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To: Monroe, Pamela
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THE SEC MUST ACT!

It is not fair to the people that live along the underground route that they are the pawns between the DOT and NPT. It is clear that NPT submitted a flawed and incomplete application. In addition, it is even clearer that DOT should never have given any type of preliminary approval to the underground layout.

One has to wonder at the events that lead up to the underground option, that lacked in-depth review of the project - which continues to plague this section of the line. I always assumed that DOT and NPT had prior, far ranging discussions, reviews, etc. prior to application acceptance. It is clear now that there were no discussions. NPT in its arrogance decided it could plow down our roads, claim our property and that DOT would approve whatever they put forth. DOT, acquiesced, did not do its homework, or force NPT to justify its original construction plans. Shame on DOT for lack of due diligence and not enforcing its own statutes that are clearly stated in the Utility Accommodation Manual. Now DOT has egg all over its face trying to find a way to approve in excess of 200 exceptions to the manual and many, many more coming. Whether ignorance, ineptitude, political expediency, corporate pressure or a combination of all these are contributing factors in this debacle, it is clear that the DOT and/or those who pushed this project without close examination, should be severely reprimanded. The only way DOT can ever save face, is by stopping this travesty.

It is my belief that NPT always intended to put the underground portion under the pavement. We heard Hodgedon and NPT representatives like Keyser explicitly telling us in the Easton Town Hall that the cable was going under the pavement. Did they not think to ask DOT to review this first? Did not NPT review the manual and believe the state would enforce its own statutes? It's pathetic. Ineptitude on all sides. Intervenors studied the manual and we knew that our lands could be in the cross hairs of NPT. We did the job that paid working professionals couldn't or wouldn't do. Thank goodness there were a few intervenors that did not put their faith in the whitewashed application that was blindly accepted by the SEC.

Many residents up and down the underground line did not intervene because they did not think their yards would be affected. If the truth was known at the time, the number of intervenors would be much larger. Wittingly or unwittingly NPT lied to the residents along this line and the state was complicit in these actions. NPT should suffer the consequences of those lies with cessation of the hearings. The SEC should admit it's failure to follow proper protocol and put an end to this tortuous process.

Now, the residents are faced with having their front yards ripped up, taken over by NPT with trenches and vaults. With restrictions on the type of plantings at least 20 feet from the center of the trench - homeowners could face landscaping challenges up to 50 feet into their yards - depending where the trench is placed. Trees will be felled or left to die in the many hundreds

never to grow again and small trees just starting to grow will be sheered off every other year. NPT will have the right to tell every landowner what to plant and how close to plant it to the transmission line. It's a pathetic situation. Yet, NPT kept insisting during the hearing that no trees would be cut down. Aesthetically pleasing? No! Is the NPT version of "truth" what the SEC wants to embrace?

A 20 foot, flattened gash from the edge of the road will accompany this line down our roads, changing the character forever. The underground route is going down poorly built roads that are little more than back roads. SEC member Oldenfield knew this quite well when he stated that the state highways along the underground route are "unbuilt roads", that started as historic foot paths by the Indians and over the years wood and gravel were added and finally asphalted. That's why our beloved roads are a frost heave nightmare.

This back road is, for many of us, our Main Street and yes, we take its destruction personally. Almost all underground transmission lines go under the pavement, in roads that are structurally sound. That's what Eversource did in CT and they paid homeowners for the use of their property to bury the vaults. Not here in NH. Guess we're 2nd class citizens and a private company that has shown itself time and again to be a questionable business partner can do whatever they want without any consequences. Heaven forbid that NH impose restrictions, penalties and follow published ground rules in fairness to residents. Heaven forbid that the SEC stop hiding behind the "law" by not acknowledging property rights. Heaven forbid that they admit this gross injustice and stop it now! What are a few exceptions when there is money on the line?

NH had a chance to fill its coffers going down I93, but, no they chose to pit town against town and play politics with people lives. The real people of NH are amazing, resilient and love their land. How can we allow this trust in each other to be torn asunder by this flawed process, much of it based on lies and half truths. How can those in power turn their backs on a state that prides itself on sense of place?

Going through the notch is often raised as a big stop on this project. Give me a break. There are tunneling techniques that could be utilized and no one would ever know it's there. It would have been such a grand opportunity for NPT and the state to show the rest of this country how it should be done, in a spirit of cooperation, shared cost with MA and CT, and smart development. The line could easily have gone under the breakdown lane of I93 or right off to the side. One big exception to the Utility Accommodation Manual that could have been approved if the will was there. Unfortunately, people were lazy and didn't make this project the shining example of what it could be. They hid behind selective statements that justified their positions, though the same positions hold for the current underground route, with one striking difference - NH citizens and businesses live along these state roads and the majority oppose it! NH caved to NPT, smelling cold hard cash, and did business as usual. Now they are considering scarring this great state from one end to the other all for lack of vision and leadership. Eversource does not own this state. The powers that be should be dictating terms, not the other way around. It is so disheartening listening to leaders, who should be dedicated to voicing the people's concerns, parroting NPT talking points.

In my view, the DOT should be called upon for cross examination to clearly expose why and

how issues are being adjudicated. How many exceptions are too much? 100, 150, 500? Who is calling the shots? If there are no hard stops in this project or any project for that matter, then the necessary mechanisms to protect the people and the environment are seriously compromised leaving the decision making process totally in the hands of bureaucrats lacking in expertise and subject to political expediency, monied interests and personal interests - one need only look at the applicants booster club at the Donovan Street hearings.

How will the current process ever be a blueprint for future projects? It is flawed and politicized with undue influence exerted by money and power. The governor thinks the process is too slow and wants a decision - perhaps he knows something we don't? The hearings should be permanently halted and let the failure of this process fall where it may. There will be other projects with new and better technologies. This project is already a dinosaur. The state should be a technology leader, forward thinking, an innovator. It just needs the will to get it done.

Lastly, and this is a core concern - by rejecting this project, NH won't be sharing in the despicable practices of Hydro Quebec in despoiling the rivers and land in Quebec and visiting cultural genocide upon Native Indians. Do we need blood on our hands to turn on that unnecessary porch light?

I was flying in from Alaska last week into Logan Airport. The lights full blare all over the city and surrounding towns at midnight. Do we want to ruin NH to keep those lights on!

All of this is so unfair to people on or near the line. The way it is being handled is an insult to us all. It clearly illuminates a very flawed process with little or no accountability to the people. If approved by the SEC, implementation of this boondoggle will be tied up in the courts for years.

From the beginning we were told that eminent domain does not apply to this project. Well it seems crystal clear that the DOT is now the de-facto entity deciding and imposing eminent domain on residents all along the underground route. Though, DOT has stated for years that landowners - OWN the land in the ROW! If approved, the SEC will be complicit in this grand deception.

The state screwed up badly and we the people should not pay the price for it. It is clear to most folks and should be clear to the SEC that the application should never have been accepted. It is best to do this right or not at all. I call on the SEC to stop this travesty - now!

Carl Lakes, Easton, NH