

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) announced that he will host two public meetings to allow local residents to voice their concerns about the Department of Energy's (DOE) draft proposal to create a Mid-Atlantic Area National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC), which could allow New York Regional Interconnection (NYRI) and other private companies to circumvent state authority and use federal eminent domain to acquire private property.

"Like many local residents, I was insulted and outraged that the DOE would hold a hearing on proposed power lines that would run right through our backyards at locations over a hundred miles from our homes," Arcuri said. "I want to ensure that my constituents have the opportunity to voice their questions and concerns, and fully participate in the public comment process. I urge local residents to attend these public forums, so I can take their comments to the DOE and continue the fight to prevent NYRI from running roughshod over local communities. How in good conscience can the DOE make a decision that would affect the lives of tens of thousands of my constituents without hearing their concerns firsthand?"

In a formal letter to U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman, Arcuri outlined his strong opposition to the DOE's decision to host public meetings outside of New York's 24th District and invited DOE staff to attend the two local meetings. A copy of that letter is included below.

At each public meeting, Arcuri will collect written comments, as well as listen to and respond to local residents, regarding the DOE announcement of a draft proposal to create a Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor. After the DOE's announcement of the draft corridor, Arcuri and fellow Representatives Maurice Hinchey (D-Hurley), and John Hall (D-Dover Plains) sent a letter to Kevin Kolevar, Director of the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, in which they requested local public meetings in Upstate New York during the 60-day public comment period. The DOE scheduled a public meeting for Rochester, NY – over 125 miles away from the communities most affected by NYRI's power line proposal.

Event: Power Line Corridors Public Meeting

Time: 6:30pm to 8:00pm
Date: Thursday, May 31, 2007
Location: New Hartford High School
33 Oxford Rd.
New Hartford, NY 13413

Event: Power Line Corridors Public Meeting

Time: 2:30pm to 4:00pm
Date: Saturday, June 2, 2007
Location: Norwich City Firehouse
31 East Main St.
Norwich, NY 13815

Section 1221 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, created new federal authority to site electric transmission lines throughout the country. Under the Act, the Department of Energy may designate areas of the country as "National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors." Within these corridors, state authority over transmission lines may be preempted and new federal eminent domain authority could be used to obtain land for approved electric utility transmission projects, such as NYRI's power line proposal.

Arcuri public meeting invitation letter to DOE Secretary Bodman:

May 22, 2007

The Honorable Samuel Bodman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing in regard to the recent decision by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to hold an additional public meeting on its draft mid-Atlantic area National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) in Rochester, NY.

While I appreciate DOE's willingness to host an additional public meeting, I am deeply troubled that your agency would select a location more than 125 miles from the closest property that stands to be affected by a transmission project proposed within the draft mid-Atlantic area by New York Regional Interconnection (NYRI).

The selection of Rochester, NY to host an additional public meeting in no way increases the opportunity for my constituents to express their strong opposition to the NYRI proposal. Given these circumstances, I find disingenuous the statements by DOE purporting concern for providing "additional opportunities for review and comment by affected States, regional entities, and the general public." It seems to me this location is more for the convenience of representatives of the DOE and not the constituency the proposed project would affect.

In light of this situation, I have decided to host public meetings within cities and towns in the 24th Congressional District that stand to be impacted by the NYRI proposal. These meetings will give affected citizens real opportunities to comment on DOE's draft mid-Atlantic area NIETC. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

New Hartford Senior High School
33 Oxford Road, New Hartford, NY 13413
Thursday, May 31 from 6:30pm until 8:00pm

Norwich City Firehouse
31 East Main Street, Norwich, NY 13815
Saturday, June 2 from 2:30pm until 4:00pm

I welcome you to attend these meetings and I encourage you to send the appropriate members of your staff to hear the concerns of the people of the 24th whose communities, homes and families stand to be impacted by NYRI's ill-conceived and poorly planned proposal.

I have lived in Upstate New York nearly my entire life, and I can say without hesitation that no other issue has ever generated so much opposition from so many parts of the district. To be honest, it seems that the only group to support this proposal is the company itself. I can only hope that the Department of Energy doesn't turn a deaf ear to the overwhelming strong vocal opposition the NYRI proposal is responsible for and will take the opportunity to listen first-hand

from the very individuals who stand to be affected.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL A. ARCURI
Member of Congress

Cc: Mr. Kevin Kolevar, Director
Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability

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