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Subject: STOP NYRI POWER LINE UPDATE

Dear Constituent:

As a member of the New York State Senate Committee on Energy and Telecommunications, I asked Chairman James Wright to schedule hearings on the proposed NYRI line. The first hearing took place last Thursday night in Norwich, and I thought you might like to hear how it went.

We heard testimony from the Public Service Commission as well as from local officials, citizens, and experts. Perhaps most importantly, we were able to question NYRI officials in a forum where they did not set the rules and could not hide behind procedures of their own making.

Although it is the Public Service Commission, not the legislature, which will hear and determine this application, we did gather some important information. A transcript of the hearing and written exhibits which were given to us will be forwarded to the Public Service Commission as part of the proceedings. This transcript will include testimony which I believe will significantly help to defeat the power line proposal.

Here is some of what we learned. Under questioning by myself and other Senators, NYRI officials admitted that their company considered no other alternatives to down state power needs, such as conservation or additional generating capacity, and only considered alternate routes for the power line. This is significant because the applicable law requires that an applicant for transmission line approval demonstrate that they considered alternatives. In their testimony, NYRI officials claimed that their proposed power line would produce savings of over 11 billion dollars over a 20 year period for New York State electricity customers. Upon questioning by myself and other Senators, they admitted that all of those savings would go to people who live below the lower Hudson Valley and that, in fact, our part of the state would pay 166 million dollars each and every year in increased electricity costs. In other words, their proposal would represent an annual 166 million dollar drain on the upstate New York economy. Additionally, they admitted that since their line begins with a converter in Marcy and ends with a converter in the lower Hudson Valley, that no additional electric supply would be given to anyone at any point before the end of the line and further that no improvement to system reliability would occur at any point along the line until the very end is reached below the Hudson Valley. These admissions are significant because the law requires the Public Service Commission to consider on a statewide basis electric system requirements, costs, environmental impacts, property impacts, availability and consideration of alternatives, and many other factors.

We believe that the opportunity to question NYRI officials before an independent body has demonstrated significant holes in their application and has provided avenues for us to explore to ultimately defeat this proposal. In the days to come, I will be working with other elected officials, community leaders, and citizens to secure answers to further questions including potential health risks by increased exposure to electromagnetic frequencies (EMFs), as well as the identities of NYRI parent companies and investors.

Finally, I want you to know that we have been working closely with the New York State Association of Counties as an umbrella organization for the eight counties impacted by the NYRI proposal. You may have seen recently in the Observer-Dispatch that Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno recently became the first statewide official to forcefully express his opposition to this line. Working together with other Senators representing communities along the proposed pathway, we will secure the resources to see to it that lawyers and technical experts with the appropriate expertise mount an effective challenge to the NYRI proposal.

Truly, we have just begun to fight, but we are already making significant progress.

We must stay focused, united, and determined. Together, we will stop NYRI.

Very truly yours,

Raymond A. Meier

New York State Senator

47th District