



DIDI BARRETT
Assemblymember 106th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Subcommittee on Outreach
and Oversight of Senior
Citizen Programs

COMMITTEES
Aging
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Friday, June 14th, 2013

Administrative Law Judge Eleanor Stein\
Public Service Commission
Public Statement Hearing – June 14th, 2013
West Ghent Fire Co. Station, Ghent, NY

Re: Case 12-T-0248: Application of New York State Electric & Gas Corporation for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the Construction of the "Columbia County Transmission Project", Approximately 11.1 Miles of 115 Kilovolt Transmission Lines and related facilities in the Towns of Chatham, Ghent and Stockport, in Columbia County.

To PSC Administrative Law Judge Eleanor Stein,

Thank you, Judge Stein, for convening this public hearing about the proposed NYSEG Transmission line project. This hearing demonstrates the ability of State Government to be responsive to the needs and concerns of the people and we are pleased to see the Public Service Commission actively engaging with the public to hear what they have to say about the issue. Unfortunately, I am unable to be there in person to add my comments into the record, but I did want to make sure that my words are read and heard alongside those of my constituents.

I am very proud to represent New York's 106th District, which includes the Town of Ghent and is truly one of the most beautiful in the state. My district and the surrounding area will be directly impacted by the transmission line project being advanced by New York State Electric & Gas Corporation ("NYSEG"). The NYSEG proposed transmission line, which currently consists of approximately 11 miles of above-ground transmission lines and related facilities, will cause serious disruptions and have a negative impact on the families, communities, and local economy within this area if this project moves forward.

Concerns include the loss of large amounts of prime agricultural land, the damaging impact to the area's rich historic and cultural resources, and the destruction of stunning view-sheds from our parks, scenic areas and recreation spaces. All of these assets contribute to the economy of Columbia County and make this the wonderful place that we call home. It's important to understand that this is a region that has just begun to see an economic resurgence which will be severely impeded by this project.

I am especially concerned about the many constituents from the affected area who have sat down with me to show how the proposed power lines would run directly over or adjacent to their property. Please consider these residents, many of them young families who have only recently invested in the community, attracted to the region by those very assets which will be negatively impacted by this project. I am asking your agency to listen to their concerns and opinions tonight as they give their testimony.

As we have witnessed over the last few years, the increase and severity of extreme weather poses a major risk to the current local energy grid. We all know we must shore up our infrastructure to better protect ourselves from future storms and prevent major black outs and service interruptions. However, I would ask that you seek to have NYSEG work closely with your agency, the local municipalities and the residents to figure out the best way achieve that goal while not destroying the very assets that communities depend on to plan for the future.

Judge Stein, thank you for your time tonight and I hope you will consider all of the personal stories of those affected by this proposed project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Didi Barrett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Didi Barrett

Member of Assembly
106th District