



Essex County Board of Supervisors

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CPHE is a Win-Win-Win for Essex County
By Shaun Gilliland

Last month, during Climate Week, Gov. Kathy Hochul referred to the Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE) project as a "win-win" because it will create thousands of good-paying jobs and help New York City wean itself off fossil fuels by replacing them with clean, renewable hydropower.

I would like to add to Gov. Hochul's characterization. For the nearly 40,000 residents in the 18 communities in Essex County, the CHPE is a win-win-win. This is because Essex County and CHPE have negotiated over \$82 million in PILOT payments to the County of Essex and its municipalities as part of its package of economic benefits to the State of New York which totals approximately \$49 billion.

While these Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) do not technically constitute tax revenue, they nevertheless will fuel Essex County municipalities and school districts by means of 30-year installments. Essex County and its municipalities have already approved the deal subject to its full approval and implementation. The Public Services Commission (PSC) must approve it, as well. Speaking for my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors, I strongly urge the PSC to do so.

To date, the PSC has already concluded that the CHPE offers significant environmental benefits, provides fuel diversity, and will provide needed transmission supply into NYC.

The environmental benefits are enormous. Stuart F. Gruskin of the Nature Conservancy New York says the project, "will reduce air pollution, bring clean energy to New York City, and build the renewable energy economy."

When completed, I am told, the project will reduce CO2 emissions by approximately 3.9 million metric tons per year, the equivalent of removing 44% of cars from New York City streets. It will reduce localized air pollutants by 20%. Further, it accelerates the state's progress toward its goal to derive 70% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030, as outlined in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

The solid-state cables to be used in this project are narrow; only five inches in diameter. This will allow Transmission Developers Inc., the clean energy company developing the transmission project, to run 339 miles of the line from Québec to

Astoria Queens underground and under water with minimal disturbance to the environment while protecting natural views.

The CHPE will directly create 1,400 new family-sustaining jobs for hard-working New Yorkers, with a commitment to use union labor. It is further estimated that the project will indirectly create 3,000 additional jobs for New Yorkers.

“This is a crucial step forward in bringing necessary clean and renewable energy to the City of New York, while ensuring that good union jobs that lead to middle-class careers with benefits remain central to the way New York generates and delivers its power,” said Gary LaBarbera of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York upon the project’s announcement.

It helps the economy in other ways, too. 2.3 million New Yorkers living in Disadvantaged Communities will see an estimates \$2.5 billion reduction in their energy burden.

It’s important that New York is partnering with our trusted allies in Québec on this clean energy project. We are each other’s number one trading partner. We know we can count on our neighbors to negotiate and operate in good faith because we have bought clean hydropower from them for over a century.

The CHPE project is good for the globe, it’s good for New York State, it’s good for New York City, and, most importantly, it’s good for Essex County.

On behalf of the Essex County Board of Supervisors, I strongly urge the Public Service Commission to approve this project.

Shaun Gilliland is the Chairman Essex County Board of Supervisors. He also serves as the Willsboro Town Supervisor.