



DE10-195

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September 9, 2010

Thomas S. Burack, Chairman
New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee
C/o New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
29 Hazen Drive, P.O. Box 95
Concord, New Hampshire 03302-0095

Re: SEC Docket No. 2009-02

Dear Chairman Burack:



This letter is being provided to express full support for the Laidlaw Berlin BioPower, LLC biomass project in Berlin and request the Site Evaluation Committee's (SEC) and the Public Utilities Commission's (PUC) timely approval of all necessary regulatory requirements. The Androscoggin Valley Economic Recovery Corporation (AVER) is extremely supportive of the effort to bring the Laidlaw project to completion for the substantial economic benefits that it would create for the region. This support is contingent on the "City of Berlin Proposed Certificate Conditions" (stipulations) being made a part of the site certificate. We understand that those conditions have been agreed to by the City of Berlin and Laidlaw.

The timely approval of this project by the SEC and PUC, so that it can commence this year, is critical to the realization of substantial federal benefits and community benefits. These potential benefits could be lost in the event of unnecessary procedural delays. They include:

- **\$44.5 million in federal New Market Tax Credit Authority**
- **\$2.25 million of the NMTC as a Community Loan Fund**
- **\$2.25 million of matching leveraged funds from the Community Loan Fund**
- **\$250,000 of the NMTC in grants for job, equipment, safety and responsible forestry practices training.**
- **\$20 million in ARRA Recovery Zone Facility Bond Financing Authority**
- **\$500,000 City of Berlin, NH Targeted Economic Development Funding**

Additional Community benefits include:

- **A "River Walk" along the Androscoggin River for community use**
- **An ATV/Snowmobile trail along Hutchins and Coos Streets**
- **Landscaping and new fencing**
- **Sponsorship of local events and social activities**
- **Plant tours to educate and promote alternative energy**
- **Low cost thermal energy to the Fraser plant and other collocating businesses.**
- **Priority hiring of local workers**
- **Local purchases of biomass**
- **A community parking lot**
- **A student intern program to develop alternative energy.**

These benefits are too important to our economy and local jobs to be lost and the project jeopardized due to unnecessary procedural delays.

AVER along with its partners have worked for years to help create economic development and jobs in the region. The retention and creation of jobs in our region and Coos County has been a priority for AVER. One of the primary messages we have heard from our community was the desire to create good paying jobs with benefits and jobs that would not be lost to China or other overseas foreign competition. Biomass energy facilities, including Laidlaw's and Clean Power's, satisfy these requirements. Biomass energy facilities in essence "manufacture" electrons which currently cannot be imported from overseas. This project would displace foreign imported oil and help reduce the region's high level of unemployment especially in the forest products industry. It is estimated that the Laidlaw project would create over 240 jobs without considering multiplier effects. Laidlaw would be purchasing over \$20,000,000 annually of wood product from local and regional wood products suppliers. The construction phase would create up to 470 jobs and infuse tens of millions of dollars into the local and regional economies.

The Androscoggin Valley and all of Coos County have enormous potential for the development of the renewable alternative energy industry. The Laidlaw biomass project contributes significantly to the orderly development of the alternative energy industry in the region. In order to achieve this economic development, approval by the SEC and PUC is required and AVER is advocating for and supporting such approval.

As the Chair of the Community EFSEC Advisory Committee, a community advisory committee formed to address the residents' concerns about the Laidlaw project, we reviewed all of the issues raised. All of the issues had manageable solutions and in addition Laidlaw would provide substantial community benefits. The City of Berlin and Laidlaw have agreed to a final list of proposed certificate conditions.

We believe the long-term success of this project will impact the regional economy favorably and will help to sustain and create jobs and move New Hampshire forward in the renewable energy arena. Thank you for your favorable consideration of this very positive and worthwhile project.

Sincerely yours,



Max Makaitis
Androscoggin Valley Economic Development Director

Cc. Deborah Howland
Executive Director & Secretary
NHPUC
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301-2429
RE: Docket Number DE10-195 (Laidlaw Berlin BioPower Project)