging the condemnor’s right to take.”); Douglas Ayer, Allocating the Costs of Determining “Just Compensation,” 21 STAN. L. REV. 693, 714 (1969) (“Many . . . condemnees may feel forced to accept an offer they regard as insufficient because they perceive an imbalance in bargaining weapons and conclude that they lack effective means of resisting.”).

9 Fegan, supra note 2, at 269 (“[I]nadequate compensation of property owners is greatly to blame for unjust or inefficient takings.”); Williams, supra note 4, at 190.

10 See infra notes 19–24 and accompanying text.

11 See infra notes 25–76 and accompanying text.

12 See infra notes 77–118 and accompanying text.

13 See infra notes 119–130 and accompanying text.

14 See infra notes 137–157 and accompanying text.

15 See infra notes 158–189 and accompanying text.

16 See infra notes 190–209 and accompanying text.

17 See infra notes 210–216 and accompanying text.

18 See infra notes 217–224 and accompanying text.
formation. The oil and gas requires processing in order to become marketable. First, the processing systems remove rock particles and water. Next, the systems separate oil and gas, which are transported via “gathering” pipelines to central processing stations to be further processed for their separate markets. From the “tailgate”—the end of these plants—“pipeline” quality gas flows through additional pipelines to be sold as a commodity for industrial, commercial, and residential applications. To facilitate this lengthy process, pipelines must often cross multiple property lines, requiring oil and gas companies to negotiate easements with federal, state, and private landowners.

B. History of Takings

The United States Constitution makes no guarantee that a person owning land will be free from the government taking that land. Rather, the Fifth Amendment provides only that land must be taken for a “public use” and that the landowner will be paid “just compensation.”

1. Public Use

The Fifth Amendment provides that a taking must be for a public use, which historically meant actual use by the public. Since the end of the nineteenth
century, however, the United States Supreme Court has defined public use as "public purpose." This broader definition led to a key decision that sparked public outcry about the use of eminent domain.29

In 2000, the City of New London, Connecticut sought to condemn an area of waterfront property and revitalize it in a way that it hoped would increase jobs and tax revenue.30 The unwilling sellers challenged whether the City's stated purpose for the taking was a "public use." The relevant Connecticut statute determined economic development projects were a public use in the public interest.32

The City argued, and the Court agreed, that the new development would generate higher tax revenues, thus indirectly benefiting all New London citizens.33 The Supreme Court gave broad latitude to the Connecticut state legislature's determination of what constituted public use.34 The Court held the takings "unquestionably" satisfied the constitutional requirement of public use, but emphasized the state legislature's ability to define public use more narrowly.35

Because of the negative public response to Kelo, state legislatures around the country reformed their states' eminent domain legislation to more narrowly define "public use." Within two years of the decision, forty-two states reformed their

28 Kelo, 545 U.S. at 478–79. (citing Fallbrook Irrigation Dist. v. Bradley, 164 U.S. 112, 158–64 (1896)); Hawaii Housing Authority v. Midkiff, 467 U.S. 229, 244 (1984)); see also Tschetter, supra note 27, at 210–12 (correlating the changes in definition to the changing economic landscape of America); John M. Zuck, Kelo v. City of New London: Despite the Outcry, The Decision is Firmly Supported by Precedent—However, Eminent Domain Critics Still Have Gained Ground, 38 U. MEM. L. REV. 187, 194 (2007) (noting the mid-twentieth century change of including strictly economic purposes as "public use" and admitting these purposes have "an ostensibly less overt connection to the public as a whole."); Nedelsky, supra note 25, at 232 ("[I]n practice 'public use' has long been defined so broadly that it is almost no barrier [to government action] at all.").


30 Kelo, 545 U.S. at 472.

31 Id. at 475.

32 Id. at 476 (citing CONN. GEN. STAT. §§ 8-186 to 8-200b (2005)).

33 Id. at 472, 483.

34 Id. at 480–83.

35 Id. at 482–84; Tschetter, supra note 27, at 193; Zuck, supra note 28, at 193; see also Nedelsky, supra note 25, at 232.

eminent domain statutes. Most reforms, however, focused on the sovereign’s exercise of eminent domain. Accordingly, many states still allow certain private entities to exercise the right of eminent domain over private land. This is especially true in western, natural resource-rich states. For example, state constitutions grant utilities, railroads, and pipeline companies the power of eminent domain. Private entities may only condemn property for public use. But, as in Kelo, these natural resource-related takings are justified based on the economic benefit accruing to the public. In addition, some state legislatures have categorically defined natural resource companies’ takings as public. Because statutes in many western states expressly provide that a natural gas pipeline is a public use, the only real battle becomes how much the landowner will receive in compensation.
2. Just Compensation

The Fifth Amendment omits a definition of “just compensation” for land the government takes. The United States Supreme Court defined “just compensation” in 1893:

The noun ‘compensation,’ standing by itself, carries the idea of an equivalent. Thus we speak of damages by way of compensation, or compensatory damages, as distinguished from punitive or exemplary damages, the former being the equivalent for the injury done, and the latter imposed by way of punishment. So that, if the adjective “just’ had been omitted, and the provision was simply that property should not be taken without compensation, the natural import of the language would be that the compensation should be the equivalent of the property. . . . [C]ompensation must be a full and perfect equivalent for the property taken. And this just compensation . . . is for the property, and not to the owner.

The Court has further defined “just compensation” to be enough to put an owner “in as good a position pecuniarily as if his property had not been taken.” However, the Court “has refused to make a fetish out of . . . market value, since it may not be the best measure of value in some cases.”

State supreme courts have elaborated on the purpose of requiring just compensation. According to the North Dakota Supreme Court, the requirement protects property owners’ possession and the rights “which render possession valuable.” Colorado’s Supreme Court noted just compensation is designed to bar the state from forcing “some people alone to bear public burdens which, in fairness and justice, should be borne by the public as a whole.”

States also define the measure of just compensation through their Constitutions, statutes, and case law. New Mexico defines “just” as a “fair and reasonable amount of compensation,” and “just compensation” as a balance between the

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50 Donaldson v. City of Bismarck, 3 N.W. 2d 808, 812 (N.D. 1942).
damages and benefits from the taking. Some states specify compensation represents what the condemnee has lost rather than what the taker has gained. However, just compensation generally excludes an owner’s sentimental value, goodwill from a business, and relocation costs.

C. Fair Market Value

Across jurisdictions, the definition of “just compensation” generally takes the form of “fair market value.” The idea of “fair market value” is to capture the price that would be reached in arm’s length transactions. That is, it is meant to be the price to which an informed, willing, but unobligated buyer and an informed, willing, but unobligated seller would agree. These hypothetical buyers and sellers are imbued with knowledge of all the advantageous possibilities for the specific property. This objective standard disregards the property owner’s sentimental or personal valuations of the property.

52 Bd. of Comm’rs of Dona Ana Cnty. v. Gardner, 260 P.2d 682, 685 (N.M. 1953) (citing N.M. CONST. art. 2, § 20) (superseded on other grounds by statute, 1968 N.M. Laws Ch. 30, § 1, as recognized in Yates Petroleum Corp. v. Kennedy, 775 P.2d 1281, 1284 (1989)).


55 See Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 1-26-702 (2012); CAL. CIV. PROC. CODE § 1263.310 (West 2012); 26 PA. CONS. STAT. § 702 (2012); N.C. GEN. STAT. ANN. § 136-112(2) (2012); Ayer, supra note 8, at 696 (1969) (“Fairness is equated with the open-market price.”). But see City of Moorhead v. Red River Valley Co-op Power Ass’n, 830 N.W.2d 32, 37 (Minn. 2013) (requiring utilities to include other factors besides fair market value).

56 See Boyce v. Soundview Tech. Group, Inc., 464 F.3d 376, 387 (2d Cir. 2006) (calling an arm’s length transaction “the best evidence of (and often the easiest method to determine) fair market value.”).

57 CAL. CIV. PROC. CODE § 1263-320(a) (West 2012); WYO. STAT. ANN. § 1-26-704(a) (2012) (including a separate valuation method for property “for which there is no relevant market”); Fowler, 17 P.3d at 800–01.

58 CAL. CIV. PROC. CODE § 1263-320(a) (West 2012) (defining the hypothetical buyer and seller as having “full knowledge of all the uses and purposes for which the property is reasonably adaptable and available.”); see Fowler, 17 P.3d at 801.

States have various statutory formulae for deriving fair market value in condemnation situations, but many considerations are similar across state lines. These considerations include attempting to value property at its “highest and best use,” valuing partial takings with the “before and after” test, and employing the “project influence rule.” Courts use these tests together to determine compensation owed to a condemnee.

1. “Highest and Best Use”

Fair market valuation often considers the value of the land in its present use as well as the value of the land in its highest and best possible use. “Highest and best use” is “the reasonably probable and legal use of vacant land or an improved property that is legally permissible, physically possible, appropriately supported, financially feasible, and that results in the highest economic value.” The valuation includes the hypothetical determination of the value of the land in the hands of its present owner if put to the most profitable use that is reasonably relevant and possible. Therefore, the “highest and best use” of land is not necessarily the current use. Further, potential for development is a factor in the property’s value, even when the landowner has no plans to use the land for that particular use. The “highest and best use” cannot be simply any use; it must be “reasonably probable” considering the property in question.

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60 See infra notes 61–76 and accompanying text.
61 See infra notes 61–76 and accompanying text.
64 Roger F. Tibble, The Appraisal: What’s it Worth?, 32 Fam. Advocate 16 (2010). Importantly, the “highest and best use” relates only to the value of the property. Avery E. Carson, Integrating Conservation Uses Into Takings Law: Why Courts Should View Conservation as a Possible Highest and Best Use, 86 N.C. L. Rev. 274, 279 (2007). For that reason, the valuation often becomes the “most intensive commercial use available.” Id. Admittedly, this valuation may disregard other types of value, such as environmental or aesthetic value. Id.
65 Baston v. Cnty. of Kenton ex rel Kenton Cnty. Airport Bd., 319 S.W.3d 401, 406 (Ky. 2010); accord United States v. Jaramillo, 190 F.2d 300, 302 (10th Cir. 1951).
67 Dennis v. City Council of Greenville, 646 So.2d 1290, 1294 (Miss. 1994).
68 City of Las Vegas v. Bustos, 75 P.3d 351, 362 (Nev. 2003). Two theories allow landowners to claim a pipeline easement is the highest and best use for the property and thereby claim higher compensation.

First, landowners use the “Pipeline Corridor Theory” to argue there is already a well-defined pipeline corridor which includes the land in question. Hanley, supra note 45, at 160. As evidence, landowners can “demonstrate the high value of neighboring land used as a pipeline corridor.”
2. Partial Takings and the “Before and After” Test

Some condemnors, including pipeline companies, seek only a portion of a landowner’s parcel. In these situations, the measure of compensation must include both the value of the land actually taken and the amount of injury to the remaining parcel. To determine the value of land actually taken, most jurisdictions use a “before and after” test. The “before and after” test determines the difference between the fair market value of the entire tract and the fair market value of the remaining tract after the taking. The valuation still considers the “highest and best use” of the land and simply takes the mathematical difference between the “market value of the land free of the easement and the market value as burdened with the easement.”

Id. This theory can result in a valuation separate from the remaining parcel. See Bauer v. Lavaca-Navidad River Authority, 704 S.W.2d 107, 109 (Tex. Ct. App. 1985). For example, even if the intact land was agricultural, the land taken can be valued separately if a landowner successfully proves its highest and best use is for a pipeline. See id. It can be difficult, however, for courts to embrace severing the land from the original tract and its unified use unless the landowner can establish the existence of a distinct pipeline corridor. See, e.g., United States v. 8.41 Acres of Land, 680 F.2d 388, 392 (5th Cir. 1982).

Second, under the “Assemblage Theory,” a parcel has greater value when consolidated with other properties rather than being used by itself. Mark S. Dennison, Probable Zoning Change as Bearing on Proof of Market Value in Eminent Domain Proceeding, 40 AM. JUR. PROOF OF FACTS 3d 395, § 8 (2013). To use this theory, landowners attempt to show that “assemblage” of the property with multiple other parcels results in the land’s “highest and best use.” Id. The consolidation must be reasonably practical when considering the costs and time involved as well as the reaction of neighboring landowners. Id. The consolidation must also be reasonably probable to affect the value of the land in question. Id. Some jurisdictions require a condemnee to “establish unity of ownership and either contiguity or adaptability for integrated use” in order to show the assemblage is reasonably probable. Id. “Without at least substantial unity of ownership and some indication of unity of use, the proposed assemblage is entirely speculative.” Id. The Assemblage theory may be expressly recognized by a court or indirectly included as part of the various other factors of compensation.


69 See, e.g., MONT. CODE ANN. § 70-30-302 (2012); E-470 Public Hwy. Authority v. 455 Co., 3 P.3d 18, 23 (Colo. 2000); Dep’t of Transp. of State v. Marilyn Hickey Ministries, 159 P.3d 111, 113 (Colo. 2007).

70 See Chalk & Harrison-Fincher, supra note 5, at 21; Hanley, supra note 45, at 160 (quoting 8.41 Acres of Land, 680 F.2d at 390–91; Leigh v. Village of Los Lunas, 205–NMCA–025, ¶¶ 9–13, 108 P.3d 525, 530–31 (N.M. Ct. App. 2004) (“The purpose of a before and after valuation when there is a partial taking of an easement or a restrictive covenant is to ensure that just compensation is provided for the diminution on value caused by the taking.”).

71 See, e.g., 26 PA. CONS. STAT. § 702(a) (2012); N.C. GEN. STAT. § 136–112(1) (2012); WYO. STAT. ANN. § 1-26-702(b) (2012) (allowing the greater of either the “before and after” test of the “value of the property rights taken”).

72 Hanley, supra note 45, at 160 (quoting 8.41 Acres of Land, 680 F.2d at 392).
3. Project Influence Rule

Many states disallow the value of the project for which the property is being condemned to influence the value of the property. This is called the “project influence rule” or the “rule against enhanced value.” In essence, fair market value, as determined in a condemnation proceeding, “includes all uses other than the use to which the taker is planning to put the property.” Exclusions of the project’s added value are justified in part based on the ideas that the public should not pay more than absolutely necessary for public goods, and that someone other than the landowner created the enhanced value on the land.

D. Growing Unrest with Takings Valuations

“What individuals really want, even more than the right to keep their property, is fair proceedings and just compensation.”

Landowners and commentators are increasingly criticizing takings valuations. As early as 1973, one scholar argued the project planning phase inevitably

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73 See MD Code Ann., Real Property § 12-105(b) (LexisNexis 2012) (stating that fair market value does not include “any increment in value proximately caused by the public project for which the property condemned is needed.”); Ala. Code 18-1A-173(a) (2012) (“The fair market value of the property does not include an increase or decrease in value before the date of valuation that is caused by (1) The proposed improvement or project for which the property is taken.”); 26 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 704 (2012) (“Any change in the fair market value . . . substantially due to the general knowledge of the imminence of condemnation . . . shall be disregarded.”); State Dept. of Health v. The Mill, 887 P.2d 993, 1003 (Colo. 1994). Some states, however, expressly allow the project to influence the valuation of the property. See Cal. Civ. Proc. Code § 1263-320(a) (West 2012) (stating that fair market value is reached when two people, “deal[] with the other with full knowledge of all the uses and purposes for which the property is reasonably adaptable and available.”); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. 19:9 (2012) (determining the basis of compensation “without deducting therefrom any general or specific benefits derived by the owner from the contemplate improvement or work.”); 26 Pa. Cons. Stat. §704 (2012) (considering the project’s influence on the property remaining after the taking, but disallowing consideration of benefits or damages which affect the entire community equally); N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 136-112(1) (2012) (allowing consideration of special and general benefits resulting from the taking).


75 Williams, supra note 4, at 190.

76 Id. at 190–92.


78 See, e.g., Eagle & Perotti, supra note 54, at 829–45 (enumerating post-Kelo laws by state); Nedzel, supra note 777, at 1018 (“The market value method undervalues the property taken and is a poorly-defined fiction. It is confusing, circular, and based on unsound economic theory.”); Fegan, supra note 2, at 269; Gideon Kanner, Condemnation Blight: Just How Just is Just Compensation?, 48 Notre Dame L. Rev. 765, 767 (1973); Brian Angelo Lee, Just Undercompensation: The Idiosyncratic Premium in Eminent Domain, 113 Colum. L. Rev. 593, 593 (2013).
depresses the value of the property.79 Others claim the definition of “public use” has expanded to fit modern society, but the concept of “just compensation” has not kept pace.80 Some further argue that eminent domain law is inconsistent with general property law.81 For example, general property law emphasizes free markets and values the individual, while eminent domain law disallows landowners from negotiating true arm’s length transactions and emphasizes the public interest at the expense of the individual.82 Another concern is that because people are more attached to certain kinds of property—such as wedding rings, heirlooms, and land—just compensation for their loss may have to include more than fair market value.83 Some argue just compensation is especially important for minority “scapegoat” groups who often face the burden of condemnation from the influence of more powerful majorities.84

Scholars have suggested various reforms.85 Some suggest setting compensation to exceed fair market value by some set proportion, such as 125% or 150%.86 Indiana and Michigan provide different amounts of compensation for differing types of land.87 For example, a residence requires higher compensation than agricultural land, and agricultural land requires more compensation than other undeveloped land.88 This tiered valuation accounts for additional subjective value

79 Kanner, supra note 78, at 767–70 (“[F]ew people are willing to buy or lease property which will be taken from them in the foreseeable future.”).
80 See, e.g., Fegan, supra note 2, at 273.
81 Id. at 279 (citing Kanner, supra note 78, at 776–81).
82 Id. (citing Kanner, supra note 78, at 776–81).
83 Margaret Jane Radin, Property and Personhood, 34 Stan. L. Rev. 957, 959 (1982); see also Eagle & Perotti, supra note 54, at 817–18 (describing Michigan’s “heritage value” premium added for property owned by the same family for over 50 years).
84 See, e.g., Clynn S. Lunney, Jr., Compensation for Takings: How Much is Just?, 42 Cath. U. L. Rev. 721, 757 (1993); Niles, supra note 5, at 280 (discussing how private oil and gas companies’ influence over the Texas state legislature has resulted in their ability to condemn land for pipelines “with almost no resistance at all.”).
85 See infra notes 86–99 and accompanying text.
86 Janice Nadler & Shari Seidman Diamond, Eminent Domain and the Psychology of Property Rights: Proposed Use, Subjective Attachment, and Taker Identity, 5 J. of Empirical Legal Studies 713, 724 (2008); see Nedelsky, supra note 25, at 234 (“It is true that the requirement of compensation can serve as a practical limit if the costs are seen as prohibitive.”). A 10% “bonus” was used for many years in England. Epstein, supra note 46, at 184, n. 10.
87 See Ind. Stat. § 32-24-4.5-8 (requiring 125% of fair market value for agricultural land; 150% for residential land, and 100% for all other land); Mich. Const. Art. X, § 2.
88 Id.; see also Chang, supra note 66, at 85 (arguing to valuate residential property at fair market value plus a bonus for length of tenure in residential property).
a landowner has for different types of property.\footnote{\textit{See Nadler & Diamond, supra note 86, at 726. Justice Scalia seemed to acknowledge the significance of a landowner's subjective valuation of land in the City of New London's oral argument. \textit{Id.} He grilled the New London attorney, “Yes, you’re paying for it, but you’re giving the money to somebody who doesn’t want the money, who wants to live in the house that she’s lived in her whole life. That counts for nothing?” \textit{Id.} (quoting Oral Argument transcript, p. 39). Other commentators have argued for a strict scrutiny standard in takings analyses that concern a person’s home because of the fundamental right of having a home. \textit{Johnson, supra note 43, at 213–14. But see Stephanie M. Stern, Residential Protectionism and the Legal Mythology of Home, 107 Mich. L. Rev. 1093, 1093 (2009) (arguing a landowner’s tie to “home” is actually only a tie to the social ties there rather than to the land). Scholars do not specify whether a landowner should also be able to include the tenure of his or her ancestors on the land, but doing so would seem consistent with the theory. See Oliver Wendell Holmes, The Path of the Law, 10 Harv. L. Rev. 457, 477 (1897) (“A thing which you have enjoyed and used as your own for a long time . . . takes root in your being and cannot be torn away without your trying to defend yourself . . . .”).}} Other scholars suggest that compensation should account for the length of time a condemnee has owned the land.\footnote{\textit{Nadler & Diamond, supra note 86, at 724; Johnson, supra note 43, at 214–15; Lee, supra note 78, at 648 (arguing, however, that the premium must be “a fixed dollar amount given to every condemnee who has an equivalent amount of sentimental value in the condemned property” rather than a percentage of the land’s value).}

Scholars have made various other suggestions to improve valuations in takings.\footnote{\textit{See infra notes 92–95 and accompanying text.}} One scholar suggests requiring a “Social Capital Impact Assessment” for takings, analogous to the environmental analysis required for new projects under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.\footnote{\textit{Johnson, supra note 43, at 217–18.}} Others suggest adjusting compensation according to the degree the purpose for the taking departs from a traditionally public one.\footnote{\textit{Nadler & Diamond, supra note 86, at 724, 726 (“[T]akings are viewed as more unjust when the purpose of the taking differs substantially from the public use archetypes like schools, highways, and post offices.”).}} Another suggestion is to allow the condemnee to set the price of compensation.\footnote{\textit{Id. at 724; Johnson, supra note 43, at 215; Ayer, supra note 8, at 694–95 (noting that if windfall-seeking condemnees price themselves out of the windfall, society’s only loss is the fact that the land may be used less productively).}} Finally, some have suggested a revenue-based approach, allowing the landowner to participate in the profits generated by the project for which their land was condemned.\footnote{\textit{Johnson, supra note 43, at 215.}}

On the other hand, some scholars think compensation is currently too high.\footnote{\textit{See infra notes 97–99 and accompanying text.}} One suggestion is to align takings compensation more closely with tort compensation principles by considering the behavior of the condemnee to potentially lower any award, similar to a comparative negligence standard.\footnote{\textit{Abraham Bell, Not Just Compensation, 13 J. Contemp. Legal Issues 29, 35 (2003).}}
Some scholars suggest eliminating takings compensation altogether and instead mandating private takings insurance.98 Similarly, some scholars worry “[t]he ultimate victims of any excessive ‘compensation’” are consumers.99

Private landowners have had some success securing more palatable remedies in the courts. For example, the Wyoming Supreme Court upheld a trial court’s authority to enforce annual payments set in relation to similar easements rather than a separate valuation.100 In that case, the court noted, “part of the impetus for [amending the state’s eminent domain laws] was the fact that one-time payments as compensation for takings were not satisfactory.”101 A New Mexico court has also awarded “annual access fees” as compensation for a taking.102

E. Psychology of Compensation

The assumption inherent in a takings analysis is that the condemnor will only force the sale of the property if the benefit to the condemnor is higher than the cost of compensating the owner.103 When the owner is fully compensated and society is directly or indirectly benefited by the project for which the land was taken, condemnation results in overall social improvement.104 However, deep concerns remain about the eminent domain power.105

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101 Id. at ¶¶ 90–96, 103–104 (citing R. Lang, Wyoming Eminent Domain Act: Comment on the Act and Rule 71.1 of the Wyoming Rules of Civil Procedure, 18 LAND & WATER L. REV. 739, 739 (1983)). In Wyoming, valuation by looking at similar easements is also available by statute. See WYO. STAT. ANN. § 1-26-704(a)(iii)(B), (C) (2012) (describing appropriate appraisal methods for determining fair market value).


103 Nadler & Diamond, supra note 86, at 714. But see Ayer, supra note 8, at 694 (noting that while some “hold-outs” may be sentimentally attached to land, others’ reluctance may be due to replacement and relocation costs that exceed the compensation award).

104 Nadler & Diamond, supra note 86, at 714.

105 Id. at 715; accord Ayer, supra note 8, at 694–95 (demonstrating how disparate subjective valuations can lead to a reduction in overall societal welfare).
Subjective value and dignitary harms matter more to a condemnee than the purpose for which the land was taken. Further, subjective attachment is a determining factor in a condemnee’s perceived justice of a taking. Most reform efforts, however, have focused on limiting the purposes for which land can be taken rather than on whether compensation for the taking is just.

Additionally, “[p]eople tend to derive greater utility from a relief that is of the same type as the injury inflicted.” Money certainly enables a landowner to restore his or her previous total net worth, but an in-kind remedy works to restore the value of the injured asset itself. Further, the landowner usually cannot use money to repair the land affected by the taking. Property rights make people feel secure, independent, and autonomous. Therefore, infringing on those rights will have a psychological effect a financial award may not fully resolve. Landowners often just prefer to have their land back.

Indiana has included in-kind redress for takings of agricultural land in its state code. There, a landowner may elect to receive, in lieu of money, an equivalent parcel of real property to replace the land taken. Other compensation schemes, while not technically involving property of the same type, can approximate in-kind redress more closely than a lump sum payment of fair market value. One example is for the government to provide greater development rights to the condemnee for

106 Nadler & Diamond, supra note 86, at 715–16.
107 Id. at 713.
108 See, e.g., CastleCoalition.org, supra note 37.
110 Can’t Buy Me Love, supra note 109, at 186; see id. at 187; Lee, supra note 78, at 639 (2013) (questioning whether payments of money can ever fully compensate landowners). But see Nedelsky, supra note 25, at 224 (“[I]t is the myth of property—its rhetorical power combined with the illusory nature of the image of property—that has been crucial to our system.”).
111 Can’t Buy Me Love, supra note 109, at 186. But see Lee, supra note 78, at 639 (arguing that money increases the landowner’s options, even though the options are of a different type than he or she would have had with land).
112 Nedelsky, supra note 25, at 249.
113 Can’t Buy Me Love, supra note 109, at 187; accord Lee, supra note 78, at 640–42 (“The taking can express disrespect or cause reasonably felt psychological harm,” especially in takings by private entities.).
114 Can’t Buy Me Love, supra note 109, at 186. Landowners also prefer to have the remedy come from the original party. Id.; Daphna Lewisohn-Zamir, Taking Outcomes Seriously, 2012 UTAH L. REV. 861, 861 (2012). In governmental takings, in-kind compensation may consist of greater development rights for the remaining parcel. Can’t Buy Me Love, supra note 109, at 186.
115 See IND. CODE § 32-24-4.5-8 (2012).
116 Id. The landowner and condemnor must agree to this option. Id. The new ownership interest must be agricultural and equal in acreage to the land lost. Id. Unfortunately, as of this publication there is no case law interpreting this interesting Indiana statute.
any remaining parcels.\textsuperscript{117} Another example relevant to pipeline takings is revenue-based payments, which tie compensation to the value of material flowing through the pipeline across the condemnee’s land.\textsuperscript{118}

\section*{F. Parallel Compensation Structures in Communications Infrastructure}

Cases interpreting another area of law have found that “fair and reasonable” compensation includes compensation based on a percentage of revenues. The Federal Telecommunications Act (FTA) allows state and local governments to “require fair and reasonable compensation from telecommunications providers” for use of their rights of way.\textsuperscript{119} Compensation in these instances “may be deemed ‘fair and reasonable’ even if based on a percentage of revenue and clearly exceeding the municipality’s costs.”\textsuperscript{120} One commentator, however, has argued that allowing only direct cost-recovery potentially results in a taking without just compensation.\textsuperscript{121}

In \textit{T.C.G. Detroit v. City of Dearborn}, T.C.G. Detroit sought to place fiber optic cables along the City of Dearborn’s right of way.\textsuperscript{122} The City imposed an annual rental fee of four percent of T.C.G.’s gross revenue as compensation.\textsuperscript{123} The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan held the compensation was reasonable, and noted that “there is nothing inappropriate with the city charging compensation, or ‘rent’, for the City-owned property that the Plaintiff seeks to appropriate for its private use.”\textsuperscript{124} The court justified its holding in part on what other telecommunications providers would be willing to pay.\textsuperscript{125} The court also noted the fees would not impact the profitability of T.C.G.’s business.\textsuperscript{126}

In affirming the decision, the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit determined that “compensation” could include more than the costs of accommodating additional cable.\textsuperscript{127} The court used a broad “totality of the

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\item \textsuperscript{117} Can’t Buy Me Love, \textit{supra} note 109, at 186.
\item \textsuperscript{118} \textit{See infra} notes 158–189 and accompanying text.
\item \textsuperscript{119} \textit{See 47 U.S.C. § 253(c) (2012); Gillespie, \textit{supra} note 53, at 231.}
\item \textsuperscript{121} \textit{See Krebs, \textit{supra} note 120, at 926.}
\item \textsuperscript{122} 16 F. Supp. 2d 785, 790–91 (E.D. Mich. 1998).
\item \textsuperscript{123} \textit{Id.} at 790–91.
\item \textsuperscript{124} \textit{Id.} at 789.
\item \textsuperscript{125} Gillespie, \textit{supra} note 53, at 238; \textit{see Dearborn}, 16 F. Supp. 2d at 790.
\item \textsuperscript{126} \textit{Dearborn}, 16 F. Supp. 2d at 791.
\item \textsuperscript{127} \textit{T.C.G. Detroit v. City of Dearborn}, 206 F.3d 618, 625 (6th Cir. 2000) (\textit{Dearborn II}).
\end{itemize}
circumstances” model to determine whether compensation is fair and reasonable under the FTA. Some of the factors include: (1) local government’s authority under state law; (2) what other providers are willing to pay for similar use of the public rights-of-way; and (3) whether the telecommunications provider previously had agreed to pay similar compensation. Some courts, however, have limited compensation under the FTA to directly relate to costs.

III. Analysis

Many of the deep concerns with eminent domain in natural resource pipeline cases would be alleviated if landowners were compensated based on revenue generated by the product moving through the pipeline. This analysis first demonstrates that current fair market valuation undercompensates landowners. Second, this analysis describes how revenue-based compensation better compensates landowners by more closely approaching in-kind redress and by better approximating owners’ lost opportunity costs. Third, this analysis demonstrates the existence of revenue-based compensation under the FTA to justify similar compensation for pipeline takings. Fourth, this analysis argues revenue-based payments provide policy benefits in addition to correcting undercompensation. Fifth, this analysis demonstrates the flaws in critics’ likely arguments against revenue-based compensation. Finally, this analysis suggests how states can implement revenue-based compensation.

A. Fair Market Value Undercompensates Condemnees

“[T]here is something about land that makes you think that when you own it, it is really, really yours.” Condemnation violates this assumption.

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128 Krebs, supra note 120, at 919 (citing, e.g., Qwest Corp v. City of Santa Fe, 224 F. Supp. 2d 1305, 1318, 1329 (D. N. M. 2002); Dearborn, 16 F. Supp. 2d at 790).
129 Id. (citing, e.g., Qwest Corp, 224 F. Supp. 2d at 1318, 1329; Dearborn, 16 F. Supp. 2d at 790).
130 Gillespie, supra note 53, at 240.
131 See infra notes 137–157 and accompanying text.
132 See infra notes 158–179 and accompanying text.
133 See infra notes 180–189 and accompanying text.
134 See infra notes 198–209 and accompanying text.
135 See infra notes 200–216 and accompanying text.
136 See infra notes 217–224 and accompanying text.
137 Nadler & Diamond, supra note 86, at 723; accord Nedelsky, supra note 25, at 247 (“[T]he popularly held idea that ‘government can’t take what’s mine’ seems to be holding fast.”).
138 See Lee, supra note 78, at 639 (analogizing takings to dethroning a king); Ayer, supra note 8, at 705. (“The psychological shock, the emotional protest, the symbolic threat to all property and security, may be expected to reach their highest pitch when government is an unabashed invader.”).
The condemnation process both forces the sale and sets the price. Current undercompensation devalues landowners’ interest in their lands and forces them to bear an undue share of takings costs. One commentator notes, “the shortfall yielded by the fair market value standard is nothing short of an open secret.”

While the definition of public use has evolved to include uses not traditionally considered public—like economic development in *Kelo*—the definition of just compensation has not kept pace. The current definition of just compensation relies on fair market value, but fair market value denies compensation for “real but subjective values.” One cannot determine compensation without considering the personal desires of both the buyer and the seller. However, the subjective value of property to the owner often exceeds its market value. Fair market value fails, therefore, to capture the value of property to an owner who has not voluntarily chosen to sell. By definition, one who has not attempted to sell his or her land values the land higher than its market price. “Otherwise, [he or she] would have accepted the market price and sold the property previously.”

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139 Nadler & Diamond, *supra* note 86, at 723.
140 Johnson, *supra* note 43, at 217. Without just compensation, the condemnee bears a larger proportion of the cost in comparison to the larger public, when the public as a whole is meant to bear the burden. See id.; *supra* note 51 and accompanying text.
142 See, e.g., *Kelo v. City of New London, Conn.*, 545 U.S. 469, 479 (2005); Fegan, *supra* note 2, at 272–73. Fegan opines that early takings were not controversial because “the costs borne by property owners in takings cases were far lower than they are today.” *Id.* at 272. Further, much of the land taken had little significant value. *Id.* Finally, takings were less common when the Supreme Court first articulated its definition of just compensation. *Id.* Regardless, the definition has remained substantially unchanged for a century. *Id.*
143 Epstein, *supra* note 46, at 183; See Chang, *supra* note 66, at 36–37 (employing the term “economic value” for fair market value plus a bonus for a landowner’s subjective value).
144 Fegan, *supra* note 2, at 279 (citing Kanner, *supra* note 78, at 780).
146 See Nadler & Diamond, *supra* note 86, at 715.
147 Nadler & Diamond, *supra* note 86, at 715; Miceli, *supra* note 5, at 57–58. The difference between the market value and the price a landowner would accept is variously termed the “‘offer-ask’ disparity, the difference between the ‘willingness-to-accept’ and ‘willingness-to-pay’ measures of value, and the ‘endowment effect.’” *Id.* (illustrating the “well known” theory of subjective value with a supply and demand diagram).
The seller’s inability to choose whether to sell fundamentally alters the relationship of the parties and their ability to reach fair market value for the property.\textsuperscript{149} Effectively, sellers are barred from conjecturing what the buyer might actually pay for the land.\textsuperscript{150} Although this can prevent “hold-outs” who would seek to artificially drive up the price, it also excludes the genuine subjective value a landowner may have.\textsuperscript{151}

Fair market value also fails to consider “dignitary harms,” or the perception of being unfairly targeted for condemnation.\textsuperscript{152} Landowners may resent their perception that a private entity is receiving a windfall resulting from deliberate government action—the exercise of eminent domain.\textsuperscript{153} This resentment is amplified if a landowner perceives the windfall is channeled to politically powerful parties—such as big energy companies—at the landowner’s expense.\textsuperscript{154} Such resentment may be well placed—less powerful social groups often experience condemnation at the hands of more powerful entities.\textsuperscript{155} Additionally, many states disallow the project for which the land was taken to influence the price of compensation.\textsuperscript{156} However, “the increased use of eminent domain by . . . energy related industries,” abuse of the right by private entities, and appreciation in land values makes paltry, one-time payments unsatisfactory because they fail to take account of these factors.\textsuperscript{157}

B. Revenue-Based Payments Better Compensate Condemnees

Compensation does not have to be tied to fair market value.\textsuperscript{158} “A higher standard for what constitutes ‘just compensation’ is both possible and desirable.”\textsuperscript{159} Pipeline companies require access to private rights-of-way in order to transport

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\textsuperscript{149} \textit{Id.} at 715, 723–24 (“[C]ompensation for a taking pegged to fair market value almost inevitably will undercompensate the owner of the property.”); McGrew, supra note 99, at 155 (“[N]o matter how the argument is cast, the market has only one buyer, when that buyer possesses the power of eminent domain, and when no one really knows what the right to be sold would be worth in an open market, there is no way that even a ‘voluntary’ sale can be characterized . . . as a truly voluntary sale between a willing seller and a willing buyer.”).

\textsuperscript{150} \textit{Id.}; see \textsc{Timothy Sandefur}, \textsc{Cornerstone of Liberty: Property Rights in 21st-Century America} 91 (2006) (arguing the “holdout” problem is greatly exaggerated).

\textsuperscript{151} \textit{Id.} at 722.

\textsuperscript{152} \textit{Id.}

\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Id.} at 722.

\textsuperscript{154} \textit{Id.}

\textsuperscript{155} \textit{See} Lunney, supra note 84, at 757.

\textsuperscript{156} \textit{See} supra notes 73–76 and accompanying text.

\textsuperscript{157} Micheli & Smith, supra note 36, at 1.

\textsuperscript{158} Kanner, supra note 78, at 774 (“[M]arket value is essentially a rule of convenience, not a conceptual straitjacket.”); Krebs, supra note 120, at 925 (“[C]ompensation can take many forms . . . and still be reasonable.”).

\textsuperscript{159} Fegan, supra note 2, at 270.
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Private landowners can offer this access in exchange for payment. The method of compensation should not be limited if it is reasonable. Revenue-based payments better compensate condemnees by allowing landowners to share in the value the land contributes to a project, by approximating the benefits of in-kind redress, and by accounting for landowners’ lost opportunities in regards to their land.

Awarding revenue-based payments would allow landowners to share in the value the land contributes to the project. The project influence rule—which disallows using the project for which land is taken to influence its price—should be a floor, but not a ceiling. That is, a landowner should not be penalized for the use to which the condemnor will put the land, but he or she may be allowed to share in the financial benefits for which the land was taken. One possible counterargument is that the landowner should have no part in value he or she did not help create, and therefore should not receive revenue-based payments as compensation. However, “awarding after value makes the taking more like a market-based transaction.” If condemnation were unavailable, parties would likely reach just compensation through negotiations including revenue-based compensation because the pipeline companies would not have the failsafe of condemnation looming over the transaction.

For example, state trust land administrators in Wyoming have been developing revenue-based compensation models for pipeline easements crossing state lands, where eminent domain by private entities is not available. Progress has slowed,

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160 See, e.g., Niles, supra note 5, at 271.
161 See City of St. Louis v. Western Union Telegraph Co., 148 U.S. 92, 104 (1893) (discussing how revenue based fee is appropriate but must be reasonable); Krebs, supra note 120, at 933.
162 See infra notes 163–179 and accompanying text.
163 See Miceli, supra note 5, at 71 (arguing that allowing compensation to be reduced by the value received from a project is unfair because other members of the public who receive the benefit are not similarly charged).
164 See Lopez, supra note 141, at 292 (arguing that “gain-based” compensation—referencing the gain inherent to assembling the land required for a project—fails to account for the individual harm suffered by each condemnee).
165 Williams, supra note 4, at 184 (defining “after value” as an “award [of] some of the benefit of the reaggregation and development of the land”).
166 Interview, Jim Magagna, Executive Vice President, Wyoming Stock Growers Association, October 23, 2012.
167 Ryan Lance, Don Threewitt, & Tina Vigil, Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments, Pipeline Easements on State Trust Lands, Presentation, University of Wyoming College of Law, November 2012; See United States v. Carmack, 329 U.S. 230, 240 (1946). A state has “the eminent domain or highest dominion” within its limits, subject only to the federal government. Id. at 240; accord United States v. 32.42 Acres of Land, 683 F.3d 1030, 1034 (9th Cir. 2012). Private entities only have the right to exercise eminent domain if given by the state. Chalk & Harrison-Fincher, supra note 5, at 17. States giving private entities the right to eminent domain specify it is the right to take private land rather than public land. See supra note 39 and accompanying text.
however, as the administrators acknowledge the arrangement would push more development onto private land, where private landowners cannot yet enter into similar arrangements. 168

Revenue-based payments approximate the benefits of in-kind redress. 169 Compensation should try to get as close as possible to repairing the asset itself, restoring the landowner to her pre-condemnation position. 170 “Setting cash compensation correctly . . . is critical to the sound functioning of our condemnation system.” 171 This is especially true because financial awards may never make a landowner feel fully compensated. 172 Although revenue-based payments are still not “in-kind,” they approximate a repair of the injured property by making landowners feel that they share in the benefits of the taking. 173 In this way, revenue-based payments share the inclusionary and participatory aspects of in-kind redress. 174

Revenue-based compensation best accounts for landowners’ lost opportunities. Owners have myriad opportunities with their lands. 175 Implementing the project influence rule to foreclose valuation based on the very option for which land is actually used deprives condemnees of fair compensation. Hypothetically, a landowner owns the possibility of placing a pipeline on her land and charging a revenue-based rate for other companies to use it. 176 Valuing all possible opportunities of which the landowner has been deprived would be too speculative and therefore unfair to the condemnor. 177 Instead, tying compensation to its

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168 Ryan Lance, Don Threewitt, & Tina Vigil, Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments, Pipeline Easements on State Trust Lands, Presentation, University of Wyoming College of Law, November 2012.

169 For a discussion of other forms of compensation approximating in-kind redress, see supra notes 109–114 and accompanying text.

170 Olson v. United States, 292 U.S. 246, 255 (1934) (“[The landowner] is entitled to be put in as good a position pecuniarily as if his property had not been taken.”); See Can’t Buy Me Love, supra note 109, at 186.

171 Supreme Neglect, supra note 145, at 89.


173 See id.

174 Id.

175 See Nedelsky, supra note 25, at 223, 231 (explaining how property has been the “quintessential instance of individual rights as limits to governmental power,” but is now turning into “a primary subject of it.”). Property rights are often referred to as a “bundle” of rights—an aggregate of opportunities in relation to land. See id. at 234; Epstein, supra note 46, at 59.

176 See id.

177 See id. One reason courts have hesitated to include subjective valuations of property in compensation is because of the difficulty in measuring it. Supreme Neglect, supra note 145, at 91; Miceli, supra note 5, at 84 (noting the “lack of a workable method for measuring owners’ true valuations, . . . [is] the unavoidable cost of substituting a court-ordered transaction for a consensual one.”).
actual use acts as the best substitute for the full measure of lost opportunities. Like all compensation methods, revenue-based compensation will be imperfect, but it will help “correct . . . for the persistent bias of the [fair] market value test.”

C. Revenue-Based Payments in FTA Cases Justify Revenue-Based Payments for Pipeline Takings

The FTA allows local governments to require “fair and reasonable compensation” from telecommunications companies for the use of their rights-of-way for telecommunications infrastructure. Some courts have held that “fair and reasonable compensation” under the Act includes revenue-based compensation. For example, the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit upheld revenue-based compensation for telecommunications rights-of-way based on Florida state law. Additionally, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan upheld revenue-based compensation for telecommunications rights-of-way based on statutory interpretation of the FTA, the general right of the city to seek rent for the right-of-way, and similar agreements with other telecommunications companies.

FTA compensation is determined under the statutory language of “fair and reasonable compensation,” and it is only imposed at the city’s option. On the contrary, takings compensation is determined under the constitutional “just compensation” standard and is imposed every time there has been a taking. The situations, however, are analogous. In each situation, a private entity seeks rights-of-way over the property of another in order to achieve goals deemed beneficial to society. In each case, the private entity pays for the use of property as a cost of doing business. Neither the FTA nor the Federal Constitution

178 Epstein, supra note 46, at 183 (explaining there are two imperfect options for valuation: the highest and best use in the hands of the landowner or in the hands of another individual).

179 Supreme Neglect, supra note 145, at 91; Epstein, supra note 46, at 184 (“The bonus could correct, however, for the persistent bias of the market value test, even as it generates overcompensation in some cases while tolerating undercompensation in others.”).


182 See BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. v. Town of Palm Beach, 252 F.3d 1169, 1183 (11th Cir. 2001) (discussing Fla. Stat. Ann. § 337.401(3)(e) (2012)).

183 See Dearborn, 16 F. Supp. 2d at 788–91.

184 See 47 U.S.C. § 253(c) (2012); Dearborn, 16 F. Supp. 2d at 788.

185 U.S. Const. amend. V.

186 One commentator has aligned this “fair and reasonable” standard to the constitutional “just compensation” standard by arguing that courts allowing “only direct-cost recovery [under the FTA] potentially permit . . . a taking of local government property without just compensation.” Krebs, supra note 120, at 926.

187 See id., at 933.
expressly limit condemnees to direct costs involved with an easement or right-of-way. Because of these similarities, the presence of revenue-based payments in the telecommunications area signifies a willingness on the part of courts to acknowledge the role revenue-based payments can play in easements required for important industries.

D. Revenue-Based Payments Will Result in Policy Benefits

Revenue-based payments provide more efficient use of land. Some scholars have argued the only reason for the requirement of just compensation is to restrain excessive takings. That is, the "price" of taking land affects the demand for takings. A low price will lead to more takings, and a higher price will require potential condemnors to explore alternative avenues for their projects. Therefore, because current valuation undervalues the actual cost of the taking, takings are over-incentivized.

Revenue-based payments will avoid subsidizing private development. Fair market value compensation should not be used to subsidize private development. Any subsidy should be direct and charged to all members of the public who receive the benefit, not just the owner giving up land. Reforming just compensation would bring landowner protection back into balance with the public benefit. This renewed balance would comport with the purpose of the requirement for

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190 See Nedelsky, supra note 25, at 259 (referencing the general notion that a free market distributes resources efficiently).
191 Miceli, supra note 5, at 68.
193 Id.; see also Chang, supra note 66, at 59–61 (explaining a general purpose of takings compensation is to reduce inefficient takings and arguing that further efficiency would result from requiring a cost-benefit analysis before a taking could occur).
194 See Miceli, supra note 5, at 69.
195 Id. at 70; Sandefur, supra note 151, at 96 (equating the “Military-Industrial Complex” coined by Eisenhower to the “Costco-Ikea-Home Depot-Government Complex” coined by Dana Berliner of the Institute for Justice).
196 Miceli, supra note 5, at 71.
197 Fegan, supra note 2, at 269 (“[R]eforming just compensation would have a more positive and balanced impact on property owners and the public than would restricting public use.”).
just compensation, which is to “bar the state from forcing some people alone to bear the public burdens that, in fairness and justice, should be borne by the public as a whole.”

Revenue-based payments will relieve burdens on private landowners. First, the payments may incentivize more use of public lands for pipelines. Because eminent domain is not available on federal and state lands, pipeline companies seeking easements across those lands must acquiesce to the terms of the government. Even with the recent, post-

\[\text{Kelo}\] eminent domain reforms, it is still often easier for pipeline companies to locate a pipeline on private land, where the company will have more bargaining power than the landowner over the terms. However, if pipelines truly constitute a “public use” in bringing natural resources to market, the public should bear the burden. While just compensation ensures one landowner does not suffer alone for the public benefit, encouraging placement of pipelines on public land more directly puts the burden on the public and results in a lower burden on individual landowners.

Second, even if a pipeline company chooses to exercise condemnation on private property, revenue-based payments will relieve the burden on private landowners by awarding just compensation. Additionally, when landowners feel they have an equal bargaining position, they may welcome opportunities to negotiate with pipeline companies. In this way, pipeline easements could become a valuable part of a ranching enterprise.

Third, allowing revenue-based payments may incentivize term limits on easements. With lump sum payments, there is no incentive for a company to abandon the easement or allow it to revert to the fee owner. With revenue-based

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199 Lance, et al., supra note 167.
200 Id.
201 Id.
203 See Armstrong, 364 U.S. at 49.
204 As a side benefit, allowing private landowners to negotiate revenue-based payments may allow public land administrators to implement revenue-based payments without pushing more development onto private lands. Lance, et al, supra note 167.
205 Magagna, supra note 166.
206 Id.
207 Id.
208 In Wyoming, the easement reverts back to the condemnee after the condemnor has abandoned the easements. Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 1-26-515 (2012).
annual payments, failure to make payments over a certain period of time would provide evidence of abandonment. With this balance in place, landowners would more easily be able to negotiate an end date for the easement.209

E. Critics’ Likely Arguments Against Revenue-Based Compensation Fail

A chief concern among critics of revenue-based compensation is likely to be that it will overcompensate condemnees.210 Revenue-based payments will not overcompensate condemnees for two reasons. First, rather than creating overcompensation, revenue-based payments will serve to correct undercompensation currently based on fair market valuation.211 Second, the percentage of revenue allocated a condemnee in revenue-based compensation can be calculated to ensure a condemnor receives the full benefit of its enterprise, less only the amount to which a condemnee is constitutionally entitled.212

Critics may also argue it is unfair for a condemnee to participate in benefits she did not create. It is fair for condemnees to share in the benefit of the project to which their land is being put for two reasons. First, their land is necessary for that project.213 Pipeline companies rely on the use of property to get natural gas from point A to point B.214 Second, it is difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at a fair price through appraisals conducted under threat of condemnation.215 Revenue-based payments acknowledge the importance of the condemnor’s land to the project and the impossibility of reaching a fair price through appraisals conducted in an eminent domain proceeding.216

F. How to Implement Revenue-Based Payments

States could implement revenue-based payment options by statute or by judicial decision. State legislatures could expressly allow revenue-based payments, either as a generally allowed form of compensation or through an explicit statutory

209 In states with reversions after abandonment, it may also give the landowner leverage to argue for compensation for a reduction in retained interest. Supreme Neglect, supra note 145, at 93.
211 See supra notes 137–155 and accompanying text.
212 This calculation can be negotiated or imposed by a legislature or court. Additionally, they can be calculated so as to add little or no cost to ultimate consumers. Lance, et al., supra note 167.
213 See supra notes 19–24 and accompanying text.
214 See supra notes 19–24 and accompanying text.
215 See supra notes 137–155 and accompanying text.
216 See supra notes 19–24, 134–154 and accompanying text.
In order to incentivize use of revenue-based payments, states could require a set premium over fair market value for non-revenue based payments. Such a premium would also serve to correct fair market valuations computed under threat of condemnation. Finally, many states must modify their “project influence rules”; compensation must include the positive after-value of a project in order to fully capture the land’s “highest and best” use as well as the price the landowner would be able to receive in private negotiations.

Courts could uphold revenue-based compensation agreements based on similar fee agreements arrived at through negotiation. For example, in Barlow Ranch Limited Partnership v. Greencore Pipeline Company, LLC, the Wyoming Supreme Court upheld annual payments over a lump sum award based on evidence of similar easements in the area. Similarly, in T.C.G. Detroit v. City of Dearborn, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan upheld revenue-based annual payments based on similar arrangements in the telecommunications industry. Alternatively, a court could uphold a revenue-based payment based on a determination that “just” compensation requires more than a lump sum payment arrived at under the threat of condemnation.

IV. Conclusion

Compensation in current condemnation proceedings grossly undercompensates landowners for pipeline easements. Fair market valuation is not “just” because approaching a true fair market value under threat of condemnation

217 Williams, supra note 4, at 195–98. For example, in a “Process-Based” framework, the condemnee receives a percentage of the benefits or expected benefits, allowing the condemnee to share in the upside potential of a project. See id. at 195–96. Although perhaps less desirable (and realistic) because it involves a pipeline company relinquishing control of operations, a state could also implement a Special-Purpose Development Corporation or a Resident Equity Shares framework, allowing a condemnee to obtain an ownership interest in the project and to receive benefits as dividends. See id. at 196–98; see also Chang, supra note 66, at 77 (explaining the Special-Purpose Development Corporation).

218 See supra notes 86–89 and accompanying text for an example of a premium over fair market value for various different types of property.

219 Miceli, supra note 5, at 69; see supra notes 137–157 and accompanying text.

220 See supra notes 175–179 and accompanying text. Because the interest would be a right to payment rather than an ownership in the property, the landowner would not share in the risk of the venture. But see supra note 217 (outlining revenue-based compensation schemes wherein the landowner is a part owner of the venture and therefore subject to risk).


222 2013 WY 34, ¶ 94, 301 P.3d 75, 103 (Wyo. 2013).


224 See supra notes 137–157 and accompanying text.

225 See supra notes 137–157 and accompanying text.
is impossible. Accordingly, revenue-based payments should be allowed for pipeline easements. Revenue-based payments better approximate the loss landowners suffer when their land is taken. They represent the best substitute for landowners’ lost opportunity costs. Instituting revenue-based payments incentivizes the use of public lands and adherence to a term limit on the easement. States may implement revenue-based payments through various frameworks to fit the individual states’ needs. The concept of “public use” in takings analyses has expanded dramatically to fit modern needs. Concepts of compensation must also expand to ensure condemnees are provided “just” compensation as required by law.