

September 16, 2016

Ms. Debra Howland
Executive Director, New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2429

RE: DG16-770, Liberty Utilities (Energy North Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities and Concord Steam Corporation. Joint Petition for Approval of an Asset Purchase Agreement

Dear Director Howland:

I find the prospect of Concord Steam being purchased by Liberty Utilities and converting from biomass to natural gas to be an initiative aimed in an alarmingly wrong direction. I understand the issues of local air quality related to biomass energy production, but this in no way suggests the replacement with natural gas, which has many air quality and other environmental issues of its own. The impacts of extraction and transport of natural gas, although not concentrated in the Concord region, ultimately will cause much more extensive harm. The enormous costs incurred with this transition could be much better directed and likely minimized, by pursuing alternative renewable energy options in a more considered and diverse effort.

Both solar and wind options should be considered, along with non-renewable energy sources in combination for a measured response. I understand that Green City Solar and other solar companies have not been offered the opportunity to offer effective alternative plans. The rush to a single solution is simply not justified.

Having been steamrolled for two years with the bureaucratic processes of the NED Pipeline proposal through my property in Rindge, NH, I am well aware of political influences that enter into these types of decisions. It is critical for New Hampshire's future that rational consideration prevails in this case. The populist coalition that formed around NED from diverse political factions, though fatigued, is still existent and attentive to fast tracking of special interest projects, as seems to be the case here.

Locking New Hampshire into long term reliance on any fossil fuel, let alone one as environmentally harmful as fracked natural gas, will inhibit growth of economically stimulating future energy production alternatives. Newer, cleaner technologies will keep our State at the front of the response curve for addressing climate change. I ask that you immediately halt the sale of Concord Steam to Liberty Utilities and reconsider the push to expand gas pipelines in New Hampshire.

Sincerely,
Richard Mellor