

From: [JJ Smith](#)
To: [Monroe, Pamela](#)
Subject: Northern Pass opposition
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These are notes that I used for testifying.

I am a retired primary care doctor with a public health degree. For the last 2.5 years, I have served as a volunteer state public policy lead, mostly working to help legislators understand the health implications of proposed legislation. One of the many issues my organization cares about is the increasing threats to health from climate change and the longstanding problems of health consequences from extracting and burning fossil fuels.

I live in Pembroke but my opposition is not based on the siting of towers. I don't live or travel much in the area that would be affected. I am also not in favor of everything coming down to the NIMBY reasons for not doing something. Broader perspectives on benefits versus negative impacts need to be the rule when it comes to what is best for most of the people, most of the time.

In fact, you might think that I would be in favor of Northern Pass since hydropower seems pretty environmentally friendly when compared to fossil fuels. However, I am persuaded that the supposed benefits are not as great as the proponents portray them for a number of important reasons. And, if this huge infrastructure project moves forward, it will supply enough electric power to dampen the prospects for better means of addressing the challenges we face. Managing our electric demand better and the ongoing development of renewables and storage capacity are things that many of us believe can meet all of the eventual need after NH stops generating and exporting surplus power when the Seabrook plant shuts down.

Aside from that, you cannot discount the negatives involved. First, more use of electricity imported from Quebec will lead to continued building of new dams that will permanently destroy habitat including carbon sequestering vegetation and lead to short term increases in methane that are approximately equal in climate forcing to 4 years of the same electricity from a combined cycle natural gas plant. Second, the massive amounts of concrete and steel for the dams and for the many hundreds of miles of towers have an

embedded carbon cost that cannot be ignored. There are embedded costs of solar PV and wind power as well but neither should require such large and lengthy transmission lines to be built. Comparisons of the environmental impacts need to be made before anyone accepts the idea that this is a wonderful, clean power source.

In terms of the jobs that this project would create, do not forget that the solar and wind energy and energy storage jobs that are the major alternative will also create many highly skilled, well-paid jobs.

Lastly, the way HydroQuebec and the utilities would use this resource is highly damaging to the riparian environment below the dams. This is a known consequence of HydroQuebec's current practice of using them as peaking plants. The daily large fluctuations in water flow destroy the natural environment below the dams, including the spawning grounds of salmon and other fish. This already creates huge problems for the indigenous people there. More dams on more rivers in the region will compound the issue for the Pessamit Innu people. Perhaps the people of New England do not think that this ignored injustice of the Quebec government to its native people should count for anything. Even if that attitude were not immoral, we should care because the assertion of indigenous rights might, in future, lead to a situation where HydroQuebec could no longer continue this practice. If we in New England have invested in this rather than better solutions, where will that leave us?

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