



# TOWN OF STRATHAM

*INCORPORATED 1716*

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New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission

Hearing on Stratham Municipal Solar Project

Docket # DE 09-137

Testimony of David Canada, Stratham Board of Selectmen, Chair

March 2, 2010

Good morning

I am David Canada and I serve as the Chair of the Town of Stratham's Board of Selectmen. I am here representing the citizens of Stratham and to speak in support of the proposed solar project for the Stratham Fire Station.

The advantages to solar generated electricity are obvious: the price of the raw materials will never go up or run short. Delivery is never a cost. Perhaps most importantly, the supply of solar energy will never be subject to unstable political systems located thousands of miles away from New Hampshire.

I was in the gasoline business in January of 1974. During the prior few months the price of oil had risen dramatically due to an embargo on oil from some Middle Eastern states. On January 15 of that year, I received a phone call from Texaco announcing an allocation system for gasoline effective immediately. I was informed at that time that I had already exceeded my allowance for the month.

Pretty grim times. I don't believe, however, that anyone at that time doubted that we in America would persevere and that we would soon be in a position to tell the OPEC states that they could keep their oil; we had our own sources of energy.

In 1979 it became apparent that we were not yet in a position of energy self sufficiency. The new regime in Iran, angered by our humanitarian treatment

of their deposed Shah, again shut off the flow of oil. Americans again waited in line for a meager ration of gasoline. We again vowed energy self sufficiency.

Today, almost 30 years after our first hard lesson, we are still far away from being able to declare energy independence. We continue to rely on fossil fuels that are being depleted and that are adding an incredible burden to our environment. We continue to depend on supplies from countries that hate us. New Hampshire cannot achieve our energy goals alone but we must not expect solutions to be handed to us by others. We need to participate in finding solutions to a national problem. The proposed solar project at Stratham is an opportunity for us to step forward and advance locally built and owned and sustainable infrastructure. This will in turn start the process of achieving critical mass for what will become part of the competitively priced, renewable, clean energy mix of the future. This project may seem expensive now, but it is part of the start up costs we delayed nearly 30 years ago.

I urge you to support this project. There are enough variables that we cannot say with certainty that there will be no net costs to ratepayers. We can say, however, that we can't afford to wait another 30 years, or wait for the next energy crisis, to begin the transition to alternative energy sources. I suspect that 30 years from now, the Stratham project will look like a shrewd investment!

Thank you.