

TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM Inc.

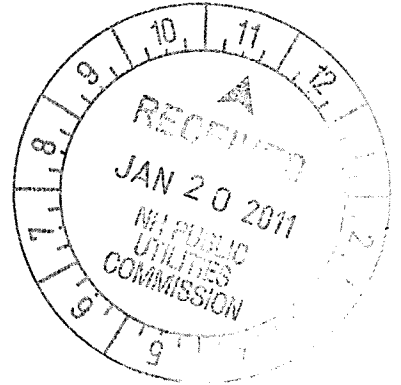
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Executive Director: Lawrence M. Kelly

January 19, 2011

Deborah Howland
Executive Director & Secretary
New Hampshire PUC
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301-2429



RE: Docket Number DE-10-195 (Laidlaw Berlin BioPower Project)

Dear Ms. Howland,

This letter is being provided to express full support for the Laidlaw Berlin BioPower, LLC biomass project and request the PUC's approval of all necessary regulatory requirements because it is in the best interest of the State of New Hampshire economy. Right now, more than ever, New Hampshire needs to create jobs and move away from fossil fuels to environmentally beneficial renewable energy alternatives.

Biomass is the single renewable energy source that assures this economic development, the creation of jobs and the building of wealth in our state. Fossil fuels do not achieve this because New Hampshire does not possess any natural supplies of oil, coal, propane or natural gas. When our residents, directly or indirectly through utilities, purchase these fuels which are supplied by other states and foreign countries our energy dollars leave the state and are lost forever from our economy. By purchasing fossil fuels we are creating jobs in foreign jurisdictions and not in New Hampshire. Our economy loses by the amount of the purchases from foreign entities. Even wind and solar energy do not require the purchase of raw materials in New Hampshire. Biomass is the only fuel source for which New Hampshire has a sustainable supply and creates the purchase of raw materials produced in our state. The Laidlaw biomass plant will purchase an additional 750,000 tons of wood chips annually which will inject \$25,000,000 more into the New Hampshire economy and create sustainable long term jobs with good benefits. This project will also immediately create 470 construction jobs! With the closure of the Fraser mill and the layoff of over 220 workers, the construction jobs are critically needed because they most fit the manual labor skill sets of the mill workers. In the long term the Laidlaw project will create 240 permanent direct and indirect jobs. Unemployment in the Berlin NH MicroNECTA area jumped from 5.4% to 9.0% in November of 2010 following the mill closure. These unemployed workers currently require substantial social assistance from the state and others. The best way to reduce these state expenditures is to provide the

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unemployed with good jobs. We need every job we can get if we are to climb out of the economic crisis that we currently find ourselves in. The economic benefit of the Laidlaw project is not limited to the North Country. The overall New Hampshire economy benefits because we keep our ratepayer's energy dollars circulating inside our economy and through the economic multiplier effects of these dollars we grow the entire economy of our state including increasing state and local tax revenues. Because of these factors the least expensive energy source today is not necessarily the best for the long term growth of the New Hampshire economy. The increased demand for biomass will help revive our depressed forest products industry. Reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and increasing domestic renewable energy is a goal we must all pursue.

For the benefit of the New Hampshire Economy please approve the Laidlaw project as soon as possible. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Max Makaitis
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