

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representatives Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica), Maurice Hinchey (D-Hurley) and John Hall (D-Dover Plains) asked the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today to include comprehensive assessments of energy congestion outside of New York City when they update the National Electric Transmission Congestion Study next year, so this information can be used in consideration of any new transmission projects that claim to reduce congestion, such as the one proposed by New York Regional Interconnection (NYRI).

“NYRI continues to push the same poorly planned project that will destroy local communities up and down the route with no proof that congestion would decrease or New York City’s energy problems would be solved,” **Arcuri said**. “The information we are asking the DOE to include in its congestion study will directly contradict NYRI’s claims that the project will relieve congestion and will show that the proposed project will not get more power to New York City. By the DOE’s own measures of congestion into New York City, NYRI’s blind attempt to run roughshod over local property owners will do nothing.”

“From the start of this whole NYRI debate it has been very clear that information was being manipulated to benefit the Bush administration’s friends in the energy industry,” **Hinchey said**. “Claims that New York City’s power supply is in dire need of new transmission lines are being dramatically overstated so that a Canadian-based company can make enormous sums of money at the expense of millions of upstate New York residents who would have power lines cutting through their backyards and towering over their neighborhoods. This report will give us further evidence that the NYRI project must be stopped once and for all.”

“NYRI has never demonstrated that its power line will benefit anyone but its foreign investors,” **said Hall**

. “NYRI must prove that it is absolutely necessary before a massive, 200 mile long high voltage direct current line steamrolls over local property rights, state authority and environmentally sensitive areas.”

In their letter, the Congressmen requested that the DOE’s 2009 National Electric Transmission Congestion Study include a detailed analysis of congestion chokepoints in the Lower Hudson Valley and Westchester County in New York, as identified in DOE’s 2006 Congestion Study, that might prevent or inhibit future improvements in transmission capacity, such as NYRI’s proposed power line, from reaching consumers in New York City.

“This information will be instrumental in evaluating future proposals for new transmission projects to reduce congestion within the Mid-Atlantic NIETC and should be completed before any projects are considered,” **wrote Arcuri, Hinchey and Hall to Mr. David Meyer of the Department of Energy** . “To do otherwise would risk granting authority for a project that does nothing to address New York State’s congestion problem.”

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAAct 2005) required the DOE to conduct a survey of transmission congestion nationwide and issue a National Electric Transmission Congestion Study. The information in the 2006 congestion study was the precursor to DOE designating 47 counties in New York State as part of the Mid-Atlantic National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor. The DOE is required to update the congestion study every three years. EPAAct 2005 is the same law that allows NYRI to apply to federal regulators for project approval after their application has been pending before the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) for more than one year, or if the PSC ultimately denies the application.

The text of the letter is attached below:

September 10, 2008

Mr. David Meyer
U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Re: 2009 National Electric Transmission Congestion Study

Dear Mr. Meyer:

As the Department of Energy (DOE) begins to formulate the process and congestion metrics for the 2009 National Electric Transmission Congestion Study (Congestion Study), we request that

the study include a detailed analysis of congestion chokepoints in the Lower Hudson Valley and Westchester County in New York, as identified in the 2006 Congestion Study that might prevent or inhibit future improvements in transmission capacity from reaching consumers in New York City.

The 2006 Congestion Study concluded that “Southeastern New York also needs improved voltage support that will require transmission reinforcements in the Lower Hudson Valley, more generation and demand-side management.” Specifically, the study identified serious constraints on transmission existing at the UPNY-ConEd Interface, between Westchester County and New York City, and between Westchester County and Long Island.

It is our hope that DOE will include a detailed description of the extent of electric transmission constraints through these points, including the amount of unused capacity during normal, peak and emergency conditions, in its 2009 National Electric Transmission Congestion Study. This information will be instrumental in evaluating future proposals for new transmission projects to reduce congestion within the Mid-Atlantic NIETC and should be completed before any projects are considered. To do otherwise would risk granting authority for a project that does nothing to address New York State’s congestion problem.

Thank you for considering our request to include this information in the Department’s 2009 Congestion Study.

Sincerely,

MAURICE D. HINCHEY MICHAEL A. ARCURI JOHN HALL
Member of Congress Member of Congress Member of Congress

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