

Ayotte Calls on Energy Department to Schedule Ad Pass Hearing

Senator Also Seeks Review Of Potential Vendor Conflict Of Interest

Feb 23, 2011

WASHINGTON, DC- U.S. Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) today called on the U.S. Department of Energy to schedule an Ad Pass hearing for the Ad Pass project. In a letter to Energy Secretary Steven Chu, Ayotte requested that the Department find time for a hearing responding to constituent concerns that residents in that area have not had convenient access to learn about the project.

Ayotte also asked the Energy Secretary to examine recent reports of a potential conflict of interest involving a contractor at the U.S. Department of Energy. The text of Ayotte's letter follows.

AYOTTE LETTER TO ENERGY DEPARTMENT:

February 23, 2011

Dr. Steven Chu, Secretary

U.S. Department of Energy

Forrestal Building

1000 Independence Avenue SW

Washington, DC 20585-0800

Re: New Hampshire Northern Pass Presidential Permit

Dear Secretary Chu:

As you know, the Department is currently considering an application by Northern Pass Transmission LLC (NPT) to construct, operate, maintain, and connect a high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission line across the U.S. The Department schedule an additional hearing in or near the town of Haverhill, New Hampshire.

The proposed HVDC transmission line would be capable of transmitting up to 1,200-MW of power into New England. The Department has held a series of public hearings on the scope of the environmental impact study. The proposal for a transmission line along the western side of New Hampshire; however, no hearings have been scheduled in that section of the state.

This proposal has evoked significant public concern in this rural and largely undeveloped section of New Hampshire. The consideration of this permit afford the people of New Hampshire a convenient opportunity to learn about the project.

I also request that you ensure the necessary steps are taken to resolve public concern that the Department has a conflict of interest during the review of the Northern Pass application. Constituent communications and press reports indicate that the Department's vendor has a business relationship with one of the companies associated with Northern Pass which might influence the Department to analyze, address, and publicly report its resolution of these concerns regarding conflict of interest.

The outcome of your Department's review of the pending application by Northern Pass is of great significance. It is absolutely critical that the residents that are being impacted by this project have a full and fair opportunity to be heard and to move forward in a transparent manner.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

Kelly Ayotte

U.S. Senator

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