STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

March 14, 2016 - 5:03 p.m.
Plymouth State University
Welcome Center at the Ice Arena
129 NH Route 175A
Holderness, New Hampshire

IN RE: SEC DOCKET NO. 2015–06
JOINT APPLICATION OF NORTHERN
PASS TRANSMISSION, LLC, AND
PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF
NEW HAMPSHIRE d/b/a EVERSOURCE
ENERGY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF
SITE AND FACILITY.
(Public Hearing of the
Subcommittee members held pursuant
to RSA 162-H:10, I-c)

[Consisting of a presentation by the
Applicants, followed by a Question-and-Answer
Session with Subcommittee members, a
Question-and-Answer Session from the public,
and comments received from the public]

PRESENT FOR SUBCOMMITTEE:      SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE:
Chairman Martin P. Honigberg       Public Utilities Commission
(Presiding as Presiding Officer)
Cmsr. Kathryn M. Bailey       Public Utilities Commission
Craig Wright, Designee       Dept. of Environmental Serv.
Christopher Way, Designee     Dept. of Resources &
William Oldenburg, Designee   Economic Development
Patricia Weathersby       Dept. of Transportation
Rachel Whitaker           Public Member
Alternate Public Member

COURT REPORTER: Steven E. Patnaude, LCR No. 052
ALSO PRESENT FOR THE SEC: Michael J. Iacopino, Esq.  
Iryna Dore, Esq.  
(Brennan Lenehan)  
Pamela G. Monroe, Administrator

COUNSEL FOR THE APPLICANTS: Barry Needleman, Esq.  
Thomas B. Getz, Esq.  
(McLane Middleton)

COUNSEL FOR THE PUBLIC: Peter C.L. Roth, Esq.  
Sr. Asst. Attorney General  
N.H. Dept. of Justice  
Thomas Pappas, Esq.  
Elijah Emerson, Esq.  
(Primmer Piper...)

Also noted to be present at one or more of the Joint Public Hearings in March from the Applicants available to provide the presentation* and answers to questions:

*William Quinlan, President NH Operations, Eversource  
James Muntz, President of Transmission, Eversource  
Kenneth Bowes, Vice President-Engineering, Eversource  
Samuel Johnson, Lead Project Manager-NPT, Burns & McDonnell  
Robert Clarke, Eversource  
Lee Carbonneau, Sr. Principal Scientist, Normandeau Assoc.  
Robert Varney, President, Normandeau Associates  
Terrence DeWan, Principal, Terrence J. DeWan & Associates  
Cherilyn Widell, Principal, Widell Preservation Services  
Mark Hodgdon, Esq.  
Jessica Kimball, Planner/Landscape Designer, Dewan & Assoc.  
Lisa Shapiro, Chief Economist, Gallagher Callahan & Gartrell  
James Chalmers, Principal, Chalmers & Associates  
Mitch Nichols, President, Nichols Tourism Group  
William Bailey, Principal Scientist, Center for Occup. and Envir. Health Risk Assess., Exponent, Inc.
## INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION BY CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESENTATION BY THE APPLICANTS (by Mr. Quinlan)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION WITH THE SUBCOMMITTEE</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioner Bailey</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Weathersby</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION TO QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMENCEMENT OF PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLIC COMMENTS BY:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairman Shelagh Connelly</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Herb Richardson</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairman Neil Irvine</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Cmsr. Martha Richards</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Edmond Gionet</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selectman Eric Meth</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Bill Baber</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Susan Ford</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Rebecca Brown</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor Ken Merrifield</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Cmsr. Rick Samson</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. John Burt</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca More</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheryl Jensen</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
## PUBLIC COMMENTS BY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Terp</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Van Houten</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Suzanne Smith</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Kellogg</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter Palmer</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Guerra</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiler Eaton</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Krey</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Meyer</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Robinson</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Grote</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sen. Jeanie Forrester</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Von Karls</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Moore</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Hunnewell (by Ms. Hunnewell)</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eli Badger</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda McDermott</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Sakura</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Arnold</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Stirling</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Novello</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Mumford</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLIC COMMENT BY:</td>
<td>PAGE NO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather Townsend</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Wilkinson</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan McLain</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Mason</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harley Mason</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen Bouthillier</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Hopp (by Mr. Page)</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manfred Hoertdoerfer</td>
<td>206, 240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Jeffryes</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Page</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Ahern</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Stephen Darrow</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Difley</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Martland (By Mr. Phillips)</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Powell</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Wieser</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Monahan</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Barber</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne Menard</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Denhart</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Mullen</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
CHAIRMEN HONIGBERG: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to a public hearing of the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee. This is the Subcommittee hearing, the Joint Application of Northern Pass Transmission, LLC, and Public Service Company of New Hampshire, which does business as Eversource Energy, for a Certificate of Site and Facility. The docket number is 2015-06.

Before turning to our agenda this evening, I'm going to ask the Subcommittee members to identify themselves, starting to my far left.

MR. OLDENBURG: William Oldenburg, from the Department of Transportation.

MR. WAY: Christopher Way, from the Department of Resources and Economic Development.

DIRECTOR WRIGHT: Craig Wright, with the Department of Environmental Services.

CHAIRMEN HONIGBERG: Martin Honigberg. I'm Chair of the Public Utilities Commission.

COMMISSIONER BAILEY: Kate Bailey, Public Utilities Commission.

MS. WHITAKER: Rachel Whitaker, alternate public member.
MS. WEATHERSBY: Patricia Weathersby, public member.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Also with us is our Administrator, Pam Monroe, our Attorney Michael Iacopino, and there's one other person I'd like to introduce, from the Attorney General's Office, Peter Roth, who serves as Public Counsel in this proceeding.

On October 19th of 2015 Northern Pass Transmission, LLC, and Public Service Company of New Hampshire, which does business as Eversource Energy, submitted an Application to the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee for a Certificate of Site and Facility to construct a 192-mile transmission line. The transmission line is proposed to have a capacity rating of 1,090 megawatts, is proposed to run from the Canadian border in Pittsburg to Deerfield.

On November 2nd, pursuant to RSA 164-H -- I'm sorry, 162-H, I, as the Chair of the Committee, appointed a Subcommittee to serve on this matter. Many of the state officials who serve on the SEC, in turn, exercised their authority under RSA 162-H to designate senior members of their agencies to serve on the Subcommittee.

On December 7th, the Subcommittee met...
and reviewed the status of the Application. At that time, the Subcommittee determined that the Application contained sufficient information to satisfy the application requirements of each state agency having jurisdiction under state or federal law to regulate any aspect of the construction or operation of the proposed facility.

Off the record for a minute.

[Brief off-the-record discussion ensued.]

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: You will all be respectful this evening of everyone who speaks. And, if you feel you can't be respectful, you will be asked to leave. Is that clear?

FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you very much. At the meeting on December 7th, the Subcommittee also made an independent determination that the Application contains sufficient information to carry out the purposes of RSA 162-H.

On December 22nd, the Subcommittee issued a Procedural Order setting forth deadlines for motions to intervene, and scheduling public information
sessions in Franklin, Londonderry, Laconia, Whitefield, and Lincoln. Those public information sessions took place during January. The Subcommittee has received over 150 motions to intervene. An order will be issued shortly regarding the intervention petitions.

On February 3rd, the Subcommittee issued and Order and Notice scheduling public hearings in Meredith, Holderness, and Deerfield for March 1, 14, and 16, respectively. Also, on February 3rd, the Subcommittee scheduled public hearings in Colebrook and Concord for March 7th and 10th, respectively. The Colebrook and Concord hearings, which have already taken place, were held contemporaneously with public hearings for the Department of Energy and other federal agencies with oversight over this Project. The hearing in Meredith took place as well. The hearing in Deerfield will -- I'm sorry, the hearing in Concord took place, and the hearing in Deerfield will take place this Wednesday. We are required to hold at least one public hearing in each county in which the project is to be located, and those public hearings must be held within 90 days after acceptance of the Application.

In addition to the required hearings,
two additional hearings will be scheduled to deal with
the supplemental information that was filed in late
February.

Notice of this joint -- I'm sorry, this
public hearing was served on the public by publication

We will proceed this evening as follows:
First, we will hear a presentation by the Applicant.
Following that presentation, the Subcommittee members
and Subcommittee staff will have an opportunity to pose
questions to the Applicant. Sometimes the Subcommittee
has questions for the Applicant; sometimes the
Subcommittee does not. The Subcommittee has had the
opportunity to review the filings of the Applicant and
other parties, and we will have other opportunities to
question the Applicant and other parties under oath
later in this process.

After the Subcommittee has had an
opportunity to ask questions of the Applicant, the
public will be permitted to pose questions to the
Applicant. If you have a question for the Applicant,
we ask you to please write down your question on one of
the green sheets, and hand it to one of the people who
are working here this evening to process paperwork. If
you have questions for the Subcommittee at this time, we may or may not answer them. It depends on what the nature of the question is. For the most part, we will treat questions directed to the Committee as public comments, as the federal agencies do in their review process. We will try to organize the questions by subject matter and present them to the Applicant in an organized fashion, with no promise that we will be able to do that effectively.

Once we have asked all of the questions that the public has, we will then take public statements or comments on the Application. Please make your comments as succinct as possible, and try not to be repetitive. I'll go through some more guidelines with respect to your public comment a little bit later. But you can expect to be asked to limit your comments to approximately three minutes, with the understanding that you may need a little bit more time than that. If you need substantially more than three minutes, we'll probably ask you to make your initial comments, and then come back at the end to finish whatever it is that you could like to say.

If you would like to speak, we're going to ask you to fill out one of the yellow sheets, and
get it to one of the people working this evening. Many of you have already done so.

If you would like to submit a written comment, there are blue forms for the written comments. All of the blue forms get scanned and are posted on the SEC's website.

I believe that is all the housekeeping we need to deal with at this time. And, I think we are ready to hand it over to the Applicant for their presentation. And, I believe Mr. Quinlan will be starting that for the Applicant.

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. Thank you. So, my name is Bill Quinlan. I'm the President of Eversource New Hampshire. I'm joined by Lee Carbonneau, who's with Normandeau Associates, she is an environmental expert; Sam Johnson, he's with Burns & McDonnell, he's a technical expert; Ken Bowes, who is our Vice President of Engineering; and Jim Muntz, who's the President of our Transmission business.

It's great to be here tonight. And, I'm going to give you a quick overview of the Project, and, probably most importantly, answer any questions that you've got.

So, Northern Pass, you know, obviously,
you've heard a lot about the Project. What is the
issue that we're trying to solve? We're trying to
solve a terribly important issue, both for New England
and New Hampshire, which is that our electric prices
are among the highest in the country. And, it's a
result of retirements at power plants that have
occurred over the last several years, and are going to
continue out in the future. But, sitting here today,
we're about 50 percent higher, from an energy
perspective, than we should be, which puts us at a
competitive disadvantage. We also have very aggressive
environmental goals as a region, and Northern Pass is a
great opportunity to not only lower our energy costs,
but also begin to address our environmental goals.

So, I've been involved in the Project a
little over a year. And, you know, what became
apparent to me, when I first got involved with this
Project, is that we needed to pursue an application
that struck an appropriate balance. And, these are the
three factors that I and the team have been seeking to
balance over the last year or so. We've been working
to strike a balance based upon feedback from New
Hampshire.

So, if you look at these three
variables, you know, first and foremost, the Project needs to do what it's intended to do, which is to take a large volume of affordable, clean hydropower from where it's generated in Canada and deliver it to the New England grid. So, it's got to work technologically. It's got to be sitable, which means it's got to be a project that addresses, to the extent it can, the view and scenic impacts of the State of New Hampshire. And, then, third, it's got to be affordable. I mean, it's got to be a project that is not so costly that it becomes prohibitive and no one is going to pay for it. These are the three factors that we've been seeking to balance, and we believe we've done so.

Late last year, in the August/September timeframe, we announced our ForwardNH Plan, which included some very significant changes to our Project. And, it was really a plan designed to balance these three critically important factors.

So, these are the -- this is the Project that we have now moved into siting, which is the result of the outreach we have done across New Hampshire to strike that balance. Now, over to the right, I'll give you a high-level overview of the currently proposed

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
route. So, the hydropower is generated in northern Quebec. Okay? Our partner, Hydro-Quebec, is siting a 60-mile transmission line, outlined here in red, which is an overhead line, to essentially get the hypothetical to the U.S. border.

At that point, Northern Pass will pick it up at the border, and ultimately deliver it to Deerfield, New Hampshire. So, just for frame of reference, these areas in red are overhead construction, yellow are areas we've determined to place underground, and blue are areas where we're following an existing right-of-way with an existing transmission line. Okay?

So, it comes overhead, it crosses the border, it then goes southeast. And, the reason we went in that direction is we wanted to pick up this area referred to as "Wagner Forest". Where we have a 24-mile leased right-of-way, which is a working forest. It's an area that's routinely forested. And, our goal was to get to that forested area so that we are away from the population centers on the western side of northern Coos County.

So, we cross into the United States, eight (8) miles here, in yellow, it's underground. It
essentially gets us to Wagner Forest. And, then, we have a 24-mile overhead construction through that working forest. Okay?

At that point, when we exit Wagner Forest, we pick up our existing transmission right-of-way, which is outlined in blue, and we follow that all the way to Bethlehem. So, there is an existing transmission line and an existing right-of-way, and, essentially, these two lines will run parallel. And, that's something we attempted to do from the outset, is to use existing transmission corridors.

When we announced the ForwardNH Plan, even though there is an existing right-of-way right through the White Mountain National Forest, with an existing line that's overhead, based upon the feedback from New Hampshire, we determined that we would go with 52 miles of underground construction, so as not to have any further impact on the White Mountain National Forest. So, the Grafton County, for the most part, is now all underground construction.

So, what did we avoid? We, obviously, avoided the White Mountain National Forest, we avoided Franconia Notch, and we avoided the Appalachian Trail.
We selected that area specifically based upon the feedback we have received from stakeholders across New Hampshire.

So, that brings you all the way down to Bridgewater. We pick back up our existing overhead transmission corridor. We bring it down to Franklin, and we convert it to alternating current, and then we follow our existing transmission corridor down to Deerfield.

So, to the extent possible, we've used existing corridors, we've used this working forest to put a large block of the Project out in an area that is not populated at all. And, then, we placed 60 miles of it underground.

So, if you look at the evolution of this project, from 2000 [2010?] to what we proposed last year, it's changed quite dramatically. Not only has it grown in length, because we had to go east to pick up the forest, so, it's gone from 180 to 192 miles, almost a third of it now is underground. We changed the cable technology. So, to have 60 miles of underground construction, we actually had to change the cable technology. We are now using state-of-the-art underground cable. That required us also to reduce the
size of the Project. We did not feel comfortable technologically with a 1,200 megawatt HVDC Light cable. So, we've scaled down the size of the Project from 1,200 megawatts to 1,090, and the price tag overall has gone up by a half a billion dollars. So, it's a fundamentally different project than the one that was initially introduced in 2010. And, that was all done based upon feedback from New Hampshire, in an effort to strike the balance that I was referring to earlier. Very significant changes to the Project.

Now, one of the things I've heard about for the last year and a half is, you know, "You're using outdated technology. Everyone else, over the last ten years, has been building transmission lines underground." Which is completely wrong. So, what I've shown here are the large 345 kilovolt transmission lines that have been built across New England over the last 10 or 15 years. There has been ten of them. And, I've broken them down between overhead construction and underground construction. You'll see there's almost 600 miles of new transmission across New England, none of it in New Hampshire, by the way. It's mostly in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont. But almost 600 miles of new construction, over 90 percent
of it is overhead construction. The only exceptions to that are down in Fairfield County, with Lines Number 1 and 2, where you're approaching, in essence, the New York border. It's heavily congested. There's just no place to put an overhead transmission line, and in Boston. Okay?

So, the notion that "other projects are going underground and we are using an outdated approach to this project" is wrong.

The other line that I've added here is the existing Hydro-Quebec line. There is an existing line in service today, it's been in service for decades. It's larger and taller than the line that we're talking about today. Essentially does the same thing that Northern Pass is proposing to do. And, it's outlined here in red. It's a 180-mile line that brings hypothetical from Quebec to Massachusetts. Okay? It cuts through Vermont and it cuts through New Hampshire. Some of the towers on that line, for frame of reference, are over 200 feet tall. Okay?

So, I just wanted to share some facts about existing transmission lines, because I think there's a lot of misinformation as to what others are building and what is currently in service today. The
vast majority of transmission infrastructure in this
country has been built overhead, with the single
exception being in large cities, where there's
physically not an open area to put in a transmission
corridor. Okay?

When we put 60 miles underground for
Northern Pass, that will be the longest HVDC
underground construction in North America.

And, another area that I felt it would
be worth sharing is the result of a recent competitive
solicitation by the southern New England states. So,
in recognition of the high energy costs, and in an
effort to meet environmental goals, the three southern
New England states have gotten together and recently
solicited proposals to bring clean energy into the
region. Okay?

And, there were a lot of projects that
were on the drawing board that we anticipated being
submitted into the competitive solicitation, but the
reality is very few are mature enough to bid. So,
you've got Northern Pass, which is the Project we're
here talking about today. It's the only large-scale
hydro project that was bid into the solicitation.

The projects that we've been hearing
about for the last couple of years, such as the New England Clean Power Link, you may have heard about the TDI project in Vermont, that was almost a mirror of Northern Pass, except it was underground and underwater; they selected not to bid.

Similar projects in Maine, which would have essentially done the same thing, bringing large amounts of clean energy into the load centers, also chose not to bid.

Now, why is that? You know, I don't know. But, you know, some of the rationale that I've heard in the market is either those projects are too costly, they don't have a power supply, they don't have an interconnection with Canada to bring power to the border, or a combination of the three. So, they are truly conceptual projects that aren't mature enough to have even bid into the solicitation, which is, you know, a unique opportunity for projects such as these to go to market. Okay?

The only other projects that did bid are relatively small, and for very different purposes.

This is a project that we're involved in, "we" being Eversource, which is to bring wind into western Massachusetts. So, it's wind, backed by hydro. You
know, there's the Vermont Green Line, which has wind, again, backed by hydro. And, then, you have these
three wind projects in Maine, which essentially move hydropower from northern Maine down to southern Maine. But no large-scale projects that will actually get to the issue we're trying to solve, which is to bring a large amount of baseload hydropower into the region to lower our energy costs.

Every one of these other projects is requiring a power purchase agreement, which is a long-term commitment on behalf of those three southern New England states to pay for the energy coming over the line. The only project that doesn't require a power purchase agreement is Northern Pass.

So, these bids are in the process of being evaluated by those three states, and the results will become known later this year. But I just felt it was important to share with the Committee and others, you know, the true facts as to what's going on in the market.

Beyond the Project itself, when we rolled out ForwardNH, this is an illustration of the other benefits that this Project delivers to New Hampshire. A question that we've gotten repeatedly for
the last year is "What are the benefits for New Hampshire? Isn't this all about getting power to southern New England?" And, the actual opposite is true. The vast majority of the benefits rest with New Hampshire.

So, when we talk about lower energy costs, we certainly get our share. Our share is about $80 million a year. That's of an $800 million a year in New England savings. So, we're about 10 percent of the load, our customers will get 10 percent of the savings. We announced the ForwardNH Fund to drive some community betterment projects here in the state. Obviously, the taxes will rest here in New Hampshire. And, importantly, from a jobs perspective, when we made our announcement, we also announced a "New Hampshire first" approach for sourcing a lot of work on this Project. Which means that, to the extent possible, we're going to use local labor and local contractors to build this Project.

When you add up the economic benefits to the State of New Hampshire, they're quite significant, almost $4 billion of economic benefits. In addition to the environmental benefits, I'm not going to hit them all, but, you know, if you think about what I said at
the outset, which is the region's clean energy goals, there's no project that is going to have the impact environmentally that Northern Pass will have in a positive way. So, it will offset 3 million tons of carbon dioxide a year, which is a very dramatic reduction in greenhouse gases. Okay? If you think about it, over the last five years, we've been making steady progress as a region in meeting our clean energy goals. In 2015, for the first year, that progress reversed itself. So, carbon dioxide emissions last year actually went up 7 percent. And, it's a result of some of our nuclear fleet retiring and being replaced with natural gas. So, after several years of steady progress, an uptick in carbon last year. And, our goals are very, very aggressive as a region, and this Project gets us a long way towards it.

The only other one I'll mention here is the last one, which is our grid upgrades. One of the things we have been able to commit to as part of this project, when we looked at the design of this, what can we do to bolster and foster small-scale renewable generation? One of the questions I repeatedly get is, "you're bringing in a large amount of hydro, are you going to squeeze out all of the small-scale renewables?"
The biomass plants, the small wind plants, the small hydro plants, are they going to be able to compete with the Northern Pass?" And, the short answer is "yes, they can." They can certainly compete economically. And, we're actually going to do something with this Project to enhance their viability. So, there's a portion of the transmission loop in Coos County that for years has been very constrained, meaning it's not big enough to get all of that small-scale renewables to market. There's almost 400 megawatts of small-scale renewable power in northern New Hampshire. And, on any given day, as much as 100 megawatts has to sit on the sidelines, because it can't get to market.

So, one of the things we can do, as part of this Project, and we've committed to do it, is to upgrade that transmission infrastructure, to increase the carry capacity of it, so that small-scale renewables can get unlocked and actually get to market. Which should make it a much more attractive proposition for those small plants, and will complement what we're trying to do here with Northern Pass, which is to meet our environmental goals.

So, that's Northern Pass in a nutshell, the ForwardNH Plan, both the changes we've made to the
Project, to address New Hampshire feedback, as well as
the economic and environmental benefits. I've tried to
summarize them, so folks can get a sense of what this
Project is all about.

And, with that, I look forward to your
questions.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Do members of the
Subcommittee have questions for Mr. Quinlan or his team
at this time? Commissioner Bailey.

COMMISSIONER BAILEY: Mr. Quinlan, can
you tell me where the $800 million of savings for New
England comes from?

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. So, the 800 million
is a number calculated by one of our experts. It's
captured in a report by London Economics. And, what
they looked at is "what is the effect on the wholesale
energy markets on an annual basis, when you take the
power that Northern Pass can deliver and put it into
the market?" So, it basically suppresses the wholesale
market costs for electricity in New England by about
800 million a year. New Hampshire's share of that 800
million, because we're about 10 percent of the load, is
80 million a year. When I sometimes say, you know,"New Hampshire's benefit is 800 million", it's for a
ten-year period. So, it's 80 million a year for ten years. It happens to be the same as the annual number for all of New England.

So, it's really that market suppression effect. In essence, for those of you who don't follow the markets, you're taking a low-cost supply, and you're displacing higher-cost generation assets that would be required to meet customer demand. So, when you do that, the overall market price comes down. And, that's what leads to the 80 million a year for New Hampshire and 800 million a year for New England.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Are there other questions from the Subcommittee? Yes, Ms. Weathersby.

MS. WEATHERSBY: I had not been aware until tonight of the existing Hydro-Quebec lines that come through the state. Is it possible to use some or all of that corridor? And, if not, what are the obstacles?

MR. QUINLAN: And, so, the short answer, it was an option that was given a lot of study, and we determined it's not technically feasible. And, I'm going to turn that over to our Engineering team to explain why that is. Sam Johnson, from Burns & McDonnell, will explain.
MR. JOHNSON: So, one of the options we did look at was utilizing that corridor, since it's already there. There are two primary issues. One is that that corridor is maxed, as far as the amount of infrastructure that can go into the existing corridor. There's no more room in that corridor, per se. And, secondly, in large tracts where this -- where that line goes, there's no room for expansion, meaning that we could not get easements on either side, either due to restrictions from the current landowners or that it's already in conserved areas.

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. I'm going to ask Mr. Muntz to also provide some further input on that as well.

MR. MUNTZ: There's also a concern with the overall ISO-New England grid system. Basically, the ISO-New England grid is based around the single biggest element, which is about a 1,200 megawatt nuclear power plant. And, the whole grid is sized and designed for the loss of that element. So, when you start having one right-of-way with the current line that generally runs around 1,400 megawatts, and you add another one, you have the potential to lose about, you know, 2,000 -- I mean, 2,400 possibly megawatts on the
grid at once in ISO-New England. The build-out of the
grid would be required to accommodate that type of, you
know, one single right-of-way would be prohibitively
expensive.

The other thing I'll mention, the
existing line currently runs at about 90 percent
capacity. It's all-in. You know, holidays, weekends,
outages, storms, it runs at about 90 percent capacity
over the last five years. So, it's pretty well fully
utilized.

MR. QUINLAN: And, just to make sure
that one point was clear. When you have two
transmission lines together, whether they're
underground or overhead, in close proximity, and
they're two of this size, you would actually change the
design basis for the entire New England grid. It would
change the design basis, from the loss of a nuclear
plant to the loss of those two lines, which is a --
it's a huge deal, from an engineering perspective. But
the alternative was pretty closely studied.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Other questions?

[No verbal response]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. Seeing
none, I'm going to turn to the green sheets. There are
a couple of questions specifically directed to SEC members. And, I'm going to ask the SEC members to identify their hometowns, because people would like to know what towns we live in. Mr. Oldenburg.

MR. OLDENBURG: I live in Bow.


DIRECTOR WRIGHT: Loudon, New Hampshire.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I live in Concord.

COMMISSIONER BAILEY: I also live in Bow.

MS. WHITAKER: I'm from up in Stark.

MS. WEATHERSBY: I live in Rye. I also have a family property in Hart's Location.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Are any of our properties or homes affected by the proposed line? Does anyone? I believe that I will not be able to see the line from my home. But, I think, if I walk about 50 yards, I'll be able to see it from my -- I live in East Concord, and the line does go through East Concord, a ways from where I live, but I believe I'll be able to see it a short distance from my own home.

There are a number of process questions. I'm going to start with this one.
"Do you know, Mr. Quinlan, or does anyone on your team know, the process for Hydro-Quebec's participation in a U.S. project and how it is that it's essentially a foreign government is able to do business here in the United States?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, Hydro-Quebec is a decades-long participant in the New England power market. They have a market status. They have applied for it and received it, just like many other foreign utilities. So, every day they are selling power into the New England market. So, they're an active participant, actually quite a large player in that market.

This Project requires the issuance of a Presidential Permit, because we're crossing an International border, and that is the subject of the review by the Department of Energy.

So, from a market perspective, they have got all the approvals they currently need. And, you know, the physical interconnection would be approved by the Department of Energy.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. There are other process questions that we'll get to a little bit later. There's a series of environmental
questions.

The first one references Section H, Number 4 of the Application. And, there's what purports to be a quote written here. It says "Many self-imposed seasonal restrictions and survey requirements have been developed by the Project to minimize impacts to wildlife at critical life stages." And, the specific question is, "Does this include tree-cutting restrictions during migratory bird nesting season?"


MS. CARBONNEAU: The seasonal tree-clearing restrictions will vary from place to place a little bit. To the extent that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service concludes that we have to do seasonal restrictions to comply with any particular rule or regulation, including Migratory Bird Treaty Act, then that will be implemented.

For the most part, a lot of the seasonal tree-clearing, to the extent that we can, a lot of it is going to happen in the winter, the best we can, for a number of reasons. But that would be one of them.
That's not always the only concern with seasonal tree-clearing. The Project does go through some deer wintering areas, where winter tree-clearing might not be the preferred season.

These things will be evaluated in the overall project schedule, and the work will proceed in a way that is as minimally impacting as possible.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: The next question refers specifically to horizontal directional drilling, and asks "What the reporting protocol is for inadvertent returns of drilling mud to surface waters during horizontal directional drilling? And, in the event that it happens, will water quality then be monitored?"

MR.JOHNSON: The answer is "yes" and "yes". And, I'll expand on the first one. Basically, what happens is, we need to come to an agreement with the appropriate agency for any potential inadvertent returns, and that's basically what's called a "frack-out". That's when the drilling mud hits a fissure in the rock, for example, and somehow the mud works its way up into a wetland watercourse -- a wetland or stream watercourse.

In this instance, there will be -- the
drilling crews themselves have equipment on standby that is able to minimize the impact. And, then, depending on the agreement with the agency and the volume of the discharge, there will be long-term monitoring that will be part of the process.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Does the reduction in carbon emissions include the loss of carbon sink capacity that occurs with the development of large hydro, i.e., the flooding of forest lands?"

MS. CARBONNEAU: The reduction in carbon, my understanding, is something that has been evaluated pretty carefully. My understanding is that the Application does include some modification of the amount of carbon reduction based on what has occurred up in the Canada provinces. The source of the hydropower is largely from reservoirs that have been in place for some time. So, the amount of emissions from those has been greatly reduced from when they were originally established, and, in general, are quite minimal, compared to the carbon reductions that this Project will foresee, based on the closing of power plants that we know are coming.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: To what extent will the construction and operation of the line disrupt
migration routes, nesting sites, mating and breeding habitats of species?

MS. CARBONNEAU: We have done a fair amount of evaluations of different wildlife habitats. So, we've looked at where threatened/endangered species, Forest Service sensitive species, special concern species, and general wildlife habitats as well. As much of the line is going to be in existing rights-of-way that are already managed or are going to be underground, in those locations, we don't expect that there will be substantial changes to wildlife habitat. Either from -- there will be some temporary changes in those locations from the construction of the -- the construction activity. So, there will be some displacement during construction. That's a short-term impact. We expect that things will return to their current status, once we get into the normal phase of the management activities that occur there.

In the northern portion of the Project where there will be a new right-of-way, there will be some habitat changes. And, those effects will be either -- they can be direct or indirect, they can be short-term or long-term, and they can be beneficial or detrimental. So, we have a range of different things
that will happen. Some of the species that are deep forest species will lose some habitat, because the trees there will be permanently removed, then it will be maintained as early successional cover. Compared to the amount of forest that's available in the North Country, this is a fairly minimal amount of loss of forest habitat. So, we're not expecting population changes. There will be -- most of the species that we see in the forested areas do not seem to have any issue crossing the right-of-way. We've done tracking surveys, we've done bird surveys. Most of the animals will be able to cross the right-of-way, which will be about 120 feet wide in the North Country.

Some of the species that like early successional habitats will actually benefit from the new right-of-way. Where it -- certainly, where it extends out of existing open lands, there will be additional habitat for some of our rarer bird species up north, and as well as some good forging habitat for some of our large game species. So, it will be a mix. We don't anticipate serious loss of wildlife habitat that's long term.

We do have a few endangered species issues, particularly in Concord Pine Barrens area,
we're working with Fish & Game and Fish & Wildlife to come up with solutions that, in the long run, will be beneficial to those species that are temporarily impacted.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Please discuss the state of the research and science regarding exposure to electromagnetic radiation, specifically with respect to early childhood Leukemia?

MR. QUINLAN: Let me introduce Dr. Bailey.

DR. BAILEY: Good afternoon. I'm Dr. William Bailey. I'm a technical consultant for the project. For the last 35 years, I've been involved in research and teaching in the field of bioelectromagnetics. So, this is a study of how electric and magnetic fields interact with the environment and with people.

I trained at Dartmouth College, here in New Hampshire, the University of Chicago, the City University of New York, and Rockefeller University. Based on my background and experience, I've been called as an advisor to many state, federal, and international agencies, including the World Health Organization.

On the topic of electric and magnetic
fields in this Project, we investigated the fields both with the direct current portion of the line, and also the AC current portion of the line.

The question regarding childhood Leukemia and EMF pertains specifically to alternating current electric and magnetic fields, associated with appliances and power lines that we commonly encounter, not with the DC type of fields.

The question arose in 1979, when some scientists observed a statistical association between the presence of distribution lines outside people's houses in Denver, Colorado, and the likelihood that children in the area had Leukemia and other forms of cancer.

Subsequently, there have been dozens of studies that have investigated this question over the years, with increasing power to resolve the questions that have come up at the beginning. This statistical association has not been confirmed by experimental studies, in which animals have been exposed for their entire lives to levels of magnetic fields that might be even 10,000 times or 50,000 times what you might find in our homes.

The most recent studies that have come
out on this topic are three studies that are described in our report. One is from the UK, one is from France, and one is from Scandinavia. And, in each of these studies, they did not find a relationship between overhead power lines and childhood cancer. That is, if you compare the birth addresses of children with and without cancer, they are no closer to the power lines, their addresses, than children without cancer.

So, much research has been done on this topic, probably more than for any other environmental exposure that we commonly encounter, and certainly for most chemicals in our environment.

And, the current conclusion of the World Health Organization is "that the evidence does not confirm the existence of any health consequences of exposure to low-level electromagnetic fields."

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "How will you protect groundwater, byways, brooks, rivers, etcetera, from contamination from chemicals, herbicides, pesticides, or petroleum agent leaks, or just deforestation during the process of building and operating the line?"

MR. QUINLAN: Mr. Bowes.

MR. BOWES: Thank you, Bill. I would
break it down into two variables. One is the construction activity and one is the ongoing operations and maintenance.

For the construction phase, obviously, we'll have environmental inspectors as part of the overall management plan of this Project. Included in that will be spill kits on vehicles, as well as rigor around the environmental management systems that we use.

For the ongoing portions of the operations and maintenance of the line, then there will be some inspections that take place, you know, either vehicle-based or aerial-based. So, there is, you know, a very remote chance of spills as well. And, our environmental management systems would deal with those spills, if they were to occur.

As far as the vegetation management practices, in New Hampshire, we do use a cutting or clearing-only policy at this point. Other utilities in the state do use pesticides. At this point, Eversource does not.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: National security. The question is: "What's the relevance of national security for our consideration and your consideration
of building this? Do you perceive this to be an attractive target for those who might want to disrupt the entire New England grid by concentrating such a highly visual row of overhead lines on huge towers?"

MR. BOWES: So, as with all of the high-voltage electric transmission system in New England, it is a critical infrastructure. We anticipate that this line will also be part of that. It has not been classified as that to date, and that really falls under classifications for the North American Electrical Reliability Corporation. That said, just prudence would dictate that we will have security systems in place for this asset, as with all assets we have our on system.

And, is there a second part of that question I may not have covered?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: It was all one big question, really.

MR. BOWES: Okay.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: About "isn't this just a really big target?"

MR. BOWES: So, as Mr. Muntz explained before as well is, is this will add another path for about a thousand megawatts of power into New England.
It will further diversify the supply we have today. So, in essence, it will become a more redundant system than New England has at the present time.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: The next question is an environmental question about the source of the energy from a large hydro project in Canada that involved flooding of lands that people used to live on. And, the statement in the question regarding the environmental effects of that flooding being "greater than the supposed benefits of hypothetical generally". And, for those of you who can see me, you can tell I'm not reading many of the words that are part of this question. But that is the gist of this question. The environmental effects of the large hydro project that is the source of this electricity, how do you account for that, how should we account for that, in considering this Project?

MR. QUINLAN: So, I'm going to refer that question to Mr. Varney. Mr. Varney, could you introduce yourself please.

MR. VARNEY: Thank you. Is that on?

MR. QUINLAN: Yes.

MR. VARNEY: Thank you. Bob Varney, Normandeau Associates. As some of you may know,
Hydro-Quebec has a number of large hydro facilities that generate electricity. The vast majority of those impoundments are already in place. Of course, we have many impoundments here in New Hampshire, with hydro facilities and with dams for flood storage, that do not create energy as a generation source. Those facilities generally are -- each one is unique based on the characteristics of that hydro facility, that site, that impoundment. And, in general, there is a reduction in emissions from each of those facilities over time. So, the newer the facility, the higher the emissions; the longer it's in place, the lower, in general, very broad, general terms.

My understanding is that almost all of the facilities, all but perhaps one, are already in place in their system, which provides and generates electricity throughout their system to multiple locations.

As far as the carbon emission calculations, those have been factored into the report, which indicated 3 million metric tons reduction, and a significant decrease in carbon emissions throughout New England that's associated with displacement of other sources. Thank you.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: A specific question about downtown Plymouth. "What is the plan for how the Project will affect Route 3 in downtown Plymouth? And, have you reached an agreement with the Town about how you're going to proceed?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, currently, the plan is for underground construction through Plymouth. It's part of the 52 miles that we announced in August of last year, in essence, to bypass the White Mountain National Forest. So, at a macro level, we're planning for underground construction. We have a currently proposed route. But I am aware that there are discussions underway with individuals in Plymouth to look at alternative routes. You know, is there a more attractive, less impactful route for the Town of Plymouth. And, these are the types of discussions that are taking place with many towns along the route as we further refine the Project.

So, the short answer is, we haven't yet reached any agreement with the Town of Plymouth. But we are certainly aware that there are preferences as to which streets to use, and we're open to those options at this point.
questions about economics. "At what" -- and use of the
line generally. "At what capacity will the new line be
used typically?"

MR. QUINLAN: Mr. Muntz.

MR. MUNTZ: Yes. Typically, we would
expect the line to flow at minimum of 67 percent
capacity. Generally, that's based on seven days a
week, 16 hours a day, which is the peak demand periods
for electricity. That's a minimum. As I said, the
Phase II line is used at 90 percent capacity, which
means it flows pretty much around the clock.

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. So, as part of the
three-state RFP that I referred to earlier,
Hydro-Quebec has committed to deliver power during
those peak periods that Mr. Muntz was referring to.
Those are the hours that New England needs the power
most, and Hydro-Quebec has made a firm commitment to
deliver it during those hours. Whether they deliver it
in other hours, I think it's going to be a function of
market conditions.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "If the government
of Quebec decides that it needs this power, would that
supersede the agreement that you have with them
regarding transmission?"
MR. MUNTZ: No. The agreement would remain in effect, and the appropriate penalty clauses would apply.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Are those penalties monetary or can you force them to deliver?

MR. MUNTZ: The penalty, it's a combination. They have an opportunity to make up the total volume of power during the course of the calendar year. They also have -- we have the opportunity to monetize that, should they not be able to deliver. And, I think it's important to note that this is not about a, you know, one-day or a two-day, you know, storm or an event like that that would cause them not to deliver. That, generally, they can make that up within the month.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Will the line ever be used to send power north, from New England to Quebec?"

MR. BOWES: It has the capability to do that. In the last few years, the Phase II Hydro-Quebec line was used once in that direction. It was December of 2014, where they had some 700 kV problems around Montreal. And, New England actually delivered power for a few hours to support the Canadian system.
In general, it's not used in that direction. Probably only under an emergency situation would that occur, just because of the pure economics of it.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Is there any way for the Hydro-Quebec power to offset New Hampshire electrical rates so much that New Hampshire would move from one of the top five most expensive electric rate states to one of the top five most affordable electric rate states?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, New England is dramatically more expensive right now than the rest of the country. Much of the rest of the United States is, as a result of the prevalence of natural gas, running at 50 percent of our rates or lower. You know, for New England to actually get those types of levels, we need a lot more than Northern Pass to do that. We, obviously, would have to bring in additional natural gas infrastructure to take advantage of the low and abundant supply of that fuel source. And, we need to diversify our supply mix with large sources of affordable baseload power, like Northern Pass.

So, for us to get to a level where we're competitive with the rest of the country, and if, you
know, if the aspiration was to be in the top five, you know, we have to dramatically change the energy infrastructure in this region.

But Northern Pass is a big step in the right direction. You know, right now, we are the highest in the country, and we're going higher. And, not only are we high, we're very volatile. Which means we're having very significant price swings in the wrong direction during the winter months, which is a critical period for many of our business and homeowners.

So, it's a step in the right direction, but much more than Northern Pass will be necessary to become truly competitive with the rest of the country.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Is the ForwardNH Fund currently active?"

MR. QUINLAN: Technically, it is not. So, the ForwardNH Fund is a corporate commitment we introduced last year, when we rolled out our new project route. Technically, it doesn't become effective until Northern Pass goes into service. The funding source for the ForwardNH Fund is the Northern Pass Project.

Now, I say "technically", because recently we did announce an advance commitment from the
ForwardNH Fund. It was made, in essence, by Eversource and its shareholders. And, it was really an opportunity to help to make the Balsams redevelopment project in the North Country a reality. For those of you who followed that project, it is a transformational project for that portion of the state, which is, you know, somewhat depressed and could use, you know, economic development.

The Northern Pass Project, which essentially funds the ForwardNH Fund, was in a position to make a commitment to allow a critical phase of that Balsams redevelopment to go forward. So, it's an advance from the Fund. It's essentially being borne by our shareholders. The reason we selected that project is it's exactly the type of initiative that the $200 million ForwardNH Fund is intended to target. It's in the North Country, it's for the betterment of communities who are hosting the line. It would have a very positive effect on tourism and economic development in the region. So, it's the quintessential initiative for a fund like the ForwardNH Fund, and we took the opportunity to make the commitment.

So, it's not technically in effect, the Fund. But, in essence, we've made an initial
commitment.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "How will the Fund be administered? If there's an advisory board, who will be on it? And, how will those people be appointed?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, ultimately, when we move forward into construction of Northern Pass and we actually place the Project in service, our anticipation is we'll have an advisory board made up of key leaders from across the State of New Hampshire. So, from the business sector and the environmental community, obviously, representation from the North Country. And, essentially, they will may make the determinations as to which initiatives to fund. We're not at the point where we are selecting advisory board members today. If you think about it, this Project wouldn't go into service until 2019. So, we've got quite a bit of time before we actually stand the fund up fully. But, you know, we're already getting inquiries from potential advisory board members, as well as communities for further investments. So, it's an opportunity to make a real difference here in the State of New Hampshire.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Are there specific programs of New Hampshire Fish & Game that are
specifically being supported? And, if so, what are
they?"

MR. QUINLAN: Not to my knowledge, no.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Will you, Mr.
Quinlan, get a performance raise or bonus if this
project goes through?"

[Audience interruption.]

MR. QUINLAN: I have no specific bonus
or incentive tied to the Northern Pass Project.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: You will be
respectful of everyone who is speaking this evening.
If you can't live with that rule, you're going to have
to leave.

Please describe the need for this
Project. As worded, the question is "Why do you keep
saying that there is a need for the Northern Pass
Project?" So, why don't you reiterate your view of why
this Project is needed.

MR. QUINLAN: You know, I tried to
outline this at the outset, but it's pretty simple.
You know, we, as a region, we, as a state, need new
baseload energy supplies to stabilize and lower our
energy costs. We're not at all competitive with the
rest of the country currently, and we're going in the

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] (03-14-16)
wrong direction. So, first and foremost, it's an opportunity to lower our energy costs for businesses and residential customers across the State of New Hampshire. Secondly, if we have any hope or expectation of meeting our environmental goals as a society, projects like Northern Pass have to be a reality.

So, those are the two principal needs: One, lower energy costs; two, environmental objectives.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: But it is correct that this is not a "reliability project", as that phrase is used in the industry, correct?

MR. QUINLAN: So, as a technical matter, it's not, today, required to keep the lights on. So, it's not technically a "reliability project". Meaning, the System Operator has said "if you don't" -- has not said "if you don't build Northern Pass, the lights are going to go out." They haven't drawn that conclusion.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: This question references a 2014 agreement between Northern Pass and Hydro-Quebec that has a missing appendix that is referenced in the agreement called -- that references the "AC line upgrade cost". Is that, in fact, a missing appendix? And, if so, "when would that
appendix be available for review?"

MR. QUINLAN: I am not familiar with any missing appendix. But let me ask the team. Perhaps we'll get clarification at the break and see if there's a missing appendix. I'm not aware of any missing appendix.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Please -- there are a few questions about the Coos Loop. I think it would be helpful for you to describe the Coos Loop in some level of detail, because there are a number of questions about it. The specific question on this sheet is "Will the Coos Loop benefit Bayroot, LLC, Northern Pass, and Eversource?" But more general questions relate to the Coos Loop.

MR. QUINLAN: So, the Coos Loop is an existing transmission loop, it is literally a loop, a circle in Coos County. It's the transmission supply to the entire North Country. Today, there are almost 400 megawatts of small-scale renewable generation that feed into the Loop; hydro plants, biomass plants, wind plants. Because the load, meaning customer demand, in the North Country is not significant, a large percentage of that power needs to get to market. So, it has to get out of that circle, out of that loop,
into more southern portions of New Hampshire.

The upgrade that we're talking about is, in essence, to give those generation plants a path to get their product to market, so they can operate more frequently. And, today, on any given day, one or several of those power plants won't be able to run, because there's not a transmission path to get the load, to get where customers need the power.

So, as part of the Northern Pass Project, because we're, in essence, in the same rights-of-way, we're going to take the opportunity to upgrade the Loop. We're going to replace the wire with bigger wire, so it's got greater carrying capacity.

This is a project that apparently has been talked about in New Hampshire for a decade, and it hasn't become a reality. The reason it hasn't become a reality is, typically, the way those transmission upgrades would be paid for would be by generators. If a generator wants to connect to that Loop, they would pay for the associated transmission upgrades. And, in the past decade, that has been cost-prohibitive to do so. It's more than a $50 million upgrade. It would be somewhere between 50 and 100 million in total, depending on the final design. So, it's quite a
substantial upgrade to the Loop. It's designed to
increase its carrying capacity so that generation could
get to market.

And, I don't believe Bayroot operates
any current generation on that loop, is that correct?

MR. MUNTZ: I believe they're part owner
of Granite Reliable.

MR. QUINLAN: Okay. I stand corrected.
So, Bayroot apparently is a part owner of the Granite
Reliable wind farm, which is a 100-megawatt wind farm
in the Dixville Notch area. So, to the extent their
plants could operate more, they potentially would be a
beneficiary, as would the Burgess Biomass plant, which
is a plant I hear about regularly, because it's, in
essence, not running as much as it should be, for
exactly the reason I articulated.

Now, as far as Eversource New Hampshire,
we do own some small-scale hydro that feeds into the
Loop. We, the Company, wouldn't benefit from increased
generation from that, those hydro facilities, our
customers would. So, to the extent our hydro plants
would run more, it would reduce the energy costs for
our customers. So, corporately, we see no benefit in
increased generation from our facilities.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: You referenced "50 to $100 million in cost". "Are those costs included in the $1.6 billion construction cost on the entire project?"

MR. QUINLAN: The known costs are. So, the ones we today currently know we have to make are in the existing cost estimate. There is some potential for incremental cost upgrades, once the ISO-New England gives us the final results of its study of what it's going to take us to unlock the loop, if you will.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Who will pay for any additional costs that ISO identifies in that study?

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. It will be paid for in a similar fashion, which is through our Transmission Support Agreement with Hydro-Quebec, importantly, not New Hampshire customers. So, as part of the ForwardNH Plan and the Northern Pass route announcement, one of the things we've been able to preserve is our commitment that New Hampshire customers will not pay for any of this transmission project, and they won't be paying for the Loop upgrades.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: The next question is about work that is being done beyond the Deerfield Substation. The question is: "What percentage of the
improvement work beyond the Deerfield Substation will ratepayers of New Hampshire be paying for?"

MR. QUINLAN: Those upgrades, which are fairly modest, I believe there's ten structures in an existing transmission line between Deerfield and Scobie Pond, which is in the Town of Londonderry, correct?

So, it's ten out of how many, Sam?

MR. JOHNSON: Over 600.

MR. QUINLAN: So, there's 600 existing transmission structures, ten of them having to be increased by five feet, to increase, in essence, the capacity of that line, once Northern Pass goes into service. The cost of those upgrades will be paid for through the Northern Pass Project. So, customers will not pay any of those associated costs either.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: A question about renewables: "Which New England states have legal mandates to increase the use of renewables? And, in which states does hydropower meet that definition? And, which states does large hydropower meet that definition?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, I think all New England states at this point have renewable standards, and they vary state-to-state. You know, I think all of
them count small-scale hydro, which tends to be run-of-river hydro, generally domestic, small-scale hydro against their renewable standards.

As far as large-scale hydro, I'm aware that Connecticut recently determined that large-scale hydro will count for its renewable goals. And, I mentioned earlier the three states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island have gone out for a Clean Energy Request for Proposal, specifically targeting large-scale hydro, as well as wind and other renewables.

Now, those won't count for renewable energy credits in the classic sense, but they will be counted as "clean energy". So, in a similar fashion, New Hampshire, when it adopted its Climate Action Plan some years ago, recognized that large-scale hydro imported from Canada was important in reaching our clean energy goals.

Today, New Hampshire doesn't count large-scale hydro technically from a renewable portfolio standards perspective, but we recognize that it's clean energy. And, I would say, as a country, we are beginning to move strongly in that direction. So, the Obama Administration, who announced their Clean
Energy Plan recently, put very heavy emphasis on importing large-scale hydro from Canada as a way of meeting the country's clean energy goals.

So, as a technical matter, I think it's just Connecticut that today counts large-scale hydro. Other New England states count it as clean energy, but not for Renewable Portfolio Standards, but I think the momentum is clearly in that direction.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: You may have answered this question before, and, if so, I apologize. "What percentage of the power that comes down the line will go to New Hampshire?"

MR. QUINLAN: Well, all of it will, as a matter of physics. You know, all 100 percent of the power will be delivered to Deerfield, New Hampshire. Okay?

Contractually, we have an opportunity to enter into a power purchase agreement with Hydro-Quebec for 10 percent of the power, which is sized to equal our load share for all of New England. So, -- and, we think we can do that in a very cost-effective way for our customers. So, we anticipate having a power purchase agreement with Hydro-Quebec for 10 percent of the power.
The other 90 percent of the power flowing over this line is uncommitted. So, if New Hampshire wants more than 10 percent, we can certainly pursue that. But, at this point, we anticipate reserving at least 10 percent for our customers, with the potential for more.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I have a series of questions about burial. What is the cost difference between burying 60 miles and burying the entire line?

MR. QUINLAN: $1 billion. Approximately, $1 billion.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: It's not exactly $1 billion?

MR. QUINLAN: It's not exactly, but it's pretty close. And, just to add to that. You know, we've built a lot of transmission as a company, as has Hydro-Quebec. And, we do know the cost differentials for these types of constructions. As part of the Clean Energy RFP, we went to some of the largest constructors in North America to get binding bids for the cost of overhead portions of the route and underground portions of the route. And, they confirmed all of our analyses. So, it means, with their numbers, on a per unit basis, for that additional 132 miles of underground
construction, it's approximately a billion dollars.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: This question asks:

"Are you aware that TransÉnergie, a subsidiary of
Hydro-Québec, said to the Federal Energy Regulatory
Commission that undergrounding high-voltage lines was
cost comparable with overhead lines?"

MR. QUINLAN: I'm not aware of that, no.

And, as I mentioned earlier, the Canada portion of this
line, approximately 60 miles, was all overhead
construction, in essence, because it's
cost-prohibitive, in their view, to go underground.

So, I would be surprised if that were
true. But I'm not aware of that statement.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: There are a series
of questions about why you haven't tried to bury the
route along the interstate highway. That question is
specifically here: "Have you asked the Department
of" -- it says the "Department of Energy" here, "if you
can use I-93?" I assume that means the "Department of
Transportation". "Have you talked to DOT about burying
the line in the interstates?" So, those next three,
they're all essentially the same question, about burial
along I-93.

MR. QUINLAN: Okay. Mr. Bowes.
MR. BOWES: So, our analysis is that the interstate highway system is not a viable path for a transmission line. It's really based on four factors. It's the public safety aspects of building on a limited access highway; it's the environmental impacts of basically going in the undisturbed portion of the highway right-of-way, the constructability of it with, in this case, for this particular route, I-93, there's obviously ledge, there will be a lot of tree-clearing to be done, as well as wetlands impacts, the constructability to deal with the on-ramps, off-ramps, various raised structures, and just the environmental impacts, would make it -- the constructability very challenging; and, ultimately, the last item is it becomes cost-prohibitive to bury the line for the entire way.

I think there was another question around "have we had discussions with the DOT?" The answer is "yes". Before the Application was provided, during the permit application process, we were actually looking to see what permits we need. And, since the Application has been filed, and now we're onto monthly meetings with the DOT, to talk about various aspects of underground construction.
Our analysis was that the interstate highway system was not a viable alternative. And, that has been also confirmed with the DOT. It's a matter of "do you have a viable alternative to that?" And, in this case, we do. And, we're actually proposing that, as part of this project, to go on state roads that are not limited access highways.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Please talk about the line that is proposed to come down underwater/underground through Vermont. Why is this not an alternative for this line, underwater and underground?"

And, then, there's a more general question about "who makes decisions such as this? Is it the states? Is it a federal agency? Is it Congress?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, the project that's the foundation of that question is one of the projects I referred to earlier that did not bid into the three-state request for proposals. It's the New England Clean Power Link, which was intended to use Lake Champlain underwater, and then some underground construction. Why didn't they bid? It's, you know, speculation, but, you know, they have suggested publicly that's a $1.2 billion project. When we look at it, based upon what we're hearing in the market, we
think they're dramatically understating the price of that project. So, it could be that they're not in a position to make a firm commitment as to the cost of the project.

Also, to compete in this RFP, you need a secure power supply. We have one with our partner, Hydro-Quebec. We've made a firm delivery commitment through the Northern Pass line. We're not aware that they have a similar commitment from a supplier in Canada.

You also need a transmission path north of the border to get it from the generation to the border. And, Hydro-Quebec, in parallel with the siting process here in the U.S., is siting that interconnecting line to bring it to Pittsburg, New Hampshire. And, we're not aware of an interconnection being sited tied to the New England Power Link.

So, we think it's a combination of those three. You know, the cost-prohibitive nature, the lack of a confirmed power supply, and the fact that they have no interconnection, but that's somewhat speculative. They chose not to bid.

Now, who's responsible for making the decision? Ultimately, for purposes of that
solicitation, it will be the three southern New England states. But, for our project, it's the SEC, here in New Hampshire, as well as the Department of Energy at the federal level.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Can you circle back --

MR. QUINLAN: Sure.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: -- and provide a little bit more information about why your proposal doesn't use the technologies that that proposal uses to go under Lake Champlain, and then down underground. Why aren't -- I think the analogue would be, why aren't you using the Connecticut river, and then going underground?

MR. QUINLAN: Okay. So, I'm going to turn it over to the engineers for a moment. But we are using the same technology. The HVDC Light cable technology that was contemplated for that project is the technology we are using for our Project.

As far as the Connecticut River?

MR. BOWES: As far as the constructability, we have done projects in open water, such as Lake Champlain and such as Long Island Sound, and it does present some unique challenges. But both
Lake Champlain and Long Island Sound, there is a path to go through. And, the capable is laid on the bottom of the floor, whether it's the ocean floor or whether it's the lake floor, and then it's jetted in. That technology would not be possible inside the Connecticut River. And, there would be significant environmental impacts by trying to do that type of trenching inside of that river bed.

Now, as far as the overland portion of it goes, it is actually very similar to Northern Pass. It uses a combination of state and local roads to do the underground, in disturbed soil, generally inside the roadway. TDI does not propose to use the interstate highway system in Vermont, nor was it a alternative studied by the regulator, the siting regulator in Vermont, nor the DOE.

MR. QUINLAN: And, just so we're clear, is the "jetting" technology that Mr. Bowes is referring to, is high-pressure water, referred to as "jet plow", on the ocean floor, you basically use that technology to open up a temporary trench in the sediment, you lay the cable, and the sediment settles back over it. That technology would not work in the Connecticut River.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Once built, which
is more expensive to maintain, an overhead line or a buried line? And, how much is the difference?

MR. QUINLAN: Mr. Bowes.

MR. BOWES: So, we've studied both overhead and underground AC transmission lines. And, the life cycle cost, again, dominated by the initial cost of installation, the underground lines for a life cycle are more expensive. Strictly, the O&M costs, for an underground line versus an overhead, they're probably lower. But what's the overall life cycle cost, it ultimately is higher for an underground line.

MR. QUINLAN: Another factor in that determination, if you have a fault, meaning an interruption in your overhead transmission line versus your underground transmission, it's a much longer restoration for an underground system. For an overhead, it's generally visible, easily located. You can get a crew -- crews out there to do the restoration. Underground, you have to locate the fault, you have to excavate, and it's quite a lengthy process, particularly for this type of construction. So, the restoration time, which also has a maintenance cost, is quite a bit higher in underground construction.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Will the project have a negative effect on tourism in New Hampshire? And, if so, by how much per year?

MR. QUINLAN: I'm going to introduce another expert, Mitch Nichols. Mitch, if you could just introduce yourself please.

MR. NICHOLS: Sure. Thank you. Good evening. My name is Mitch Nichols. I'm President of Nichols Tourism Group. Over the last 20 years, we've worked with states, cities, counties, national parks, state parks, around the country, in assisting them in developing their tourism industry and developing strategic plans to maximize the potential of the visitor industry.

We've studied New Hampshire's tourism industry and the relationship to Northern Pass. We've looked at that relationship in five varying approaches. And, in all cases, it points to the same fundamental conclusion: Northern Pass will not have any impacts to the regional travel demands for visitors to the State of New Hampshire. And, that's the fundamental --

[Audience interruption.]

MR. NICHOLS: -- conclusion.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Excuse me. Excuse
me, ma'am. If you're having trouble breathing, why
don't you step out for a few minutes and get a glass of
water.

Everyone here has an obligation this
evening. Everyone here has an obligation to be
respectful of the people who are speaking. If you are
unable to do that, you will be asked to leave. Is
everyone clear on that?

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Is everyone clear
on that? There is no question being asked right now,
except for the one that the audience --

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Excuse me, sir.

Thank you. You are done. Thank you very much.

You may continue.

MR. NICHOLS: I will just point to one
specific example, I think it was brought up, the Maine
Power Reliability Program. That project has been
underway for the past five years in the State of Maine,
another large overhead transmission project. We looked
at trends, in terms of the tourism businesses and
operations that were evolving during that period of
time. What we found was not only was there not a
reduction in tourism businesses, but the tourism business expansion in counties in which the transmission lines occurred expanded at rates three times the level of counties in which there was no transmission development that was experienced.

And, what we found is there's a variety of fundamental travel factors. They range in diversity of travel products and experiences a destination can offer, the ease of access to the destination, the price and value opportunities that is provided to the visitor dollar, the range of economic underlying factors, weather conditions. These are the factors that drive the fundamental business and tourism demands and experiences, not the presence or lack of presence of power lines.

And, I might just, one final anecdotal example. I was assisting Estes Park in Colorado just a couple weeks ago, the entry to Rocky National Park. There's very large transmission lines as you enter into Estes Park on their main arterial pathway. There's also a tremendous transmission plant that's located just a quarter mile away from the main Visitor Center in Estes Park. And, in that case, just in the last year, Rocky Mountain National Park expanded their
attraction and visitor demand. They grew from the
fifth most visited national park in the nation to the
third. Visitors are coming to those kinds of
experiences because of the collective destination
appeal of the region, of the state, of a city. And,
again, it's that collection of significant factors,
products, marketing, ease of access, those are the
factors that drive visitor demand.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: You would agree,
though, would you not, that the plural of anecdote is
not data, correct?

MR. NICHOLS: That's why we undertook
both survey work in the five areas that I noted in
terms of our analysis, we looked at actual tourism
expansion during periods of past power line
transmission development, both in the State of New
Hampshire, in the 1980s, and in the Maine example, with
the Maine Power Reliability Project. In both of those
instances, businesses -- tourism-related businesses
expanded at rates of growth faster than what occurred
in counties and areas outside of those in which
transmission lines were developed. We undertook one of
the most extensive surveys of prospective visitors into
New Hampshire, from key feeder markets to New
Hampshire, and we asked specifically about the --

[Extended audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Since she may have just vacated a seat, if there's someone in the overflow area, the seat just emptied.

MR. NICHOLS: Just the survey I was mentioning, it was an extensive survey that we undertook, in terms of key feeder markets to the State of New Hampshire. And, through that, we developed a very strong understanding of the key factors that were influencing visitation to the state. And, it was consistent with the points that we raised earlier.

These are also consistent with the points that were supplied in your Draft Environmental Impact Statement. They reached the same conclusion about these key factors driving fundamental visitor demand.

One last point I'd bring up, as far as research, one of my associates is Dr. Daniel Fesenmaier. He's with the University of Florida, and runs the National Laboratory of Tourism and eCommerce. He's on the Journal of Travel Research Editorial Board, and he's one of the most published academics in the world. We undertook a worldwide literature search in

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
relation to power lines and their impact to tourism. There was no peer-reviewed studies that identified or documented that relationship. And, again, that was also a fact that was noted in the Draft EIS.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Quinlan, earlier you were asked about the existing Hydro-Quebec line and why it's not being considered for this. Please address the question asked on this sheet, about "whether, in fact, the reason you're not considering the existing line is that it would produce less revenue for Eversource?"

MR. QUINLAN: No. That's not the reason. I think we explained earlier the reasons for not using that line. In fact, I think there might be a flawed premise underlying that question as well. You know, the revenue to Eversource is based upon the cost of the line. That existing transmission corridor is about the same length. It's 180 miles. It would probably be a similar cost if the construction was similar. So, I don't think it would have a material difference to the revenue to Eversource.

But, more importantly, the reason we elected not to explore that alternative are the technical and other factors that Mr. Muntz referred to
earlier.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: The next question is very specific to a property owner along Route 3 that has buried water lines next to his or her property. I guess the general question here is, "how will you work with existing underground facilities in the area where your line will be underground? And, who will be responsible if an existing line is damaged?"

MR. QUINLAN: Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes. So, the very first process, and we're actually just about to kick it off, is to do all the investigative work from a survey and geotechnical perspective along the entire underground route. This will include coordination with any local utilities for water, cable, existing electrical utilities, and other things, as well as landowner outreach to find out where wells and any water lines are that may not be put together as far as a regulated utility. So, that process is just about to be kicked off, and we will be reaching out to everyone on the underground route, as well as to the municipalities, to start that mapping process.

As far as our design, obviously, we will avoid those utilities wherever practicable. And, where
it is not practicable, which is almost never, we will
rebuild your facilities such that they remain the same
as they were before.

CHAIRMEN HONIGBERG: The next question
is specific to the right-of-way in Bethlehem, from the
Whitefield/Bethlehem town line to Route 302. "Will you
have to cut additional trees to put up new transmission
lines? If so, how much cutting will you do? And, will
you be removing or moving the current lines and poles?"

MR. JOHNSON: In the Bethlehem
right-of-way, there will be some selective clearing.
There will be no rebuilds of the existing facilities.
That there's enough room already to put our lines
adjacent to those facilities.

CHAIRMEN HONIGBERG: If the transmission
line is damaged, what corporate entity or what entities
would be financially responsible for the cost of
repairs?"

MR. MUNTZ: Eversource will be owning
and maintaining the line.

CHAIRMEN HONIGBERG: Who pays for
repairs? Shareholders or ratepayers?

MR. MUNTZ: Basically, whoever's paying
for the line. So, Hydro-Quebec would pay for the
operation and maintenance cost and reimburse Eversource. More than likely, Eversource New Hampshire.

MR. QUINLAN: Just so we're clear, New Hampshire ratepayers will not pay for any costs of owning, operating or maintaining this line.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Is there an estimate of how many", what are referred to on this sheet, as "danger or hazard trees per mile do you have to cut down during construction?"

MR. JOHNSON: So, we've done some preliminary analysis of that. As far as the existing right-of-way, Eversource already maintains that right-of-way, and has managed the danger trees. They do come up once in a while. I'm aware of a couple in the southern part of our right-of-way that recently have been attended to. But, for the most part, there are not a significant number of danger trees that will be removed as part of our process.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "The slide presentation stated an environmental benefit to New Hampshire fish and wildlife. Can you specify what you mean by that?"

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. What that was
referring to is a commitment we've made as a corporation to the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation. It's a national organization that's involved in preservation and conservation efforts across the country. We are partnered with them on a New Hampshire-specific set of initiatives to pursue important conservation initiatives in the State of New Hampshire. So, we've made a $3 million corporate commitment. They, in essence, go out and solicit matching funds. So, in total, it's about a $10 million fund, where they, in essence, go out and solicit grant applications to deal with important conservation work targeted here in New Hampshire. And, it's all for the betterment of fish and wildlife. We are not involved in the selection process. It's a program that they administer. We are, in essence, a funding source. And, again, it was intended to provide additional benefits to the State of New Hampshire as part of our ForwardNH Fund.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Earlier in response to an environmental question, "it was stated that "private environmental inspectors will be on site during the construction phase". To what extent will there be state or federal oversight during the
construction? And, to what extent will there be state or federal enforcement if best management construction practices are not adhered to?"

MS. CARBONNEAU: Well, that's actually up to the agencies. They, obviously, operate their inspection and enforcement operations at their discretion. We would expect that there will be some permit conditions that may require certain activities from different parties. I know that the Project is committed to having environmental monitors. If the state and federal agencies would like to have their own, they're certainly welcome to do that. And, as is typical, we would certainly have worked with them in the past on such issues, often monitoring reports are required. They are certainly welcome to come out and look at the activity at any time that they so desire. The application fees that we pay to the state help fund all of their review and project implementation practices.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: This question asker would like you to repeat "what the current total projected cost is? What the increase would be with full burial?" And, also asks for "the money you are stating as a cost includes gifts to North Country
nonprofits?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, the total current projected capital cost is a little over $1.6 billion. The incremental cost of a full underground route would be approximately $2.6 billion. And, that's the capital cost of the Project. Any of the initiatives that we're talking about, such as the ForwardNH Fund or the National Fish & Wildlife Fund, are separate and apart from the capital cost of the Project. Those are ongoing expenses.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "If Northern Pass "walks away", either because it decided not to move forward with the project, or because the SEC does not issue a certificate of site and facility, will Northern Pass owe any penalties or damages?"

MR. QUINLAN: No. We have a currently active proposal into the three-state request for proposal, but it's conditioned upon receiving the necessary state and federal permits. If those permits were not granted, we would have no damages in that solicitation. Obviously, we and our partner have made a certain amount of investment to bring the Project along to its current point, and that will be borne by shareholders.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "How employees does Eversource New Hampshire have? And, if the Project is not approved, would there be any effect on New Hampshire employees?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, Eversource New Hampshire has approximately 1,500 employees here in the State of New Hampshire. That's about -- it's out of roughly eight or 9,000 for the entire Eversource footprint, which includes Connecticut and Massachusetts. Short answer is there will be no impact on those employees if this project didn't move forward.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Will ratepayers, taxpayers, or the State of New Hampshire generally, be underwriting this project in any way -- in any way, directly or by contract?"

MR. QUINLAN: No.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "How is the $80 million you estimated as the benefit, how will that be received? Is it through lower rates? And, if it is through lower rates, how will that effect existing suppliers/generators of electricity?"

MR. QUINLAN: So, again, that $80 million is New Hampshire's share of lower wholesale markets. In essence, that assumes that there are
certain higher-cost, generally, carbon-emitting
generating plants that wouldn't run. They would be
displaced, because there would be a lower-cost
alternative for the region. So, to the extent there's
an existing generator, that would have cleared without
Northern Pass, it may not clear in the future, because
it would be a higher-cost asset.

Could you repeat the first part of that
question, Chairman?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I think you --
actually, it's "how would the benefit be received?"
Would be through lower rates, right?

MR. QUINLAN: Okay. So, the benefit, in
essence, is through a lower wholesale price for energy
and the associated capacity in the wholesale markets.
Those wholesale markets ultimately are reflected in the
retail rates that businesses and residences would pay.
In essence, utilities across New England access those
wholesale markets to buy electricity on behalf of
customers, and then they deliver that electricity. So,
lower wholesale markets, it's a lower supply cost,
lower retail rates for businesses and residences.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "What percentage of
the usage is residential versus non-residential?
MR. QUINLAN: So, that's a --

MR. BOWES: Across New England, it's probably about 50 to 60 percent residential, 30 percent commercial, and probably less than 10 percent industrial.

MR. QUINLAN: And, those rough numbers are similar for Eversource New Hampshire as well. It's predominantly residential, 60 or 70 percent residential.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I'm going to read this as it's written, but I think you and I may need to figure out exactly what the question is. But "what is the process to become a public service provider or to obtain that status in New Hampshire?" I'm thinking that question really is asking "what is the process for becoming a public utility?"

MR. QUINLAN: A utility, yes. So, to become a public utility in the State of New Hampshire, you would file an application with the Public Utility Commission, and make the necessary technical, managerial, and financial showing. And, then, the Public Utility Commission would determine whether you would qualify as a public utility.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Does being a
public utility give a company eminent domain powers to
take land or expand current easements?"

MR. QUINLAN: It does in circumstances
referred to earlier, where the project is a
"reliability project". So, it's a project necessary
to, in essence, keep the lights on. Northern Pass, as
indicated earlier, is not a reliability project. So,
under New Hampshire law, public utilities would not
have the right to use eminent domain to build a
project, such as Northern Pass, because it's not
technically a reliability project.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Another question
about burial. "If I-93 is not an option for burial,
have you considered using Route 3A, from Plymouth to
Franklin, to burying the line along that route?"

MR. JOHNSON: We did look at various
options around the state. And, again, as Bill alluded
to earlier in his presentation, it's striking a
balance, as far as the amount of underground that could
go. We focused primarily on the White Mountain
National Forest, as that is what most people in New
Hampshire have talked about as far as preserving the
environment. And, that would lead us to a natural
conclusion of ending our route where it is in
Bridgeport -- Bridgewater, sorry.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: A similar question.
"Why not bury the route in the existing right-of-way in Sugar Hill and Franconia?"

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. So, the reason we've selected the public highways is that, generally, you're dealing with a already disturbed area of the land. If we were to bury it in our existing right-of-way, which, in essence, slices through the White Mountain National Forest, the environmental impacts of burial would be quite significant. So, when we made the determination to look for an underground alternative, to minimize the environmental impacts, we selected the public way, as opposed to the existing right-of-way through the forest and mountains.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: This is a safety question related to FERC recommendations. "Is it true that in a number of places where you'll be going overhead that multiple lines will be closer together than FERC recommends?"

MR. BOWES: I'm not aware of any FERC regulations on the separation of transmission lines.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Is there any body out there that recommends spacing of lines, and are you
in compliance with those recommendations?

MR. BOWES: So, the answer to that is "yes". I was going to get to that. So, the NERC, another acronym, similar to FERC, which is the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, does have planning criteria through both the region and ultimately through ISO-New England about how many lines and spacing of lines. And, there are also safety codes that would apply for the physical dimensions. So, one is around how many transmission lines you can have in a corridor, based on that reliability, which would be ISO-New England. And, then, the issue on the corridor, "what's the physical separation?" And, that is governed by the National Electric Safety Code. So, there are two other non-FERC regulations that would apply.

MR. QUINLAN: And, we're in compliance with both?

MR. BOWES: And, we are in compliance with both regulations, yes.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Are you concerned at all about having multiple lines in such a small space from a safety perspective?

MR. BOWES: I am not. In this case,
there's only two or three transmission lines in the
same corridor, in some cases a distribution line as
well. That is very common throughout Eversource
operating areas.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I'm going to read
this one as it's written: "If the project does not go
through, will Eversource still get paid?"

MR. QUINLAN: No.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: We're not going to
take any more questions, folks, after this group that
we've just been handed. We have a lot of people who
want to speak. And, we have a handful of process
questions to get through, apparently, some more
substantive questions, but I'm sure a lot of people
want to speak. And, our stenographer is going to need
a break very soon.

There's a process question related to
how this space was chosen. I don't personally know the
answer to that. But, if this space is not workable, we
apologize. I know there are people who are in an
overflow room. And, that's not our preference. We
certainly didn't want that to happen. But we never
know how many people are going to show up at one of
these things.
There's a couple of questions about intervention. "Will there be other opportunities to intervene?"

There will certainly be other opportunities for public participation. As I noted at the outset, there are going to be at least two additional public hearings, in all likelihood, one north of the Notch and one south of the Notch, for people to discuss the supplemental information that was filed. It is always possible that someone could seek late -- seek intervention beyond the deadline. Would need to make an appropriate showing if that was something that should be granted.

There's a question -- a substantive question about intervention. There will be an order being issued relatively soon regarding intervention.

There's one gentleman who has asked a series of process questions, about how would things happen at the SEC. I'm going to ask him to deal separately with the Administrator, Ms. Monroe, or with counsel, to get a number of those process questions answered.

Turning to the last few sheets. You know what I'm going to do, because the stenographer
needs a break, and I have just been handed these questions, we're going to take a 15-minute break. And, when we come back from the 15-minute break, we'll ask these last few questions of the Company, and we'll start the public comment period.

So, we'll come back at five minutes after 7:00.

(Recess taken at 6:50 p.m. and the public hearing resumed at 7:08 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. We have three more green sheets. Some of which have a couple of different questions on them. We're going to try to do those quickly. We have over 70 people who have signed up to speak. In the "respect your neighbors" department, I'm going to have to make a few requests. I really would like you, if at all possible, to keep your remarks to three minutes or less. I would really like you to consider whether what you would say has already been said by somebody else. If you heard it already, please, just say that you pass or you agree with what so-and-so said earlier. There are a couple of other ground rules that we'll get to when we start calling people up. And, we're going to try and keep people moving as quickly as possible.
So, the last few green sheets.

Mr. Quinlan, can you clarify what seems, to this question asker, to be a possible contradiction between the improvement to the Coos Loop, which would allow more small power producers to get their power into the grid, versus the lower price, wholesale price that the project will produce for all of us. And, won't the latter undercut the viability of the former?

MR. QUINLAN: The short answer is, no, it will not. If you look at how generation is dispatched in New England in any given hour, it's from lowest cost to highest cost, until you have sufficient supply to meet customer demand. Small-scale renewables, whether it's wind, hydro, biomass, bids in very low from an energy perspective, because the economics around those facilities generally are driven by the additional revenue they receive through renewable energy credits. So, they tend to bid very low, and always clear in the energy markets.

So, Northern Pass would come in perhaps a bit higher in cost than those small-scale renewables, and likely what it will displace is what's referred to as the "marginal cost", meaning that last piece of generation necessary to meet customer demand, which
tends to be, on 80 percent of the hours across the year, a natural gas plant. In some hours, during the winter, for example, it might be a coal plant or an oil plant. But it's not going to be a small-scale renewable, it's not going to be a nuclear plant. Those are lower-cost assets, because of the way the bid stack is designed.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: The next question has to do with permits for burial under land the Company does not own. I'll read most of this question as written. "The White Mountain National Forest requires Northern Pass to apply for a Special Use Permit to bury the line through the White Mountain National Forest." Do you -- is that a correct statement, first of all?

MR. QUINLAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: And, that's because that's federal land, owned by the federal government, correct?

MR. QUINLAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: "Why does the same logic not apply to private landowners who own their land? Why do you not need to get their permission before going under their property?"
MR. QUINLAN: So, my understanding, under New Hampshire law, for land that is, in essence, below the public way, the Department of Transportation has the authority to grant use or access rights to those lands. So, once a public way has been established, it's DOT that has the authority to allow further use.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: The question on this sheet asserts that a "3.5 mile burial project in Chino Hills took approximately two years or was estimated to take approximately two years to complete. What is your estimate of how long it will take to bury 60 miles of this line here in New Hampshire?"

MR. QUINLAN: Our estimate for the construction of Northern Pass is approximately two years. So, assuming our permits are issued in late 2016 or early 2017, our expectation would be we could place those facilities in service in 2019, two years in total. And, that will be both for the aboveground and underground construction.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. We're now ready to start with the speakers. Here are some additional rules for you to follow. The first is, when you come up, if you could spell your name, if there's
any ambiguity about how your name is spelled, and
sometimes even if there isn't any ambiguity, if you
could spell your name for the record, so the
stenographer has it.

Second, if you have something you're
going to be reading, please read clearly, and at a
slower pace than you sometimes might feel you want to
speak to get a lot of information out there. Because
the only way that the record is going to be clear is if
the stenographer can understand you and follow what
you're saying. If you have something prepared that you
have read from, please give a copy to the stenographer,
who will be right in front of you, who is wearing a
green shirt and a tie. And, that will be helpful to
all.

What I'm going to do is, when I call a
speaker, I'm going to call three people. I'm going to
say "A, being followed by B, and C." If you are the
second or the third name, please get ready. And, if
you are in the overflow area, and you hear your name as
one of the next couple of speakers, please come up, so
that there's no delay, so we can get people in and out
of here as quickly as we can.

All right. Everybody clear on that?
We're going to start with various elected officials, local and state, who are here with us this evening. So, we'll start with Shelagh Connelly, who is the Chair of the Holderness Selectboard. For those who did not know, we are not in Plymouth, we are in Holderness as we sit here. To be followed by Representative Richardson, and Neil Irvine, who is Chair of the New Hampton Selectboard.

MS. CONNELLY: Good evening. For the record, my name is Shelagh, S-h-e-l-a-g-h, Connelly, C-o-n-n-e-l-l-y. I am the Chair of our Selectboard here in Holderness. Thank you all for coming out to our lovely little hamlet. We're happy to have you here.

Our town has been actively involved in following this whole project. And, in 2012, and again in 2014, at our Town Meeting in March, we affirmed our objection to the Northern Pass Project, and recommend that state-owned transportation rights-of-way should be used to locate underground energy transmission corridors. And, this is something that was voted on both times unanimously, with no opposition.

So, I just wanted to have that for the record. Here you are in Holderness, and that has been
the vote of our people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Representative Richardson, to be followed by Neil Irvine, and Martha Richards.

REP. RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Herb Richardson, H-e-r-b, R-i-c-h-a-r-d-s-o-n. I'm the State Representative from Coos District 4, the Towns of Lancaster, Dalton, and the unincorporated place of Kilkenny. And, I am the Vice Chairman of the Science, Technology and Energy Committee, in Concord.

I am pleased to be here today in support of the Northern Pass Project and ForwardNH Fund. I believe that I speak for the silent majority of the citizens of my district that want to grow our economy, want opportunities for themselves and their families, and want to see the North Country thrive again.

Unfortunately, those who speak up in support of this project find themselves a target of harassment and bullying from the opponent of this project. This is something I have seen affect not only myself, but others as well. This is something I have learned firsthand, a few years ago, and again a couple of years when I spoke against legislation on mandatory
burial that project opponents were pushing in the New Hampshire Legislature. I was threatened, as many others were, on this subject. Yes, but the New Hampshire House ITL'ed that bill. Yes, threatened personally, I was. But I can tell you, I'm still here today. And, I will not be silent.

I fought burial in Coos County down the state right-of-ways. No one could or would show me these right-of-ways. I learned that abandoned rails have been deeded back to the landowners. What's left? Route 3, creating a disaster for what -- that would only cripple the economy of the North Country, affecting transportation in a negative way for a couple of years.

I pass along the story only to encourage you to disregard the threats you will receive. Disregard the antics, the stunts, and the bullying that I have enjoyed. Do your job to do the best of your ability, look for the opportunities to make this a better project, and do your best to mitigate the impacts and make a decision based on facts.

I believe this project will bring major benefits and opportunities to Coos County. In addition to lower electric rates, which New Hampshire is one of
the highest in the country, this project will only --
will provide jobs and economic opportunity for
residents and businesses of my district.

I support the project's decision to
provide $200 million in funding for economic
development and other initiatives. Imagine the
possibilities. Imagine the projects, like broadband,
that could bring -- that could be completed and the
problems that could be solved with these funds.

I support the project's decision that
Northern Pass was providing $2 million in early funding
for the Balsams redevelopment. This is another perfect
element of how beneficial this fund could be. This is
great news for Coos County, and will help bring the
project to completion. And, hopefully, in my lifetime,
attend the ribbon-cutting.

I would also like to add that I do not
dismiss the concerns of my constituents. These types
of projects do have impacts. Over the past several
years, I have tried to use my position to facilitate
solutions to concerns raised. And, I encourage the SEC
to do the same and continue to look for ways to
migrate -- mitigate the impact of this project.

Ultimately, I believe the SEC can and
will play a positive role in approving a project that
our state can be proud of. Thank you for your time and
your consideration.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Neil Irvine, from
the New Hampton Selectboard, followed by Martha
Richards and Representative Edmond Gionet.

MR. IRVINE: Neil Irvine, N-e-i-l,
I-r-v-i-n-e. Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee,
thank you for the opportunity to address you this
evening. As Chairman of the Board of Selectman, it is
my privilege to speak on behalf of the residents of New
Hampton, and to continue to give voice to our
opposition to the Northern Pass Project as currently
proposed.

Our observations, comments and
objections submitted in writing to the Committee
September 10th, 2015, remain unchanged. Our position
that Alternative 4a, which brings maximum benefit to
the affected communities, in jobs, tax revenues, and
protection of the scenic viewsheds, that form the
backbone of the tourist economy is consistent with our
previous statement that as a "participant funded
merchant project" any disruption, inconvenience or
financial impact be borne in its entirety by the

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
Applicant.

The project sponsors have spent untold resources trying to convince the affected communities that the project will be a benefit to their communities. I would like to speak to just three of those perceived benefits.

Jobs. The Applicant would have us believe that one of the benefits of the project will be massive job growth. What they have not shared with the public is that the number is a theoretical number based on a concept referred to as "Regional Economic Modeling". The model says that while the construction crews are in your town, the additional business at Dunkin Donuts or a local pizza shop, etcetera, will cause the owners of these businesses to hire additional staff. Once the crews move on to another town, another project, and the business activity returns to its normal levels, will the business owners keep those new hires or will they return to pre-construction staffing levels? A promise of temporary jobs for a permanent scar is no benefit at all.

Taxes. New Hampton, like many other municipalities, has spent years fighting abatement filings from the utility companies, including
PSNH/Eversource. To date, we have spent $27,000 for the privilege of prevailing before the BTLA regarding assessed value of utility assets. Project sponsors tell us that, if we accept their methodology of asset valuation, which is "original cost, less the depreciation and adjustments to zero", they would not file an abatement request. However, that very methodology was deemed not credible as an indication of market value by the BTLA in its July 2nd, 2015 decision. Northern Pass would have us leave over $15 million on the table to avoid an abatement fight. Taxes assessed on a discredited methodology are no benefit at all.

Lower electricity pricing. We've heard a lot of that tonight. Representatives from Northern Pass, PSNH, and now Eversource have spent five years throwing around big numbers in savings for New Hampshire electricity consumers, ranging from 25 million back in 2010, to the latest iteration of $80 million, but have struggled to answer the simple question "how much will the savings be to the individual ratepayer?" The math really isn't that difficult. Using data from the Applicant's original FERC filing, as well as the U.S. Energy Information
Administration, we can calculate an estimated saving for the average residential customer of between 16/100ths of a cent and 5/10ths of a cent per kilowatt-hour. And, that's just on the energy cost portion of the bill. A benefit measured in hundredths or even tenths of a cent is no benefit at all.

One hundred and fifty-three (153) years ago, President Lincoln concluded his Gettysburg Address by describing our government as being "of, by, and for the People". Six generations later, you have been afforded an opportunity to demonstrate that, at a time when the trust of government and their agencies is at an all-time low, that you have heard the people of New Hampshire, and the consistent message that the only viable option for the siting of this project in New Hampshire is complete burial along the entire route.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Please wrap up.

MR. IRVINE: Last sentence. Tonight, I have been asked by the residents, property and business owners of New Hampton to present you with copies of a petition having 739 signatures calling for the full burial of the project, if approved. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Martha Richards, from the County Commission, to be followed by Edmond
Gionet, and Eric Meth.

MS. RICHARDS: The 2000 Day Plus Campaign. Good evening. I am Martha Richards, from Holderness, wearing two hats tonight. First, as a private citizen, on an ROW now on the winners list, who proudly stands with the opposition fighting this damnable project for six years. And, second, as one of the three Grafton County Commissioners, who are all in full agreement of opposition to the Northern Pass Project as currently proposed. We are also intervenors on this project.

So, I finally stand before you, this august group we have conjured up for six years. I do see you really are mere mortals like us, but hold more power. You do have the power to make some life-changing decisions for thousands of us throughout New Hampshire about whether or not Northern Pass gets built. I assume you are aware of the perception you are in collusion with the Northern Pass officials. It will be up to you to ask the very tough questions eventually about an application fraught with questionable statements about this no-need, private (for greed) project.

An application that divides up the state
into winners and losers, burial or aboveground, depending apparently on who squawked more over these past years. There has been silence from you in all of these meetings, but Chair Honigberg offers the excuse as wanting to give the audience more time to interrogate the Applicant. I appreciate that. But we have received too many hollow, deceitful, and superficial answers to our hundreds of queries already. We need to hear from you to frankly see if you’ve even been listening to us, let alone thoroughly read Northern Pass's Application and will follow through this process with intense questioning to bring you to a decision.

As a County Commissioner, I have been very forthright in my complete opposition to this project. Initially, like our late Ray Burton said, "pack up your tents and go home". But, now, reluctantly, I will accept this private project only if totally buried all the way. Hydro-Quebec has already decimated thousands of pristine acres with their flooding of the indigenous peoples' lands, erected huge dams wreaking imbalance with Mother Nature, all the while methane gases from decomposing trees spilling into our atmosphere. This is not a green project.
Now, backed up with their money, Northern Pass wants to continue this raping of our state's beauty and further disrupt our fragile economy with "fugly" [sic] towers in the "losers'" regions. You don't want to believe there will be and are real estate losses. You think we and the tourists will get used to seeing towers. No, we won't.

Having our main streets in Woodstock, Franconia, and Plymouth ripped up for months, adversely affecting businesses, while I-93 is a mere one mile away or less makes no sense. It is baffling why, when there is a logical transportation corridor as I-93 for use, that Northern Pass is so averse to using it? If all the impacts you have been told about could be avoided by burial down I-93, why not bury it? For once, let's see if New Hampshire can be progressive and environmentally sensitive, as well as deriving some income from the use of I-93.

Now, it's your turn to fulfill your duty as a member of the SEC. Ask the hard questions that are expected from you. I hope you let the citizens of New Hampshire for once see a government entity work effectively to determine if this project is really something that will or will not benefit New Hampshire,
not just line too many corporate pockets with obscene profits who don't give a damn about people's lives and livelihoods being permanently ruined in an already fragile region.

We know, though, over this many next months, as someone quipped, we will see voodoo procedures and red tape morph into your decision. A decision you will have to live with, but will hopefully have been arrived at with great thought, deliberation, and sensitivity.

Northern Pass will continue to see the strength of the orange movement, as we defend the beauty and the economy of our state against a private project, unless it is buried all the way. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Edmond Gionet, to be followed by Eric Meth, and Bill Baber.

REP. GIONET: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee. For the record, my name is Edmond Gionet. I'm a native of Lincoln, and District 5 of the state, that encompasses the Town of Livermore, Waterville Valley, Woodstock, and my hometown of Lincoln. I am here to express support for the Northern Pass.

I did not automatically support the
project, and I didn't just listen to the rhetoric from
the supporters or the opponents. I did my homework.
And, I saw immediately that, as an elected official, it
would be irresponsible to immediately oppose this
project. And, when is it the last time that the state
has seen an investment in the state of over $1 billion?
That kind of investment is exactly what the state
needs, and it's especially critical in my region. Yet,
I was concerned about negative impacts that naturally
come with this type of project. So, I spent time
asking questions. I placed my phone calls, and
attended most meetings by Eversource.

I believe I was one of the few elected
officials that recognized the role that the state plays
in ensuring that this project is built without
"unreasonable adverse effects". I knew that you, the
members of the Site Evaluation Committee, play a
critical role in how this project ends, what it looks
like and the benefits that New Hampshire receives.

It was obvious to me that the visual
impacts had been exaggerated, and even exaggerated by
those who have supported wind structures that are
roughly three times the height of the Northern Pass
towers. I agree that Northern Pass has to respect the
state and its natural resources. I also want to be certain that we don't make it so difficult to site this project that it doesn't go forward.

We have a great need for low-cost energy, and communities are in dire need of tax benefits, not to mention the jobs and the ForwardNH Fund. I am not one of those who wants to throw out the good in search of the perfect.

Please review this project with the appropriate balance, and with a keen eye on the facts, and not just emotion. Thank you for your time and for listening to all of us.

Respectfully submitted. And, I will spell my name, Edmond, E-d-m-o-n-d, the last name, Gionet, G-i-o-n-e-t. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Eric Meth, to be followed by Bill Baber, and Susan Ford.

MR. METH: Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the Site Evaluation Committee, I thank the members. My name is Eric Meth, E-r-i-c, last name is M, as in "Mary", e-t-h. I'm a selectperson, one of the selectpersons from the Town of Franconia. I represent the concerns of the citizens and residents of Franconia.
Our town has many concerns about the scale of the Northern Pass proposal and the effect it will have on our infrastructure, our waterways, our real estate values, and our tourist -- tourism-driven economy. The issues I discuss represent just a cross-section of these concerns, and it's by no means complete.

For at least the last decade, hundreds of residents have been personally involved in planning for the future development of Franconia. To that end, we have replaced water mains and other utilities in their homes and to businesses. We have replaced sidewalks. And, in fact, many of our electric lines and fiber optic cables are underground to preserve our scenic views.

Since this proactive planning has included a design charrette with Plan NH, a prestigious grant organization with professionals working with our citizens to design a future plain for our Main Street. We've worked out a Master Plan, with the result, a formation of a Community Design Committee. This has resulted in the Colonel Oliver [Nelson] Planning Board Award from the North Country Council. And, my point is that this, a lot of effort and a lot of thought has
gone into the development going forward for Franconia.

And, it seems ironic that Eversource has placed a plan that -- it does not work with or cooperate with the Town of Franconia whatsoever. At the time they met with the Selectboard in the Fall of 2015, they weren't even aware that we had an infrastructure buried five feet below the road surface, the very road surface they propose to tear up and modify with a large trench.

Excuse me. As for the construction period itself, we have serious concerns. We are a four-season vacation area with hundreds of second homes. These property owners come to ski, to hike, to bike, to swim, to boat, and just enjoy the peaceful and quiet side of the Notch. These people support the businesses on Main Street, where the project is due to come down, and are the only reason many of our stores are able to exist. Our fear is that a prolonged, massive construction project right through the center of town will discourage their visits to the village. They will not want to navigate through this massive construction project. And, we fear that this will be the life -- the lifeblood of our village is our businesses, and they will not survive this impact.
The other concern is the impact it has on our geography. Like a lot of other towns, Franconia grew up at the confluence of several creeks and rivers. Sometimes, like a couple of weeks ago, we had a devastating overflow, with erosion and flooding along these creeks. We only fear what will happen once this line goes through, when these normal disasters happen exposing the line that's going to be buried, and are we prepared for that type of disaster?

If this project is approved, what happens when a 1,000-megawatt, 320 kilovolt cable is buried four feet below the surface of our road, capped with a cement slab and settled just over our utilities? We fear what will happen, and the answers that have been given to us.

The other end -- the other anticipated effect of the cable generating such great heat is the changes in the road surface and shoulders, especially during our cold winters of often 20, 30, and even 40 degrees below zero. No one has studied these problems. We've talked about EMF, but we don't believe that the problem either has been addressed. Again, --

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: How much more do you have?
MR. METH: I'm wrapping it up right now.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Okay.

MR. METH: Thank you very much. And, perhaps Eversource should build some real-life model to illustrate that we are -- that our fears are without merit.

And, I'll wrap it up right here, one last point. We personally have a problem with the best practices. And, as pointed out in the letter that was submitted to the Committee, December 2nd, by the Public for the Counsel, we think that the "best practices" is really code for cover and for the specificity. And, we would like to see a little bit more of that going forward. Thank you very much for your time.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Representative Bill Baber, to be followed by Susan Ford, and Rebecca Brown.

REP. BABER: Thank you. Sorry, I'm getting over a cold. So, bear with me. Bill Baber, and it's B-a-b-e-r. I'm from Dover. I'm the ranking member of the Science, Technology, and Energy Committee. And, I was one of the authors of the legislation which you currently have the opportunity to be serving under. And, so, I thank you for your
service. I know that this is no small contribution on your behalf.

I'm not going to speak from my prepared remarks. I just want to make three simple points. And, the first, I think, is one that everyone in this room can agree with. This part of New Hampshire, in fact, most of New Hampshire is a special place. It's kind of a magical place, and it's a place that there are few left in the Northeast that can rival it. And, that's important to me. And, I think it's important to everyone that's a resident of this state. And, we understand that this is not something that's given. It's something that has to be protected, it has to be cherished, and we have to make trade-offs to ensure that happens.

One of the reasons it's such a tourist destination is we are so close to metropolitan areas. That's good and it's bad. That means that, in this case, we're also a conduit to serve the needs of those large dense areas to our south.

The second point I want to make is we need to remind ourselves that this project is not for the civic government of the state, this is simply a business project. It's a project to make money for the
corporation of Eversource and for the Province of Quebec, and get back to the core owners of the funding sources for this. And, while they're investing in this mountainous project, it's not a significant amount of the money that's going to be involved in the lifespan of the project. If we look at some of the other projects around the state, and other we have not far from us, pipelines that were built during World War 2 that are -- actually, I think it may have just closed last week, but were in service until last week. Electric service lines can have similar lifespans, they endure.

And, at current market rates, and that is what Eversource is saying that they are going to enter the market, they're going to sell at market rates, you can expect that Hydro-Quebec will be earning about half a billion dollars a year from the revenue stream that's coming from this single project.

So, I think that it seems not unreasonable, in looking at the balance of the task that you have before you, to find that a small additional amount of that significant long-term revenue stream to be invested for the best welfare and the future of this state, and for our grandchildren's sake,
that we preserve much of what we see today.

And, I just remind you that your charge is to find the best balance for the needs of the state, and it's not to maximize the profits for the companies involved. Thank you for your time.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Susan Ford, to be followed by Rebecca Brown, and Ken Merrifield.

REP. FORD: Thank you. For the record, my name is Susan Ford. And, I am a New Hampshire House Representative from Grafton District 3. I would have preferred to speak at the Concord hearing, but we were all quite busy last Thursday evening.

My concern is about the towers planned for Concord. If the proposed Northern Pass plan goes forward, it means there will be 77 towers, ranging from 85 to 100 feet, in our capital city. I am so concerned about this that I did invite the CEO of Eversource to visit New Hampshire and see where these towers were going, and to show him what were some scenic views -- the scenic views in New Hampshire look like. I lived in Connecticut, and worked in Berlin, the corporate home of Eversource. I can predict what the headline in the Hartford Courant would be if 77 towers were
proposed for Hartford. I suspect the same would occur
in Boston. I have read articles in the Courant that
object to a cell tower marring the landscape. I've
lived in both states. The Connecticut residents don't
know what a scenic view is unless they have visited
northern New Hampshire.

I know that there are tours planned to
take a look at where these towers are going. Please
don't assume that, because you work and maybe even live
in Concord, you know about the Concord towers. Please
go on tour and examine the locations and the landscape.
While you're on the bus, please stop at McKenna's
Purchase, an apartment complex on the east side, and
have a conversation with the residents. The City of
Concord will have the most visual assault in the state
due to these towers.

Concord was designated as the Capital
City in 1808. Our State House is the oldest State
House in the country in continuous use. We have a
grand and glorious history in Concord and New
Hampshire. Please don't let them defile our capital
city with 77 towers.

I'm also amazed that we're still having
any conversation about burial versus towers. If this
project was a reliability project that was proposed 25 years ago, New Hampshire residents might just have to live with the towers. After all, it was in the 1940s that the right-of-ways were granted. Rural New Hampshire needed electricity, and this was the only way to get it.

Today, there is new technology that eliminates scarring our landscapes. Why we would not use this new technology is beyond me. After all, if I have a heart attack tomorrow, I want my medical team to use the most up-to-date knowledge and technology possible, not 25 years before. Just because I choose to live in a rural area does not mean that I am adverse to technology. Why would anyone allow towers to litter the landscape into the next century, when for sure this will be an old outdated project.

Require the transmission lines to be buried and we’ll all go home. Bury all of it.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Rebecca Brown, to be followed by Ken Merrifield, and Rick Samson.

REP. BROWN: Thank you. Good evening. I'm Rebecca Brown. This evening I am wearing two hats has. I'm representing the Ammonoosuc Conservation
Trust, which is the regional land conservancy serving the North Country. We conserve land for the vitality and wellbeing of the region.

I'm also representing the Towns of Franconia, Sugar Hill, Lisbon, Lyman, and Monroe as a state legislator.

And, I'd like to address you, first and foremost, as an elected public official, someone who, like you, is entrusted with working in the public interest, and who must earn and maintain the public trust.

The process by which this particular project is examined is going to set the groundwork for many more like it over the next few years. Your work will set the tone for how the public believes the process works, or does not work, in their behalf.

Many others this evening have spoken or will speak to the fact that these overhead transmission lines represent an outmoded form of infrastructure that will scar our landscape far beyond their useful life.

Others will speak to the idea that a truly green, renewable locally produced energy is the key to New Hampshire's energy future.

And, others will speak to the fact that
this project represents the last gasp of a failing company and is at heart a corporate welfare project, not a project conceived in the public interest at all.

I want to ask you, in your deliberations over what the public interest is in this case, to think of what it means to be New Hampshire. Please listen carefully, I am quoting: "When we look around us, what do we experience as part of life in New Hampshire? What is good, what is bad, and what can we do about it? What makes New Hampshire special and unique? What gives our people a sense of place? How have our citizens, through their attitudes, approaches to problem-solving, and responses to community needs shape our institutions, government, and infrastructure? Will our small-town rural heritage and small-scale city life still be available in the future? Will our natural environment be able to provide for our recreation and products for manufacturing? These are among the types of questions that the Commission needs to ask itself and the people of New Hampshire."

The commission in question was the Governor's Commission on New Hampshire in the 21st Century. And, those words were written by Governor Judd Gregg 25 years ago. It was in his introduction to
their report, which is called "New Hampshire, My Responsibility". The Governor had two goals for that Commission. Again, I quote: "First, identify those characteristics which would make New Hampshire a unique and special place. Second, develop approaches and initiatives that will help assure the protection and promotion of those characteristics."

The Northern Pass Project represents the opposite of what Governor Gregg called for. It goes against the character of our landscape. It goes against the small, democratic, direct involvement of citizens in creating public policy.

It has, however, energized hundreds of people in creative problem-solving about how to stop it. Many of them are my constituents. These are people who care deeply about the future of our state, about what is unique and special.

We do not want to look like New Jersey with mountains, or like the landscape between the Canadian border and Montreal, crisscrossed with transmission lines and every manner of tower.

I am personally, as many of my constituents, and the Land Trust are still opposed to this project going forward, period. But, if it is to
cross our state on the way to supplying energy to those way down below, it must all be buried. Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mayor Ken Merrifield, to be followed by County Commissioner Rick Samson, and Representative John Burt.

MR. MERRIFIELD: Good evening. Ken Merrifield, K-e-n, M-e-r-r-i-f-i-e-l-d. And, I am the Mayor of Franklin, New Hampshire. And, I come to you this evening on behalf of my community, certainly, but also on behalf of a unanimous Franklin City Council, who supports this Project as submitted to you. And, the benefits to my community are numerous and profound.

But I would like to take a second to share conservations that I have had with manufacturers throughout central New Hampshire. Who tell me that they have a couple of tremendous burdens as they try to compete with other manufacturers throughout the country. One of which was on display a little earlier this evening, that being climate control in New England, which some of their competitors do not have to face. The other is very high electricity prices, as you’ve heard several times this evening. And, so, as manufacturers in New Hampshire, and throughout New
England, are trying to compete and trying to save jobs here in our state, they find themselves increasingly burdened by high electricity prices.

And, I hope that you will be able to bring balance to the discussion. You'll hear very heartfelt concerns this evening, you've heard some already. I hope that you'll be able to balance those with the economic needs of the state as well, which I believe is part of your charge under the statute.

So, thank you very much for this opportunity for the public to speak. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: County Commissioner Rick Samson, to be followed by Representative John Burt, and Rebecca More.

Before you start, I just remind people, if you have a written statement, to please give it to the stenographer. Representative Brown I think may have escaped before doing that.

MR. SAMSON: Good evening, Mr. Chairman. For the record, my name is Rick Samson, S-a-m-s-o-n, as in "Samson and Delilah". I am the Coos County Commissioner for District 3, which is the upper portion of Coos County. I represent eleven towns and eight unincorporated places in District 3, six of the eleven
towns and two of the unincorporated places will be
directly negatively affected by Northern Pass.

I did not intend to speak here this
evening, as I spoke in Colebrook, and you have that
testimony, Mr. Chairman. But I do have several
questions that I would like to give the Committee to
consider upon hearing the Northern Pass presentation
tonight. And, some of the comments that were made that
Bayroot owns 25 percent of the Coos wind farm,
Brookfield Power, from Toronto, Canada, owns the other
75 percent. They have a agreement with the Vermont
Central Public Service and Green Mountain Power to
procure 80 percent of all power generating at that wind
park.

When the three paper mills in Berlin and
the two in Groveton were running, they used more
electricity than all other commercial and residential
users in Coos County. And, therefore, I question
Northern Pass and Eversource's figures on the Coos Loop
and the availability of power. The Coos Loop does not
extend out of Coos County. It has no effect on upper
Coos County. There are no transmission lines in
northern Coos County. This will be an entirely new
project.
I would like to know if the SEC would request an independent analyst to find the real facts concerning cost of burial of the entire route of Northern Pass. Vermont has a DC line right now almost identical, and it only operates at approximately 50 percent of capacity. And, I'm wondering if that has been taken into consideration by the Site Evaluation Committee?

Another question that I have that I would like the Site Evaluation Committee to look at is why has Eversource not had any discussions with either the Coos County Commissioners or serious discussions with the selectboards of Pittsburg, Clarksville, Stewartstown, and the Town of Dalton or Northumberland?

As noticed, most of the proponents here this evening will be receiving monetary benefits from this project. And, I would appreciate you keeping that in consideration when you're looking at their testimony.

One of the notes I would like to make is that the cost of generating, transmitting, and distributing electricity -- distributing electricity in New Hampshire has always been the purview of Public Service Company of New Hampshire. But the costs of
installing, maintaining those poles is no different in New Hampshire than it is in North Carolina, Montana or Wyoming. And, I would like to know why the costs in New Hampshire are so much higher?

Another question would be, does Eversource currently have any AC or DC transmission lines on the same right-of-ways?

With my testimony this evening, and the state requirements and the state RSAs that define who the selectmen for the unincorporated places are, those duties and responsibilities are required to be the duties and responsibilities of the County Commissioners, according to New Hampshire RSA 28:7-a.

I would like to ask, and you will be getting a written request, to strike the testimony of Les Otten, that testified in the Concord hearing as a selectman from the Town of Dixville, which he is not. The only responsibilities of the residents of the unincorporated places are with the election of election officials. To assume any other duties, responsibilities, or titles are not governed by the state RSAs, laws or regulations.

As a District 3 Commissioner, I represent the best interest of my district. And, I
would like to know if the Site Evaluation Committee has given appropriate time, attention, and consideration to my constituents that they deserve. Northern Pass, thus far, has refused to identify who they consider the stakeholders in this proposed project. Will the Site Evaluation Committee require Northern Pass to identify the stakeholders and ask why the local elected officials have and are not considered as stakeholders?

I would respectfully request that any members of the Site Evaluation Committee be required to notice how much, if any, time they have ever spent in upper Coos County. Can they consciously make such an important decision concerning the future of Coos County, knowing very little or nothing about the county and the economic condition of our county?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Samson, how much more do you have?

MR. SAMSON: One minute, one paragraph.

As a member of this Committee, --

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Please wrap up.

MR. SAMSON: -- it is your obligation, duty and responsibility to the residents of our state to consider the negative impacts that this proposed project will have on our entire state. Your decision
is not temporary, but permanent, and will affect our
state forever. Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Representative John
Burt, to be followed by Rebecca More, and Cheryl
Jensen.

REP. BURT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
thank you, Board, for allowing me to speak tonight. My
name is Representative John Burt, and I represent
Goffstown, Weare, and Deering. And, my name is John
Burt again, J-o-h-n, and it's B-u-r-t.

Mr. Chairman, I think the gentleman with
the green shirt and tie is going to have very tired
hands tonight. As I watch him, I don't know how he
keeps up.

Mr. Chairman, I used to have a business
in Barnet, Vermont. I operated it for 18 years. Every
day, when I came out of my office, which was an old
barn, that I converted it into an office, I saw the
power line over in Monroe. I support Northern Pass,
because I support that power line over there. I
thought it looked pretty cool, to be honest, when I
looked at it. All my friends and neighbors over in
Monroe, they didn't have an issue with that power line.
As a matter of fact, their property values did not hurt one bit.

I am a resident of Goffstown, and in Goffstown, it does not hurt property value. That same power line from Monroe, New Hampshire, runs right through Goffstown. As a matter of fact, Market Basket built their parking lot under, in Bedford, New Hampshire, they built their parking lot under the power lines, and the store is just off to the side. And, again, they pay a lot of property taxes, because it does not hurt property value.

What I'd like to talk about is a little bit of the wind and power, the wind power and the solar power. It is high cost to me and my constituents and to my neighbors. Hydro-Quebec is low-cost energy. We need it, Mr. Chairman.

As a state representative, I get a lot of calls and e-mails from businesses. Several of the businesses, well, almost all the businesses say one of their major factors of not coming to New Hampshire is the high cost of power. Hydro-Quebec will help with that. The businesses that want to come here are not. They're going to North Carolina and the southern states, because the power cost is less.
Mr. Chairman, I hope you look at this favorably, because we need the Hydro-Quebec power, which is renewable, cheap, and a good energy source to come down here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Rebecca More, to be followed by Cheryl Jensen, and Elizabeth Terp.

MS. MORE: Good evening. My name is Rebecca More, M-o-r-e, one "o". I'm speaking on behalf of the Weeks Lancaster Trust, in Lancaster, New Hampshire, regarding the proposal of the Northern Pass to lay two, I repeat, two new aboveground lines through New Hampshire's historic and cultural landscapes.

Many here in New Hampshire know how devastated the White Mountains region looked before the Weeks Act of 1911. The reclamation of forest lands and habitats has been slow and incremental. The Weeks Act was a collaborative, grass-roots effort, based on accurate data and supported by many people.

Sadly, Weeks State Park, given to the state in 1941 by my grandfather, Sinclair Weeks, and his sister, directly overlooks the proposed transmission line. They gave the Mount Prospect site to the state as a reminder of the purpose and the benefits of the Weeks Act, as well as for recreation by
all. Thousands of visitors come from around the world to enjoy its extraordinary panoramic views -- if you haven't been, I advise you to go there -- from Mount Monadnock, near Colebrook, to Moosilauke, near Benton.

However, the documents submitted by Northern Pass regarding the visual impact of this proposal on Weeks State Park are inaccurate, inconsistent, and misleading. Just one example will suffice: The submitted materials state that eight towers would be visible from the Park. When, in fact, the number is approximately 219.

I hope that the SEC, acting on behalf of the people of New Hampshire, will submit these materials to the critical review by independent experts. If the Weeks State Park materials are inaccurate, inconsistent, and misleading, then undoubtedly those submitted for other areas are as well.

Thank you very much.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Cheryl Jensen, to be followed Elizabeth Terp, and David Van Houten.

And, Ms. Jensen, just for one day I wish I had your penmanship.
MS. JENSEN: Wish what?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I wish I had your penmanship.


[Laughter.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I did not have Ms. Weir.

MS. JENSEN: Okay. My name is Cheryl, C-h-e-r-y-l, Jensen, J-e-n-s-e-n. I am Co-Chair of the Bethlehem Conservation Commission. I timed my remarks at three to four minutes, but that was at one o'clock this afternoon and I was much fresher, so...

As proposed in Bethlehem, this project would include almost five miles of overhead transmission lines along the current Eversource right-of-way, through wetlands from the Bethlehem town line to Route 302, as well as Transition Station Number 5 across from Miller Pond, also called "Baker Brook Pond", where the lines will then be buried. It will impact two important water bodies: The Ammonoosuc River and Baker Brook Pond.

The Ammonoosuc River is a New Hampshire Designated River, with special protection from the New
Hampshire River Management and Protection Program under RSA 380 -- 483. And, I'd like to mention that the Ammonoosuc Local River Advisory Committee opposes this project and has submitted a letter to the SEC.

Baker Brook Pond is the largest open water pond in Bethlehem at almost 18 acres, and it's subject to the Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act. This Transition Station Number 5 is going to be directly across from Baker Brook Pond.

We commissioned two certified wetland scientists to look at the impact of this project on the wetlands in the current right-of-way. And, we submitted the report to the DES and to the SEC. The report is titled "Assessment of the Transmission Line Proposal on Natural Resources within the Northern Half of Bethlehem, New Hampshire". Not a very sexy title, but it's interesting reading. I know you will read that report and the letter we submitted, which thoroughly outlines our concerns, but I do want to call your attention to a few other things.

First, we believe that the environmental impact of this project, as bad as it is, is being underestimated in several different ways, and not just...
in Bethlehem. First, all the temporary impacts that are associated with this I believe are not accounted for. Just one example is the area at Baker Brook Pond, where I believe you stopped very briefly when you visited the Rocks last Monday. The land there drops away very quickly into a wetland. I talked to Eversource engineers at one of the public hearings, and they said that that area would have to be developed with "fill".

The Northern Pass Stormwater Management Study for that area reads, I'll give you just one sentence, "Filling these soils likely requires a permit from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Yet, no application that I can find has been submitted for like dredging or filling that area. So, how can we be looking at the full impact?

Another way it's being underestimated is that the temporary impacts from -- for staging and laydown areas, as well as access roads, are not included in the applications that have been submitted to DES thus far. The fact that these impacts are not being accounted for is documented in two places. One is the letter to the SEC from Peter Roth, Counsel for
the Public, the other is in the prefiled testimony of John Kayser, who is the Construction Project Manager.

Briefly, from excerpts in Mr. Roth's letter, "The prefiled testimony of Mr. Kayser indicates laydown areas can be up to fifty acres...Yet the testimony does not describe how many laydown areas are needed or where they will be located. The prefiled testimony...states that the information is not known at this time...Thus, for an unknown portion of the land that will be impacted by construction, which could be significant, given the potential size of each laydown site, the Applicant is silent."

And, finally, we think the impacts being underestimated in Bethlehem, because Northern Pass was constrained to mapping in the right-of-way because of property rights. And, although the Applicant purports to have a relatively small impact of 0.39 acres, this does not take into account the connectivity of the wetlands, streams, and rivers.

In the existing right-of-way, Northern Pass identified 55 wetlands, all of which are part of larger systems that extend far beyond that narrow right-of-way. Disrupting the wetlands within the right-of-way will have negative impacts far beyond
those boundaries.

And, in our report, we identify five "Wetland Concern Areas", all of which involve potential adverse impacts to the Ammonoosuc, because of impacts to streams which from flow either directly or indirectly into it.

Please keep these points in mind when you're looking at and considering the impact. Bethlehem hopes that you won't allow the destruction of valuable wetlands and adverse impacts to the Ammonoosuc River and Baker Brook Pond, merely so that corporations based in Connecticut and Quebec can make money at the expense of our environment. It seems that you can achieve balance that people have been talking about tonight by just burying the project.

Thank you very much.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Elizabeth Terp, to be followed by David Van Houten, and Suzanne Smith. Ms. Terp, before you start, I need to make a couple of announcements.

First, for those who want to come to the status conference that's scheduled I think next week, there's still no location set for that. So, please
check the website regularly, look for an order specifying where that will take place. It will be in Concord, but it probably won't be at the Public Utilities Commission, because our facility, while large, is probably not big enough to accommodate the crowd.

Second, with respect to questions about process and participation in a proceeding like that, Public Counsel, Peter Roth, has been referenced a few times tonight. Peter, can you stand up again?

Peter reminded me that he's also available to speak to people who have questions about the process and how things are going and what the process will look like.

And, the third thing I want to talk about is that, I know people are trying to be brief, and I really appreciate that. What I'm going to do is, when people get to three and a half minutes, I'm going to raise my hand. So, if you do happen to look up and see that I have my hand raised, that means you've gone past three and a half minutes. And, if you could either bring yourself to a close or to stop and come back at the end, we'll all appreciate it and we'll get through more speakers that way. So, thank you for your
patience.

Ms. Terp, you may proceed.

MS. TERP: All right. And, I'll be brief. Elizabeth Terp, E-l-i-z-a-b-e-t-h, T-e-r-p. I'm from Thornton. And, my concern is the plan to mitigate the Northern Pass carbon footprint.

Hydro-Quebec power is not clean energy. It comes at great cost to the environment, the indigenous people of Quebec, the fishing and tourist industries, and the diversity of wildlife. It leaves a significant carbon footprint. Hydro-Quebec has avoided mitigating their destruction of Quebec through Environment Canada, which considers their reservoirs a "land-use change". Hydro-Quebec can make no such claim in New Hampshire.

My concern is with the carbon footprint by the Northern Pass Project, and the absence of a comprehensive mitigation plan to offset 500 miles of access roads, widening the existing road, blasting to prepare for pilings, cement for pilings, and heavy equipment used to create 35-foot pilings to carry the new lines. Here is a picture of the overhead transmission line foundation to consider. These are filled with cement. And, cement is -- for every ton of
cement, you have one ton of carbon dioxide emitted.

The following questions need to be addressed before the Northern Pass Application can be accepted: What is the Northern Pass Mitigation Plan? And, what Carbon Footprint Monitoring System is being used to assure that compliance is documented? For example, the Carbon Disclosure Project is a London-based global non-profit. And, how much will the mitigation of the Northern Pass carbon Footprint cost? And, how is the Northern Pass paying the bill?

Burying the line is certainly going to lower that carbon footprint. So, please bury the line. See that the line is buried.

Thank you for your consideration.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: David Van Houten, to be followed by Representative Suzanne Smith, and Patricia Kellogg.

MR. VAN HOUTEN: Good evening. Thanks again for those of you who serve on the Site Evaluation Committee to come and hear our opinion of this dreadful proposal.

My name is David Van Houten, V-a-n, H-o-u-t-e-n. I live in Bethlehem. And, you will remember, from my comments in Colebrook last Monday,
that I disagree with the Applicant's contention that
they have the right to build this project on my land.
I am not alone in this.

The Applicant claims that this project
is about energy. In fact, energy is a secondary issue.
The primary objective of this proposal is for
Hydro-Quebec and Eversource to make a lot of money.
This has guided their every move since day one.

The route that was first proposed cost
the least to build and made the most money for the
Applicant. The proposal now before us costs a little
more, and would yield slightly lower profits, but is
still very lucrative. The Committee will not have
failed to notice that this proposal is still rejected
by the people of New Hampshire by a three-to-one
margin. You've also heard that some of the opponents
might be willing to settle for a route that was
completely buried along major corridors in ground that
has already been disturbed. Coincidentally, this would
line up with statements in the U.S. Department of
Energy's Draft Environmental Impact Statement that the
least environmental impact and the greatest economic
benefit to New Hampshire would come from this approach.
The Applicant claims that it cannot afford such a
project. According to the Montreal Gazette, Hydro-Quebec profits in 2015 were $3.1 billion. That represents a lot of buying power when considering a project that will generate income for decades.

An alternative that must be considered is burial of the line from Derby Line, Vermont, down I-91 to Hartford or on 91 to I-93. These are already developed corridors that are large enough to absorb a project of this magnitude. Instead, I see Route 112 and 116, which are not big enough, and Route 3 barely qualifies as a major corridor. The idea to bury this in Franconia village and Main Street, in Plymouth, close by homes, schools, and businesses, is simply ridiculous.

I have also not seen much discussion about the wisdom of building a project on our land that will funnel money out of the country. This money would be much better invested in American workers implementing energy efficiency and conservation measures, and ramping up solar energy capacity here in New England. Are the electrical workers who come to these meetings looking for jobs going to follow the money to Canada? It won't be here anymore.

Will Eversource sell this project to {SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
Hydro-Quebec when it is all done? What would be the implications of that?

How do we know that the electricity coming down from Quebec is this supposedly clean hydropower? There is nothing to stop Hydro-Quebec from building a thousand megawatt coal plant just north of the border to feed this line.

Over the last week or so, the property owners and the citizens of New Hampshire have stated in no uncertain terms that we oppose this project. You have heard of the "line in the sand"; we have drawn a line in the mud: No towers.

I hope you will decide that the no-build alternate is the best. And, if you can't bring yourself to do that, please stipulate that the entire project be buried in a sensible fashion.

Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Representative Suzanne Smith, to be followed by Patricia Kellogg, and Walter Palmer.

REP. SMITH: Good evening. For the record, I am Suzanne Smith, S-u-z-a-n-n-e, S-m-i-t-h. I represent the Towns of Plymouth, Hebron, and Holderness in the New Hampshire Legislature. And,
welcome to my district.

Since the Northern Pass was introduced five years, I have attended numerous public forums, hearings, meetings, and, today, a site tour. I listened to the comments of my constituents, residents of the North Country, Concord, and the Lakes Region at many of these meetings. One phrase that I frequently hear is "our natural beauty", the "natural beauty of New Hampshire". Whether it's the lakes, the mountains, or the farmland, we live in a beautiful state. And, we need to protect the natural scenic beauty of New Hampshire.

When this project was first proposed entirely above-ground, signs went up in downtown Plymouth. The local cafe, the hair dresser on Main Street, the dentist, and even my own cabin: "Stop Northern Pass". These signs have not come down, I checked today, along the transmission lines -- although the transmission lines in Plymouth are proposed to be buried. Burying some of the lines is a good first step, but it is only a beginning.

Northern Pass has worked long and hard to push this project ahead. But they have not garnered much more support than when they began in 2010. In
fact, as more people become aware of the ramifications of Northern Pass, they may have lost support.

In New York and Vermont, large transmission projects, which will be underground or underwater, have been approved easily. In Maine, negotiations for burial of long distance HVDC lines in the Maine Turnpike corridor are moving ahead.

I had a wonderful time on the site visit today, and I learned a lot. And, you, the SEC, have a daunting task ahead of you. And, I'm relying on you to ask the tough questions. Does this project work? And, if so, how?

I took a few notes, and here are a few questions I had. Route 3, in Plymouth, Main Street. Hmm. Going to dig it up? How long will businesses be impacted by this? Having sat on Route 3, how feasible is it when ledge is on one side of the road, railroad tracks running close by on the other side, and wetlands on the other side also, all very much in close proximity to Route 3? And, what about homes close to the road? I saw some that looked to be maybe 50 feet at the most from the side of the road. Ledges on one side, houses on the other, blasting of ledges, damaging homes. All these are questions I have.
Why is the project taking the most challenging route? For example, back to Route 3, that weaves in and out from Woodstock, down through Plymouth, and into Bridgewater. Route 93 is pretty much a straight shot. Why not bury in the interstate? I think more work could be done on that. And, why, again, with the most challenging route, if the project crossed the border at Derby Line, followed the Interstate-91 in Vermont, and cross to New Hampshire below the White Mountains, the White Mountain National Forest would be avoided, and Pondicherry section of the Silvio O. Conte Wildlife Refuge would also be avoided.

If burial had been the first, rather than the last, option, the line would probably be built by now. New Hampshire is worth the effort.

And, thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Patricia Kellogg, to be followed by Walter Palmer, and Jeff Guerra.

If there are people who are still sitting downstairs, there are seats coming available upstairs pretty much every 30 seconds or so.

MS. KELLOGG: Patricia Kellogg, P-a-t-r-i-c-i-a, K-e-l-l-o-g-g, of Littleton, New
Hampshire. And, I just have a picture that's done to scale that I would like to show the Site Evaluation Committee. And, I have an assistant.

[Large photograph presented for view by the Site Evaluation Committee and audience members.]

MS. KELLOGG: Just say "no". This is to scale. Just say "no".

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Walter Palmer, to be followed by Jeff Guerra, and Tiler Eaton.

MR. PALMER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Walter Palmer, P-a-l-m-e-r. And, I'm from Franconia, New Hampshire. Most of my prepared remarks have already been covered by others. So, in the interest of brevity, I will skip over most of them.

But there is something that I still would like to bring to the attention of the Committee. And, that is, in 2011, New Hampshire's Legislature had enacted Senate Bill 361, which was a bill created to create a commission to study the feasibility of establishing energy infrastructure corridors within existing transportation rights-of-way. These corridors would be for the expressed purpose of siting projects.
just like Northern Pass.

Senate Bill 361's commission included DOT staff, and worked very closely with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. The final Senate Bill 361 Commission Report, published on November 30th, 2012, stated that DOT, Department of Transportation now, had identified four high corridors as preferred energy infrastructure corridors. These four corridors included, and I quote, "I-93, between the Massachusetts border and the Vermont border". Other identified corridors included the "I-89 corridor" and the "I-95 interstate corridor".

The Senate Bill 361 Commission Report is available on the Internet. And, I will give you the reference, the citation for that.

So, in 2012, the DOT themselves identified the Interstate I-93 corridor, including the portion, I might add, through Franconia Notch, as a preferred corridor for the siting of projects, such as Northern Pass. I-93 and Franconia Notch are not off limits to Northern Pass, despite their repeated efforts to try to convince us that they are.

In fact, the opposite is true. I-93 has been specifically identified, through a coordinated

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
statewide study, to be a preferred energy infrastructure corridor for projects just like Northern Pass. And, I might add that Northern Pass are certainly fully aware of this fact.

It's clear that Northern Pass does not want to build along the interstate corridors, because it's more expensive to do so. However, the fact that they don't want to do it does not make it inviable, as they have repeatedly try to claim it is.

Construction of Northern Pass within interstate corridors is highly viable, completely viable, would eliminate most of the impacts of the project. Would still provide all the benefits that you saw in Mr. Quinlan's table about the benefits of the project, and would, in fact, provide more jobs than the current proposal.

I'll just conclude by emphasizing that burial of Northern Pass along interstate corridors is, in fact completely viable. And, just because Northern Pass doesn't want to do it, that doesn't mean that it can't be done. It is, in fact, the optimal solution for siting Northern Pass in New Hampshire.

And, if SEC is true to its mandate to consider environmental impacts, visual impacts, and
overall benefits to the people of New Hampshire, it
will certainly deny a permit to Northern Pass for its
current proposal, and instead stipulate that Northern
Pass must site its transmission lines -- its
transmission line along interstate corridors.

Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Jeff Guerra, to be
followed by Tiler Eaton, and Robert Krey.

MR. GUERRA: Good evening. My name is
Jeff Guerra. I'm a resident of -- spelled G-u-e-r-r-a.
I'm a resident of Manchester, New Hampshire. And, I
want to thank the Site Evaluation Committee for
allowing me the opportunity to speak in support of the
Northern Pass Project.

I'm a Project Manager for PAR Electrical
Contractors. We were recently added to the Northern
Pass Project Team, and will serve as a general
contractor if the project is approved. Our office is
in Bow, and we have a sister company in Raymond. We
currently employ over 200 people in the state between
our two companies.

For an industry that traditionally
requires these men and women to travel for work, you
can be sure that all of them are looking forward to working on the Northern Pass Project. Especially so for the 240 plus qualified electrical workers currently working away from their homes and families that reside in the State of New Hampshire.

I have personally been involved with our operations in New Hampshire for the past two years, and, more importantly, our apprenticeship program. As part of the Eversource Jobs Initiative Program, we have partnered with Eversource to train and employ young New Hampshire residents. We started this program last year, and it has been a success from its initiation. After approximately three and a half years, these apprentices become fully qualified journeymen. If approved, we plan to continue this program throughout the Northern Pass Project, which will give many more young New Hampshire residents the opportunity for a lifelong career in a highly specialized industry.

The New Hampshire First Initiative will be implemented on this project as well. It gives New Hampshire residents and contractors a first priority to work on the project. Based on our experience on past projects, Northern Pass will add thousands of jobs to the New Hampshire economy. Only a small portion of
these jobs will be for the actual line workers who build the lines. The greatest portions of jobs will be in the form of local road builders, excavation companies, lumber mills, loggers, landscapers, waste management firms, aggregate hauling, equipment maintenance, trucking, and I could go on.

Over the upcoming months, PAR Electrical Contractors will be holding a series of informational sessions for local contractors to attend. We will be working with the Chambers of Commerce and issue press releases once the dates are firmed. At these sessions, we will discuss how all the local contractors can get involved with the project.

In closing, I would like to urge the Committee to approve this Application. Not only will it bring the 240 traveling workers back home and reduce our electric bills, it will bring much needed jobs and economic stimulus to the State of New Hampshire.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Tiler Eaton, to be followed by Robert Krey, and Barbara Meyer.

MR. EATON: Good evening. My name is Tiler Eaton, T-i-l-e-r, E-a-t-o-n. I'm a lineman. I live in Nottingham, New Hampshire. I'm in favor of
Northern Pass. And, like many here tonight, I have also attended several hearings regarding this project. I have done some research on many of the other projects that have been mentioned at several hearings as well. According to the New England Clean Energy RFP website, there are 24 bidders at this time, and two of the projects that would be built underground that I keep hearing of, Champlain Hudson and Maine Power Express, have not submitted a proposal.

Some of the projects that have are the Vermont Green Line, which is 13 miles of underground in Vermont, 6 miles of underground in New York, and 40 miles of sea cable.

The Maine Clean Power connection, 66 miles of overhead transmission.

The Maine Renewable Energy Interconnect, 149 miles of overhead transmission.

NextEra project, which has two, the Evergreen Express, 114 miles of overhead transmission; and the CMP Express, 72 miles of overhead transmission.

The Northern Pass is 192 miles, in which 60 miles will be underground.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Robert Krey, to be
followed by Barbara Meyer, and Barbara Robinson.

MR. KREY: Thank you. My name is Robert Krey, K-r-e-y. I've been an employee at Eversource for 20 years. My father served as a Tuftonboro Planning Board member and on the Lakes Region Planning Commission. And, so, discussions of public concern were dinner talk back in the 1970s. And, this issue is not simple, I can say. New Hampshire residents and businesses both need new generation to offset power plant closings, but you all know that. I thought a lot about what's best for the customers we serve at Eversource, understanding some people's negative views of overhead power lines. And, as an aging pond hockey player, I admire efforts to preserve New Hampshire's vistas. It simply appears that Northern Pass now is the best proposal available to provide clean power here.

I asked myself, who has a plan now that's better? That provides renewable power, no up-front construction costs to New Hampshire customers, and provides reliable hydropower available when wind turbines and solar plants are fast asleep.

The time is here when officials will need to choose some kind of large-scale power source
simply as a replacement just to keep the lights on. In my work as an account executive, I assist large power users. I'm in charge of ensuring customers to get the best value-for-money in their electricity purchase; analyzing customer usage, and advising them on best practices.

New Hampshire power prices are a drag not just on job creation, but also on job retention here in New Hampshire. Whether it's a supermarket chain paying $6 million a year for electricity, believe it, or a school district paying one and a half million, high power prices discourage hiring, and school improvements as well.

Please consider what a manufacturing president told me after I announced a power price increase would work out to $50,000 per year for his business. After he turned red, then purple, he replied, "That just cost me two employees, Bob."

It's important to remember, as a delivery utility, Eversource sets prices based on what it costs us to buy power for you, our customers. Now, there's just not enough reliable supply to keep prices stable and affordable all year around.

Schools, supermarkets, and manufacturers
need relief from current prices. Like spokes of a
wheel, our economy works best when all sectors
function. If people want to continue the increase in
New Hampshire government spending they have voted for
continuously since the 1990s, a business-friendly
economy is the only way to afford it.

With only three states having higher
electricity prices, is it time now for New Hampshire to
choose at least one solution that may turn out better
financially for us than just building another natural
gas-fueled generator?

Like a balanced economy, a balanced fuel
mix, as you all know, helps us by smoothing the
volatility in electric prices. In many cases,
power-intensive businesses are now located in New
England for one reason: Because they're already here,
and relocation is costly and disruptive.

Family-owned businesses create much of
the wealth that government takes to function. If you
burden those businesses too much with high costs, you
reduce government revenue available for the schools and
public services. As you all know, too many New
Hampshire towns already know this effect.

With the planned closure of many nuclear
and coal power plants, we're painted into the current situation of high-priced power. I salute our company and private property owners who have collaborated to make way for a new energy source that the public needs. The state now has a great opportunity for clean, affordable power.

Shouldn't people support the most economic route construction? Why shouldn't affordable power be a high priority in New Hampshire, like it is in many other states?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Please wrap up, Mr. Krey.

MR. KREY: Solar and wind can't rise to the job at hand in this case. Clean hydropower, coming overhead from Canada, will help all New Hampshire power customers.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Barbara Meyer, to be followed by Barbara Robinson, and Peter Grote.

MS. MEYER: Barbara Meyer, from Easton. Meyer is M-e-y-e-r. People have been talking about "winners" and "losers" in the Northern Pass Project. I live among the "winners", where cables are proposed to be buried along Route 116 through Franconia and Easton.
And, I'd like to explain tonight why my neighbors and I don't feel like "winners" at all.

First, there is the fact that, in our area, our homes are sited fairly close to the road where these lines would go in. I estimate that maybe about a third of our homes are within 50 feet of the road. Some are on stacked stone foundations. Some have wells in the front yard, at say around 30 feet from the excavation, which will include blasting and drilling, especially for the 10-by-10-by-30-foot vaults. Eversource has said they'll be taking videos of wells and foundations in anticipation of damage claims. Damage claims? And, we're winners in this?

We're also concerned that, although Eversource has said they'll try to bury the lines under the pavement, they will sometimes use adjacent land. That means that, in some of our front yards, they will be removing vegetation permanently. And, again, no winning here.

Next, consider what's happening to our property values. Many folks have an 80/20 split, mortgage financing to equity in their homes. But the banks don't share your pain when something like this hits your overall property value. So, an overall loss
of ten percent in the value of your home wipes out
50 percent of your equity. Half of your investment is
gone overnight, because you opened a letter from
Eversource that says the Northern Pass is going at the
end of your driveway. Now, that's winning like Charlie
Sheen!

Then, you go to an info session and you
learn that huge property tax payments are being used to
entice local governments to approve the route.
Millions of dollars are going here, going there, to one
group or another, that can push the project along.
Yet, you, the people who are actually affected, are
completely ignored, ignored while you're the ones
suffering the impact of the project. You bear the
risks of excavation, blasting, dust and debris through
the years of construction. Forever after, you'll bear
the loss of vegetation, and the hassles of repairs.
Most galling of all, though, you'll watch the value of
your home equity eroded, while no one even contemplates
compensation to you. Somehow that feeling of being
crushed by political expediency, I don't think that's
what winning feels like.

When even the winners hate your plan,
it's time for a new plan. Opt for Alternative 4a and
bury this whole line using existing industrial corridors like I-93. The I-93 route is shorter. It has less environmental impact. Fewer historical sites would need to be evaluated. Problems from construction damage, to EMF worries, to dig-in risks, are all reduced on 93 compared with running this through a residential community. Traffic flow on 93 would even keep the lines safer from people who might intentionally want to disrupt the grid. And, most significantly, using 93 preserves property values.

Don't tear a new industrial corridor through residential neighborhoods in the North Country. Bury this project down 93 instead.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Barbara Robinson, to be followed by Peter Grote, and Senator Jeanie Forrester.

MS. ROBINSON: My name is Barbara Robinson. I'm a resident of Ellsworth, New Hampshire. I'm also the Executive Director of North Country Council. North Country Council is a state-designated regional planning commission for the proposed route of the Northern Pass transmission line from the Canadian border to the Plymouth-Bridgewater line. We are
responsible, under state law, to prepare a coordinated plan for the development of the region to encourage the most appropriate use of land. Accordingly, New Hampshire RSA 162-H:16 requires the SEC to take the views of the regional planning commission into account in determining whether issuance of the certificate would interfere with the orderly development of the region.

Our current regional plan was adopted in 2014. The plan was developed after two years spent asking residents of the region what their highest priority need was, and what qualities of the region were most important to them. We asked in many different ways, in many different settings. Through this process, we were able to generate a consensus-based regional plan aimed at addressing the region's highest priority need: Livable wage jobs with benefits, that are built on, or at least compatible with, stewardship of the region's scenic natural environment and recreational opportunities. The plan emphasizes taking care of what we have and building on our strengths, such as our scenic natural environment, to increase prosperity, while reducing the cost of living through such means as local energy production.
The regional plan contains the following strategy statement: "Protect the region's iconic and popular viewsheds from undue adverse impacts associated with incompatible land use, such as large transmission lines, like Northern Pass, through such means as legislative restriction and participation in EIS and permit reviews."

Alternatives 4 and 6, which provide for burial of -- in the roadway corridors throughout our region, would be consistent with the region's plan's emphasize on the natural scenic environment as the foundation for the orderly development of the region.

A second consideration relative to the orderly development of the region criterion is the impact of local energy production. Relative to reducing the cost of living in the North Country, the plan contains the follow strategy statement: "Increase the region's production and use of renewable energy consistent with protection of other important natural and scenic resources." This means that to establish that the Northern Pass proposal will not interfere with the orderly development of the region, in addition to burial of the line. The SEC must also be convinced the project won't provide a financial disincentive to the

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
development of additional local energy generation facilities.

We urge the SEC to seriously consider the 2014 regional plan for the North Country when considering interference with the orderly development of the region. I will provide this paper that gets into more details for you.

Only the cost of construction to the Applicant is higher with burial, but not by orders of magnitude, not by an unreasonable amount, by 33 percent, in the case of Alternative 6A, for example.

Thank you for consideration of our comments, and the unusual high stakes associated with scene impacts of our region.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Peter Grote, to be followed by Senator Jeanie Forrester, and Frederick Von Karls.

MR. GROTE: Good evening. My name is Peter Grote, G-r-o-t-e. I'm a resident of Franconia.

I thank the Committee for hosting this public hearing and allowing us to address members.

I first would like to respond to Mr. Quinlan's comment, if I heard it correctly, and please correct me if I'm wrong, I heard Mr. Quinlan say
that the reason for avoiding I-93 was "because it can't be disturbed". That disturbs me. For over a million years, the Appalachian Mountain System has survived ice sheets, glaciers, earthquakes, floods, and landscapes [landslides?], and, in recent times, even the construction of twenty different interstate highways, including Interstate I-93.

Geologic history indicates that a river once flowed through Franconia Notch, the river that disturbed -- that deposited disturbed gravel, not ledges. I think, Mr. Quinlan, you need to send of your experts back to do some homework.

I have three questions. Will Plymouth taxpayers have to pay for the cost of maintaining, repairing, and updated their existing utility infrastructures, in addition to the Applicant's new, untested, thermally dynamic DC lines for the next 70 years?

Now, "70 years" may be a contradiction to what we've heard, but at one of our meetings, and I believe it was in Whitefield earlier in the year, representatives of Northern Pass were asked the life of the towers, and the answer was "60 or 70 years". If the life of the towers is 60 or 70 years, we, the
skeptical public, can also assume that the whole line will have a life of 70 years, not 40 years.

The second question: What are the cumulative, long-term, quantitative and qualitative impacts on all the other New Hampshire Main Streets, not just Plymouth, North Woodstock, and Franconia, all the other Main Streets, residences, businesses, farms, wildlife habitats and viewsheds along the proposed 192-mile project?

It can be argued that the Applicant's proposed route, consisting of 1,838 towers and buried lines under New Hampshire State Route 3, 116, 112, and Route 18, as well as other roads, could impose greater long-term impacts than an alternative route throughout the Interstate Highway System, as has been proposed and suggested many times tonight.

During recent public hearings in Whitefield, Lincoln, Colebrook, and Concord, Applicants made the following comments: It would be technically impossible to bury the entire line. The lifespan, as I mentioned, of the towers was stated to be "60 or 70 years". This presumes that the line consisting of towers and/or underground cables could be 60 or 70 years. Finally, again, as we heard tonight,
Hydro-Quebec, not New Hampshire ratepayers, will be paying for the construction of the line. And, that the cost of burying would add a billion dollars.

While the Applicants are still withholding from the public a report titled "Cost/Benefit and Local Economic Impact Analysis", Hydro-Quebec, on a regular basis, discloses detailed financial results and projections.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Grote, please bring your comment to a close.

MR. GROTE: Okay. I'll conclude. Basically, the simple model of cash flow suggests that burying the entire line could cost perhaps 1 percent of the potential cumulative profit resulting from the project.

To conclude, the Applicants have told members of the Committee repeatedly "It's not economically viable to bury the entire line." Many of the participants here tonight believe this hypothesis is not credible.

Thank you very much.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Senator Jeanie Forrester, to be followed by Frederick Von Karls, and
Susan Moore.

SEN. FORRESTER: Good evening. For the record, my name is Jeanie Forrester, J-e-a-n-i-e, F-o-r-r-e-s-t-e-r. I'm the Senator for District 2, representing 27 communities. And, I'm here this evening to testify in opposition to this project.

I was happy to hear earlier the gentleman, Mr. Palmer, mention the "361 Commission". I'm the prime sponsor of the bill, and chaired that Commission. So, it was nice to know somebody actually read the report. So, thank you, Mr. Palmer, wherever you are.

I did want to talk about that, but I'll be brief, since he took most of my lines. In 2012, a commission to study the feasibility of establishing an energy infrastructure corridor within existing transportation rights-of-way was created. On that Commission were members of the House and the Senate, the Office of Energy & Planning, the Department of Administrative Services, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Environmental Services, and the Department of Resources and Economic Development, along with the Chair of the Public Utilities Commission and the Department of Revenue
Administration.

And, I tell you that, because I think it's important to know how that Commission was made up. And, for any of you that are interested, I'd be happy to give you a copy of that report.

And, I reread the report myself. And, I would like to just read a few things, and then I'll be done.

As an elected official, my priority, my responsibility is to my constituents. I have heard loud and clear their concerns about what could potentially happen to New Hampshire's beautiful vistas and landscapes with uncontrolled predatory development. It is exactly why the 361 Commission was created, to look at the feasibility of creating underground energy corridors.

Now, I'll go to the findings very quickly. And, basically, it says, and I'm just taking excerpts, not reading the whole thing: "Some current transmission proposals would use New Hampshire essentially as a through-path to link generation capacity located outside New Hampshire, with demand load centers also located outside New Hampshire." So, essentially, an extension cord through New Hampshire.
And, you heard that the DOT did identify the corridors that could be used. And, then, I'll read you this one last thing: "As specified in RSA 162-H, the SEC, before issuing its approval for a proposed energy facility, must consider available alternatives and fully review the environmental impact of the site or route, and must also find that the site and facility will not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region, with due consideration having been given to the views of municipal and regional planning commissions and municipal governing bodies, and that the site and facility will not have an unreasonable adverse effect on aesthetics, historic sites, air and water quality, the natural environment, and public health and safety."

And, supporting this, this finding, were members of the Department of Revenue Administration, the Department of Environmental Services, the Department of Transportation, the PUC, DRED, and OEP.

So, I think the results of the 361 Commission is clear. It is possible to put this site -- this project underground, and this Commission -- or, the Site Evaluation Committee should seriously look at that as the alternative, as the way
to put this project through, if you're going to do it.

So, thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Frederick Von Karls, followed by Susan Moore, and Richard Hunnewell.

And, before you start, Mr. Von Karls, I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that somebody asked to have their card pulled. The bad news is that we are roughly one-third into the pile of cards. Okay? So, we're going to take three more speakers, and then we're going to take a break, so Mr. Patnaude's hands don't explode.

Mr. Von Karls, you may proceed.

MR. VON KARLS: My name is Doctor Frederick, F-r-e-d-e-r-i-c-k, Von Karls, spelled V, as in "Victor" -o-n, K-a-r-l-s.

And, I'm going to start by reading a letter I sent and addressed to Mr. Peter Roth, who is I believe, I was told at a Plymouth meeting earlier by Mr. Roth that he is a representative, an attorney who represents the interests of the people of the State of New Hampshire, who also has the ability to hire consultants around issues that pertain directly to Northern Pass and this project. So, this is the letter I wrote to Mr. Roth, and -- Roth, I'm sorry, I keep
saying that improperly, Mr. Roth.

"Dear Mr. Roth: After meeting you at the Loon Mountain Northern Pass meeting, I had an idea that may prove crucial to a final and accurate rendition of the outcome data concerning the estimated versus the ultimate true tax benefit value to communities in New Hampshire regarding the immediate, ongoing and long-term effects of the Northern Pass Project.

I propose that you consider hiring an independent consultant -- notice that word, very important here -- independent consultant who would gather the following data. Number (1) Validate the current Eversource estimates regarding the proposed total tax dollar benefit of their proposal. Number (2) Research the dollar impact of view and construction degradation to affected properties adjacent to the proposed construction per owner and town. Number (3) Assess tax revenue losses in each town along the route due to assessments that may need to be lowered on properties, as well as the probable losses of income due to tourist avoidance of visiting impacted areas or deciding not to visit affected or adjacent areas.

I believe the residents of the State of
New Hampshire deserve a fair and accurate cost/benefit analysis that compares the Eversource estimates of tax revenue benefits against all possible tax and tourist revenue losses that could be incurred because of real estate devaluation and lessened tourist trade visits because of unlike -- [unsightly and] degradation to scenic areas and towns both during construction and as a result of this project."

I'd like to add further that I believe this state is a national treasure. I firmly believe that, and I'd like everyone who's a resident of this state hopefully to feel the same way. And, that all of us, everybody here, Mr. Chairman, the SEC members, the Eversource people who are with us here today, that we all could work toward making sure that this state stays a national treasure. Because I think it's an incredible resource, and we all need to be proud of it and maintain it.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Susan Moore, to be followed by Richard Hunnewell.

MS. MOORE: My name is Susan Moore, M-o-o-r-e. I am speaking as Chair of the Northern Grafton County Democrats, and I am a Franconia
resident.

We are on record in opposition to the original proposal for Northern Pass. We are pleased that Eversource has recognized how important it is to bury some of their lines, and that they have put forth revised plans. This is a great beginning, but it still leaves most of the lines above ground.

Coos County and a good portion of Grafton County will still have aboveground lines. This is not a good situation for our neighbors.

Now that Eversource has stated that lines can be buried along roadways, through the White Mountain National Forest, we request that lines be buried throughout the entire route. We also request that this burial of lines be done in such a way that it will cause the least disruption to the communities the lines pass through. Eversource uses the -- use of the I-93 corridor for the Northern Pass Project would mitigate much of our concern.

Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Hunnewell, to be followed our break.

MS. HUNNEWELL: My husband has taken
ill, and I would like to read his speech for him. Is that all right?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Absolutely.

MS. HUNNEWELL: Thank you. This evening, I would like to leave you with two points. One is an ingredient missing in the transcription of the hearings the SEC has not attended, and, second, about legacy. My husband, I should tell you, is an art historian.

Firstly, to guard the natural beauty with which New Hampshire has been so generously endowed is the principal reason most of us are wearing orange, and have come out time and time again to these hearings during the last five years. Legions of New Hampshire citizens have spoken passionately and eloquently in opposition to Northern Pass. They have enumerated the multiple negative impacts, as well as marshaled prodigious amounts of painstaking research that has pointed out facts and supplied compelling documentation which refute the contentions and promises in Northern Pass's glossy propaganda.

What I would like to emphasize this evening, however, is that a crucial ingredient of these statements have not been captured in the reams of transcription. For the first time, you, as members of
the SEC, have the opportunity to see us give our statements. Yes, to experience us as people, not as pieces of paper transcripts.

My hope is that you will take away from this evening not only our statements to the opposition to surface transmission lines, but also the following: The intensity in our faces, the sincerity in our eyes, the passion in our voices, and the commitment and resolution in our -- in our demeanor to continue our protest of Northern Pass and surface transmission lines.

Secondly, I am wearing my orange in an attempt to contribute in a small way to those courageous souls in the past and present who have worked to doggedly to honor, protect, and preserve our landscape and its resources. We must continually remind ourselves that New Hampshire people and other state visitors have extolled and celebrated New Hampshire's natural beauty for over 200 years.

In the 19 -- in the 1820s and '30s, the English born artist and poet, Thomas Cole, traveled to the White Mountains and recorded his responses to the majestic grandeur of New Hampshire in paintings and poetry. In 1911, Congressman John Weeks sponsored the
Weeks Act, which created the White Mountain National Forest. These persons of vision understood the crucial importance of the preservation of our natural environment and the future.

As members of the SEC, you have a momentous decision to make. A decision which not only will impact New Hampshire now, but will also resound into the future. If the entire length of Northern Pass is not buried, then the surface lines will become a permanent disfiguration assault on our landscapes.

My hope and prayer is that you will take the high road and make the decision which will continue the history of honoring, protecting, and preserving the New Hampshire landscape, and thus safeguarding our birthright and assure our legacy for future generations, your birthright and legacy as well.

Thank you very much.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Ma'am, could you identify yourself for the record please.

MS. HUNNEWELL: I'm Anne Hunnewell.

MR. PATNAUDE: Anne Hunnewell.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you. Please, we hope your husband is feeling better.
MS. HUNNEWELL: That goes for me, too.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: We will be taking about a ten-minute break. When we come back, the first speakers will be Neil Irvine, to read a statement on behalf of John Hughes, Eli Badger, and Linda McDermott.

(Recess taken at 9:01 p.m. and the public hearing resumed at 9:12 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Irvine, are you ready to read Mr. Hughes's statement into the record?

[Short pause.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Is Mr. Irvine still here?

[No verbal response]

MR. SAKURA: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry, I didn't hear your call. My name David Sakura, S-a-k-u-r-a.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Sakura, are you speaking for Mr. Hughes?

MR. SAKURA: No. I thought you called me?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: No. I haven't called you. I'm sorry, no. I see your name, you're in here somewhere, but you're not up yet.

MR. SAKURA: Okay.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: The person I'm looking for is Neil Irvine, to speak on behalf of John Hughes?

[No verbal response]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. Well, we'll put that aside. Eli Badger, to be followed by Linda McDermott, and Scott Grey.

MR. BADGER: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I am Eli Badger, E-l-i, B-a-d-g-e-r. I'm with the Ashland Water and Sewer Commission. And, 11, approximately 11 of the towers are going to go, if this happens, are going to go through our well field and our lagoon area. So, we are a little bit more concerned if this happens.

Part of what I have to say is, when I was reading all -- as much of the documentation as I could over the last several days, is that Ashland Water and Sewer was lumped into -- lumped along with the Planning Board and the Town of Ashland's Board of Selectmen. And, we feel that we have different issues than either the Planning Board does or the Selectboard does. The Commission is responsible for the health and safety of our drinking water and our septic systems.

Three of the wells -- excuse me, three
of the towers are going to be within 80 feet of our septage receiving area, our lagoons. Our lagoons are clay-lined, and we have a large concern that -- what will happen if they are disturbed. We are within 250 feet of the Pemigewasset River.

Our concerns have not been addressed.

And, we hope the SEC will ask about them, as explained in our letter. That's all I have.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Linda McDermott, to be followed by Scott Grey, and Anne Hunnewell, again, although I'm not sure she wants to speak separately.

But, anyway, Ms. McDermott.

MS. McDERMOTT: Thank you.

I'm from Franconia. My husband and I fell in love with Franconia when we honeymooned there 23 years ago at the historic Franconia Inn. We loved the laid-back culture and peacefulness of the town and the serene scenic views of the surrounding mountains.

Our retirement dream came true recently when we purchased a home in Franconia to enjoy nature with our family, today and into our future. We felt safe with our purchase, because Franconia wasn't on the proposed route on the website, "What's happening in your town."

But the route changed and underground lines are now
being proposed for the town.

While that's preferable to ugly stress-inducing towers, I feel it would be an unnecessary disruption to this small town, with historic homes close to the road, with fragile foundations, and roadside wells and ponds. Small businesses on Main Street depend on tourists that will have to close during construction, a financial hardship.

Environmentally, an extensive network of wetlands and streams meander along the scenic treeline winding and rolling Route 116, where bear, moose, deer, beavers, and other wildlife nest and feed.

There are less populated, less environmentally sensitive, and straighter interstate routes available. I imagine a straighter route, A to B, would be less expensive.

I don't like the idea of Northern Pass at all. But, if it has to be, the entire Northern Pass should be buried. There cannot be human equality for the people of New Hampshire when there is a lack of environmental equality.

With all the millions Hydro-Quebec has spent, buying a property, donating to causes, investing

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
millions in the Balsams, an ambitious and risky
development, which is probably better suited to private
investment, could those millions have been earmarked to
bury the Northern Pass in the first place?

I'm getting a little shaky. And, yay,
tourism. People are exhilarated by the scene: Hikers,
deer, campers, and fishing people and more. We don't
want transmission lines zapping out our endorphins.

New Hampshire beauty can't be compared to other states.
Bury it, because New Hampshire is revered for its
special natural resources, and is one of a few
remaining places in this area to seek refuge from
stressful city life. Those unobstructed views all the
way to Canada is worth it. New Hampshire is defined by
its land.

A corporation is not a person, I get
that. But people run Hydro-Quebec and Eversource, and
their lives will be enriched from profits for many
years to come. But the lives of the people directly
impacted by the Northern Pass will not be enriched.

Below the Notch, many will lose their homes,
businesses, yards, and views. Above the Notch, the
same, except there's a huge bond that the people in the
North Country have with the land. Their lives are
enriched by the land. Those massive, ugly towers with humming lines will scar the landscape forever, and rip the heart out of New Hampshire, but more so, rip the heart and soul from these people. It will be like taking a child away. They have nurtured, cultivated, they have loved their land for generations. They have fished, hunted, farmed, and eating -- and they eat off the land. They have used the land to educate their children. They want this land for future generations.

I'm also almost done. Hydro-Quebec and Eversource have an environmental and moral responsibility to bury all the lines. If that's not good enough, with technology advances today, and the rapidly changing sources of energy, it's incumbent upon Hydro-Quebec and Eversource to bury all the lines.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Scott Grey, to be followed by Anne Hunnewell, if she's still here, and then David Sakura.

[Short pause.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Scott Grey here?

[No verbal response]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Sakura, to be followed by Susan Arnold, and Mike Stirling. Welcome.
MR. SAKURA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
My wife has my dinner ready for me. So, don't worry.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I'm not.

MR. SAKURA: During the public information meeting held by Eversource -- first of all, let me spell my name again for the recorder. It's spelled S-a-k-u-r-a, David, first name.

During the public information meeting held by Eversource last summer in Lincoln, I believe it was Mr. Quinlan who estimated that the average homeowner would expect to see an approximate 5 percent reduction in his or her electrical bill due to the added capacity and the lower cost of energy -- to the lower cost of energy. As a homeowner, the 5 percent reduction translates into just $40 per year, which is about the cost of four large pepperoni pizzas.

This amount of money is an insult, when compared to the overall economic and ecological damage Northern Pass will have on our beautiful state. And, I, for one, will not be bribed by Eversource or NPT with a few gold coins. So, I strongly urge the SEC to either reject the Application or to approve the full burial option.

I'd also like to make a personal appeal
to the members of the SEC. In a statement made by
Chief Seattle, as he surrendered his tribe to the
Federal officials in the State of Washington in the
late 1880s, he said "We do not inherit the earth from
our ancestors; but we only borrow it from our
children."

And, let me emphasize that statement
again. "We do not inherit the earth from our
ancestors; we only borrow it from our children." We
all agree New Hampshire is a beautiful state, with its
forests, streams, and mountains. And, this is the
reason why we choose to live here.

As members of the SEC, you have the
power, granted by the people of New Hampshire, to
approve or reject the NPT Application. So, if you
grant approval, what will you tell your children and
their children's children, why you would allow NPT to
deface their land, the children's land?

I strongly urge the SEC members to
consider your own legacy to your children, your
grandchildren, and your great grandchildren, when it
comes to the NPT Application.

Thank you very much.

[Audience interruption.]
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Susan Arnold, to be followed by Mike Stirling, and Mike Novello.

MS. ARNOLD: Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I think my testimony is a little over three minutes, but I will be fast.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Well, we have it in writing. So, you could probably forego reading it, understanding that it will be part of the record.

MS. ARNOLD: Correct. I'm going to say it, though.

[Court reporter interruption.]

MS. ARNOLD: I'm Susan Arnold, Vice President for Conservation at the Appalachian Mountain Club. AMC is the oldest conservation and recreation organization in the country, with more than 100,000 members and supporters, from Maine to Washington, D.C., including more than 12,000 here in New Hampshire. For 140 years, AMC has helped to protect this region's open spaces, including from poorly sited energy projects, such as Northern Pass, which wants to use high-impact, old technologies to maximize profits at the expense of New Hampshire's iconic landscape. And, just because they are used elsewhere, as was pointed out by Mr. Quinlan, it doesn't make it right here. It is this
unnecessary impact that has brought out so many people in opposition to this project as proposed.

I have three points I would like to make. AMC appreciates the SEC's intention to hold additional public meetings and site visits. Our observations from these sites, that is including today's, is that the stop locations and vantage points are those principally selected by the Applicants' visual consultant for his photosimulations, and they often reflect a bias towards minimizing visual impacts, whereas other more egregious locations are downplayed or ignored.

For example, from last week's visit in Stark, the Route 110 photo location simulation by Mr. Dewan is shown in the top picture, this is on the back of the handout. Yet, where the line would cross Route 110, a scenic byway, there is a much more serious visual impact, but this view, which is the lower picture, was not photo-simulated by the Applicants' consultant. We urge the SEC to consider site visits to locations suggested by parties other than the Joint Applicants, to provide sufficient advance notice, to conduct them during seasons when the most people would see and experience the impacts.
The SEC rules require the use of best practical measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate project impacts. This is my second point. With the proposed 60 miles of burial, Northern Pass has about one-third of the "avoid and minimize" right. Bury the rest and this commitment is met, similar to how other lines are now proceeding in the region and elsewhere.

But the mitigation portion, the so-called "ForwardNH Plan", is a façade. Started with hearings last fall, and ramping up even now, the Applicant has promoted its ForwardNH Plan as the panacea to provide direct benefits to New Hampshire. In reality, it's largely a self-serving business slush fund. "No strings" attached, Les Otten is the best and latest example. Unsaid is that Mr. Otten needs BayRoot's lands for his Balsams project, BayRoot wants the land on -- the line on their lands for multiple business reasons, Mr. Otten needs investment money, and Northern Pass is desperate for public support. The strings are very much attached.

Mitigation plans and funds should be transparent, and directly address the project's actual impacts. The ForwardNH Plan is designed by the Applicants for the promotion of the project through the
calculated dispersal of funding to bolster its own business interests. Until such time the public has sufficient information to accurately scrutinize the claims for this plan, the ForwardNH Plan should not be considered in the Application review process.

We strongly object to all the waiver requests submitted by the Joint Applicants, but especially the request on decommissioning. To avoid providing a required decommissioning plan in its Application, the Joint Applicants are arguing that this transmission line may never be removed, underscoring the permanence of the scar this project will inflict on New Hampshire's landscape if approved as proposed.

One of the Joint Applicants has a recent history, and this is PSNH, of not removing decommissioned transmission poles. When this line was updated through Woodstock, Lincoln, and Easton, 215 chemically treated poles -- I will close in three more sentences -- were dumped in the right-of-way near the Reel Brook Trail, a feeder trail to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in the White Mountain National Forest. Despite numerous complaints from the Town of Easton, these poles were not removed until this Application was put forward. This callous disregard
for the impact of dumping, in the White Mountain National Forest and in the vicinity of the AT, underscores why this request for a waiver from the decommissioning requirements must be denied. The revised SEC rules were designed to make decommissioning promises a reality, and not leave New Hampshire with the Hobson's choice of a permanently scarred landscape or a taxpayer-funded bailout.

Thank you for your time.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mike Stirling, to be followed by Mike Novello, and Lew Mello.

MR. STIRLING: My name is Mike Stirling, and it's spelled S-t-i-r-l-i-n-g. I represent Chapman Development. I am the General manager for a project we have in Groveton, New Hampshire, that is the site of the former Wausau Paper Mill and Groveton Paper Mill.

Groveton, right now, is a dying community. Over eight years ago, we lost a mill that employed 750, to, at one time, 1,200 people, in a town of 2,200 people. These jobs have not returned. This is an aging community. Every year, young families move out of this community, with their kids, seeking employment, because they can't find it there locally.
This trend has depleted the tax base, raised taxes, significantly per capita, and decreased property values as supply exceeds demand.

The community needs this assistance that the project can provide. And, I testify to you tonight that this project can reunite families in this area. The project can bring revenue and work to businesses, revitalization to the area, and hope to these families and communities. And, this support is vital.

The economic support from the ForwardNH Fund is critical for the economic development in Groveton. We, right now, have three businesses that are ready to move onto the Groveton site, bring new jobs to the area and new business activity to the area. What we are looking for are the outside funding sources to make those businesses viable in their new situation. The quicker this support can be extended, the faster the recovery can begin.

We look forward to the support that this project can provide to Groveton and to the surrounding areas. We are grateful for this opportunity. This area depends on the support and the opportunity that this project provides. Thank you for your time.
followed by Lew Mello, and Margaret Mumford.

MR. NOVELLO: Hello. I'm Mike Novello. That's N-o-v-e-l-l-o. I'm from Lyme. I work for Wagner Forest Management Company. We support the project. For my job, I focus on renewable energy solutions. I could not be prouder of the job that I do, because I feel very strongly that climate change is the biggest single problem that faces us today, and our response to this man-made disaster will define the legacy we leave to the next generations.

I read last week in Popular Science that, according to NOAA's latest "State of the Climate Report", this past winter was the warmest on record in the U.S., two and a half degrees Celsius above the 20th century average, or about what the scientists are telling us to expect as an approximate average case scenario for expected global warming situations. So, this past winter is what we can expect going forward. And, if New Hampshire doesn't get -- if we don't get serious about this challenge, I worry that we're going to have a lot more winters where the use of snowsuits is to prevent people from getting muddy, instead of the kids staying warm in the snow.

I'm well-versed in the local energy
markets. And, one of the really clear trends over the last several years is that the only new projects coming on line are wind and natural gas. Natural gas is definitely better than the coal -- the coal plants that are being retired. But it still involves burning a fossil fuel and releasing pollutants into the atmosphere. Hydro projects like Northern Pass, will not be burning anything, so they won't be releasing any pollutants, carbon dioxide or otherwise. It remains still one of the most cost-effective baseload power sources that we have right now that are clean.

I'm looking forward -- I'm also looking forward to the upgrades to the Coos Loop that we've heard about a little bit today. As you know, this section of the grid is host to a lot of New Hampshire's renewable resources, both existing and planned, like wind, water, and biomass. However, our ability to sustainably use our own generation potential and our resources to keep money and energy within the state is severely limited by the aging infrastructure up there. Upgrading these lines will unleash the power of New Hampshire's ingenuity and the ability of our sustainable developers that -- and deal with the problems that we've been talking about for about for
the last decade. With Northern Pass, we will finally have the means of turning a lot of this talk into action.

I have been part of countless SEC hearings, drafts, and proceedings. I recognize just about everyone up here. And, I know that yours is a thankless task. And, I just want to say thank you for your dedication to a fair process.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Lew Mello, to be followed by Margaret Mumford, and Heather Townsend.

Is Mr. Mello here?

[No verbal response]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: No. Margaret Mumford.

MS. MUMFORD: My name is Margaret Mumford, M-a-r-g-a-r-e-t, M-u-m-f-o-r-d. I've been a resident of Plymouth for 42 years, and I'm a sixth generation descendent of early European settlers in both Plymouth and Bridgewater. I remain a landowner in both Plymouth and Bridgewater. I wish to voice concern over the inequity of impacts of the underground and overhead sections of this most recently proposed route. Overhead versus underground determinations seem to have
been made based on weakest link of opposition.

Concerning the overhead route:
Environmental and aesthetic considerations of our river and forest resources are not being considered adequately, especially those resources in close proximity, but not owned by abutters within 100 feet of the current easement.

The Pemigewasset, in Ashland, Bridgewater, New Hampton, and Bristol is a gem, does not enjoy the same protection as waters to the north. The river is enjoyed most by being on it, and the views from it are wonderful. The steep banks at some of the planned crossings appear, from the published maps, to need up to 60 feet additional width of tree-clearing. The risk of erosion during construction and maintenance will be significant. Enjoyment of the relatively unspoiled beauty will be significantly lessened by more towers, more lines, and more clearing, and water quality will decrease.

Peaked Hill Road, in Bridgewater, is another gem, even this time of year. And, SEC members saw a viewscape from Peaked Hill, a simulated viewscape, but did not have the opportunity to travel along Peaked Hill Road itself, which has significant
easements running adjacent to the road and within view of many who live there.

Many other scenic vistas and spots of beauty are unable to be seen from any bus tour route on major throughways, but will be affected by Northern Pass. Such is the New Hampshire landscape.

There is also a lack of an attempted integration of existing overhead structures, as seen in Ashland and Franklin today.

The underground/overhead issue is also pitting town against town, with ForwardNH advance funds potentially driving deep wedges, in potential town buyouts to garner support.

Please note that the last public decision of Plymouth Selectmen regarding Northern Pass was a vote against the project. The community members have not been privy to the conversations between individuals and Northern Pass representatives. Please do not assume the people of Plymouth support this project.

With one foot in underground Plymouth and one foot in overhead Bridgewater, my roots and my heart in New Hampshire, I oppose the project. If it is to happen, then let it specifically be buried down 93.
I appreciate the enormous task you, the SEC, are facing. And, I do appreciate the chance to speak. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Heather Townsend, to be followed by Jon Wilkinson, and Alan McLain.

MS. TOWNSEND: Hi. I'm Heather Townsend, from Bridgewater. I grew up playing along the banks of the Pemi River, swimming and paddling in boats down its near-wild tree-lined corridor. I love the Pemi, in part, because of the wonderful resource it's been to me, but also because it's been a -- it is a resource available to anyone. It is a true public good.

Northern Pass high-voltage lines will cross the Pemi four times within a short span. It will also approach the river closely, within yards, in two more places. All of these places will have new towers for high-voltage, and most also relocated towers up to 125 feet. Currently lines there are below the treeline, new towers well above, often twice the height of what they replace. There must be much additional clearing. The Pemi will simply no longer be a near-wild tree-lined corridor. That will be a significant loss of a public good.
Today, my cousin and I went on the SEC site tour of Plymouth to Franklin, at which we were thankful to gain many specifics. The itinerary had stops mostly at industrial substation, transition station, or converter station locales. But, at our request, the buses made another stop, a quiet riverbank of the Pemi. This place will change dramatically, with 150 feet clearings and four towers, 65 foot, 75, 110, and 125 feet. We were grateful the tour was willing to stop there. We ask that the Siting Committee please consider this undeveloped space of natural beauty as a single example of many, repeated again and again along the route. You cannot see all of them, but please remember that they are there, and that their collective loss is a huge one.

Full burial of the line would yield less initial profit for Eversource and Hydro-Quebec, which would be recovered in subsequent years of the project. But full burial would preserve an invaluable public good for New Hampshire. Please preserve that public resource.

Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Jon Wilkinson, to
be followed by Alan McLain, and Jim Mason.

MR. WILKINSON: My name is Jon Wilkinson. And, my first name is actually spelled J-o-n. My last name is spelled W-i-l-k-i-n-s-o-n. I'm a resident of Lancaster. And, I've lived and worked in New Hampshire all my life. I'm here tonight to remind everyone that the proposed Northern Pass Project is a privately-funded merchant project. It is not a publicly-funded reliability project. And, so, the simple fact is that it is not needed, nor is it necessary, especially right now as it is currently proposed.

During the beginning of the possible siting of this project, and over the past five years, we have continually been told by the Applicant that the line couldn't be buried. While at the same time similar electrical transmission projects in our neighboring states have advanced much more quickly, virtually unopposed, due to being entirely buried. Since then, the Applicant claims it has listened to the requests for burial, and it has now struck a balance that addresses those concerns in critical areas, like the White Mountain National Forest.

I, and thousands of others, say the
Applicant has listened to none of our concerns regarding burial. Instead, it has only listened and acted regarding to its own desire to hopefully create a continuous route. Just look, for example, at the proposed routes in the Towns of Pittsburg, Clarksville, and Stewartstown, where it is offering to bury eight miles along Route 3, Route 145, Old Country Road, North Hill Road, Bear Rock Road. That is a beautiful area, like most of New Hampshire is. But burial isn't being offered there due to reducing the visual impacts. The Northern Pass had been stopped above ground in that area by unwilling landowners. So, it's only hope of getting through is to go underground where some utilities generally have access.

The recently offered burial in and around the White Mountain National Forest, along Routes 302, 116, 112, and Route 3 is a similar situation to the one up in northern New Hampshire. Except in this area, a special permit is needed through the National Forest, which could put the project at risk. So, instead, the Applicant eventually elected to go underground, along the roads where some utilities generally have access.
Impact Statement on Northern Pass clearly states that the full burial alternatives to the project along New Hampshire highway and roadway right-of-ways would create the largest number of jobs and create the greatest tax revenues for towns. It also states that the full burial alternatives to the project would have the least impacts on the environment, the visual resources, historical architectural resources, property value, tourism, and recreation.

The Applicant would prefer us not to focus on these facts and has attempted to cloud our attention over and over with testimony from its hired experts, lawyers, paid lobbyists, and promises of money from its New Hampshire Forward Fund.

But, if the Applicant continues to seek this approval for this project, it must do so by abandoning its current approach, methods, and antiquated technology. Instead, the Applicant must move forward for New Hampshire by truly listening to the overwhelming requests for additional burial, and then use the latest advancements in the electrical transmission industry, including HVDC Light.

I'm not an expert. I'm just one of the thousands of New Hampshire people that even after more
than five years of lobbying by this Applicant, can see through the fog and still knows that the Northern Pass Project is not needed and should not be permitted as processed. Thank you for letting me speak for New Hampshire.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Alan McLain, to be followed by Jim Mason, and Harley Mason.

MR. McLAIN: My name is Alan McLain -- my name is Alan McLain, spelled A-l-a-n, M-c-L-a-i-n. First, I'd like to thank the Forward Fund for choosing the Balsams. Hoping to get the hotel going and the ski area, and the golf course. It's a big tremendous help to Colebrook, New Hampshire, and they need it. I would encourage the Forward Fund to pick, Mr. Chairman, Berlin, New Hampshire as their second choice of a community that certainly needs your help.

Now, I'll read my statement. And, thank you for that. I'm a property owner in Berlin, New Hampshire, and a business owner. On the property side, I'd like to see my electric rates drop, and, on the tax side, get some relief. Northern Pass will have a positive impact on both of these problems. Lower energy costs are also important, if we have any hope of
rebuilding the -- and it will help in the hope of rebuilding the North Country's economy.

On the business side, we have worked on other energy projects here in Coos County. These projects clearly injected money into our local economy, they helped support our business, and provided critical jobs for the people here.

Our involvement in these energy projects allowed us to grow in size and position, and helped us to build other projects, like switch stations, control houses, and other service -- services to utility companies. As a result, my employees are buying homes, buying trucks, other products and services that support our local economy. It is a good involvement [employment?]. They're getting better pay, and these projects will do the same for us.

I welcome this project and encourage the Committee to fully support it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Jim Mason, to be followed by Harley Mason, and Allen Bouthillier.

MR. J. MASON: Hi. My name is James Mason. And, I'm from Franklin, New Hampshire. And, I'm here to just share a small story with you. First off, that Northern Pass transmission lines will go
within a quarter mile of my home. I'm in favor of the transmission line, I'm in favor of Northern Pass.

But it does bring a lot of jobs, and there's a lot of residual money. I've heard a lot of opponents to it say that, you know, "once they're gone, there's no money that's coming into the town", and things like that, and "small businesses won't benefit again".

But I have a small business in Salisbury, New Hampshire that I started in 2003. And, one of the power utility companies came through while I started my business, and they needed a place to stage and put static lines up on the transmission lines. And, at that time, they came in and they were looking for a place on a state highway, and I had that place. They came in, they assisted me in bringing in some gravel and building my yards. And, then, I opened my retail store and they bought product there, and they were a big boost when I first opened my business.

Last year, I happened to be involved with a project in Seabrook, New Hampshire. And, I watched the utility companies do the same thing down there with the Yankee Fish Co-op.

They do leave a lot of residual money.
after they're gone. And, there's a lot of benefit to
the towns and communities, and a lot of help to small
businesses.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Harley Mason, to be
followed by Allen Bouthillier, and Pat Hopp -- or, Jim
Page will be speaking for Pat Hopp.

MR. H. MASON: Let me introduce myself.
I'm Harley Mason. That's H-a-r-l-e-y and M-a-s-o-n.
I'm from the Town of Milan. And, I own and operate
Mason Enterprises, which is a excavating and trucking
company. We build complete sites -- subdivisions, we
build roads, we do complete site work for homes and
small businesses. We also process and sell gravel
products.

We support the Northern Pass as this
project is much needed in New Hampshire, creating
around 300 jobs and bringing millions of dollars into
New Hampshire for the workers and the small businesses,
giving our economy a big boost.

We were involved in the Portland Natural
Gas pipeline, which came through the Coos County in
2000 and 2001, as we supplied gravel, sand, and trucks.
This project put many people to work and brought
thousands of dollars into all the small towns. It was
a great economy boost.

Next came the wind towers on Dixville
Peaks, Kelsey Mountain, Owls Head Mountain, and Blue
Mountain, a total of 33 towers were installed. Our
construction crew doubled in size, as my men worked 12
to 14 hours a day. Seven days a week we trucked gravel
and sand and burial material on top of these mountains.
We produced over 54,000 yards of material which was
delivered to these mountains. This project had a
couple hundred people working again, bringing millions
of dollars into the area for local New Hampshire
businesses and boosting our economy.

The Northern Pass is a much larger
project, which will take two to three years to
complete, putting 300 workers to work. We are very
lucky to have this great project, and should be
overwhelmed to have the work and the large amounts of
monies that will be put into our state.

We are ready to challenge this project.
We the workers and contractors of New Hampshire have
the ability and the knowledge to start and complete
Northern Pass. We have the ability and knowledge to do
it in a professional manner -- a professional and safe
manner, working as a team. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Allen Bouthillier, to be followed by Jim Page on behalf of Pat Hopp, and then Manfred Hoertdoerfer.

MR. BOUTHILLIER: Let me introduce myself. I'm Allen Bouthillier. I'm a resident of Lancaster, New Hampshire. I was born and brought up in Colebrook, New Hampshire.

I'm here today to tell you that I'm in support of Northern Pass. Northern Pass is the type of project that helps companies like mine to grow. Started out in the logging business, and then we diversified into the construction, excavation and site work business. As I was sitting downstairs here tonight waiting, got a call on my phone that another -- another paper mill in Maine shut the doors. Another 250,000 tons of wood that I sell to on a weekly basis gone. That's 2,250,000 tons of wood in the New Hampshire/Vermont/Maine area is gone. We no longer have the ability to sell that. That's -- it's a big impact. Part of the reason that Northern Pass is so important, because of the upgrade of the Coos Loop, it will make the Burgess Biomass Plant operate at 100 percent capacity, instead of 50 percent. It makes
me be able to keep all of my employees working all the
time. It gives landowners an opportunity to sell more
of their product. It keeps the timber industry viable.

As a landowner, I applaud Northern Pass for taking the time and money to work with private
landowners in developing their new right-of-way.

Whether you're hiking, hunting, fishing, or snowmobiling, I am sure that some people in this
room take for granted the ability to freely cross private land for their own recreation and enjoyment.
And, many of us that own these large tracts of land value our ability to provide this access. This isn't
the case in many states across the country where people pay to access private land.

However, when these same people, our state elected officials and others want to restrict our
ability to use this land to generate income from sources like transmission lines, or require that only
government-owned rights-of-way be used, such as roads, it threatens our ability to provide open access to our
land.

If these elected officials and other folks like that restrict our ability to raise capital from this type of project, we will be forced to
seek other sources of income, such as charging fees or leases for public access.

I support Northern Pass because I want this opportunity for my family and my employees, my community, and I encourage the SEC to approve this project as quickly as possible.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Jim Page for Pat Hopp, to be followed by Manfred Hoertdoerfer, and Virginia Jeffryes.

MR. PAGE: Here to speak for Pat Hopp, she was here earlier this evening. Her name is P-a-t-t -- Patricia Hopp, H-o-p-p. She lives on Route 112, in Easton.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: And, what is your name, sir?

MR. PAGE: Excuse me?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Would you please identify yourself. Please identify yourself.

MR. PAGE: James Page, P-a-g-e, is my last name. And, I live next to Patti Hopp. Her home is less than 25 feet, her living room, from the underground line. She is extremely concerned about the noise levels. She does work off-hours. She's very concerned about blasting, sheet piling work, one of the
underground structures is less than 75 feet from the side of her home. She has an underground oil tank system. She has a rubble-cut granite foundation. With 750 feet of road opened at any one time, which is what it says in Northern Pass's literature, how does she get out? How does EMS respond to the area? With the intersection -- it's very close to the intersection of Route 116 and 112, how are these services going to get to her? If that much road is open, she would have to travel almost 40 miles out of the way to get to work. She is greatly concerned about this.

She's also concerned about the electric fields produced and the health effects so close to her home. She tells me Route 112, she lives on the side of the road. It's a heavy trucking route. And, she's concerned about what effect will the large trucks, mostly logging trucks and freight between Woodsville and the 93 corridor, what effect will that have on the buried lines, and also the rerouting of this kind of traffic during construction?

Patti Hopp is not in favor of Northern Pass and extremely concerned. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Manfred Hoertdoerfer, to be followed Virginia Jeffryes, and
then Mr. Page on his on behalf.

    MR. HOERTDOERFER: Manfred Hoertdoerfer.

Do you have my name?

    MR. PATNAUDE: Yes.

    MR. HOERTDOERFER: And, I did sign in.

All right.

    Well, here we are. Tried, worn out, trying to find the energy to speak, energy to listen, trying to stay awake. And, I have to admire the Commission hanging in, like you all do, at least the ones that are left. And, I'd first say, about to get into my preliminary, I'm not in the text yet, but I say this from just because of where we are. I'd like to thank the Commissioner and the members for hanging in there with us.

    Naturally, I have to wonder how much you're into this at all, because you're all tired, and listening is hard. And, you might not record everything in your mind as you did earlier. It is just like Eversource likes it. Perfect for them; not so for us.

    I've been at a few meetings now, January 14th, in Laconia, it was a public information session, one where Northern Pass presented their case
to the public. Opportunities for the public to ask questions and make statements were provided, yet Northern Pass used the first one and a half hours with their presentation and with lengthy and repeated answers to presented questions. By the time the public was given the opportunity to make comments, it was just like here, energy had been sucked out of the room, and many had left. What had been advertised at great lengths by the presiding Commission representative in Laconia as a fair process that the Commission will engage with due respect for input by the public seemed rather like a staged play on a very tilted playing field. But I told myself, okay, this is Northern Pass's time to present their case, and the following public hearings will be the time for the public to get a fair chance.

So, I went to the hearing in Meredith on March 1st. My hope that the public might get a fair chance at these proceedings was misguided, I guess, just like here. Even there, at the "Hearing for the Public", Northern Pass gets first dip again, sucked up the initial energy to present their case one more time, and jumped on the opportunity to monopolize the floor with lengthy answers by teams and experts to some
apparently planted questions by Northern Pass employees on top of it. I thought this was to be -- supposed to be a session for the public. Not so. Bear with me. Again, by the time, we, the people, got a chance to speak, just like here, many had left, and we're faced -- we were faced with imposed time limits. You, too.

If this is supposed to be an even playing field, then why does the Northern Pass team sit in front with the Commission and not next to the public, facing the Commission as is common practice in most public board and Commission hearings.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG:  Mr. Hoertdoerfer?
MR. HOERTDOERFER:  Yes.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG:  Please bring it to a close.
MR. HOERTDOERFER:  Not so here.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG:  You can come back at the end, if you have more.
MR. HOERTDOERFER:  With all due respect, I only expect to get the same fair allowance to speak [inaudible] that Northern Pass has with multiple questions with answers to the same questions.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG:  Mr. Hoertdoerfer,
you may come back at the end to say whatever you would like.

MR. HOERTDOERFER: I don't want to do that.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Well, I'm sorry.

MR. HOERTDOERFER: This is too important.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I'm sorry. But others need their opportunities to speak, and you can come back at the end, if you would like.

MR. HOERTDOERFER: Well, you know, if that's your sense of fairness, then we have a problem, don't we?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I am happy to stand this process that we've followed here tonight up against any process anywhere in the state. Thank you very much.

Ms. Virginia Jeffryes, to be followed by Mr. Page on his own behalf, and Henry Ahern.

MS. JEFFRYES: Hi. I'm Virginia Jeffryes, J-e-f-f-r-y-e-s. I live in Franconia. I work in Colebrook. And, I'm really tired. So, this is not going to be as clear as it would have been a few hours ago.
I won't repeat a lot of what got said, but I will say that I'm against Northern Pass. And, I know your body is not the one who decides on Alternative 4a or going under 93, you have to simply decide on what got presented to you. But, had it been under 93 to begin with, I don't think we'd be here five years later. And, under Route 3 or somewhere under a roadway further north, I drive that route a lot, and I know the difference between a 30-foot power line that's carrying utility poles past people's houses, and a 100-foot utility line that's basically usurping someone's lifelong view and happiness.

And, while I support jobs in Groveton and Colebrook and the North Country in general, those jobs can also be supported by burying the line, and not stealing from the poor individual people whose rights are being usurped.

And, you know, Northern Pass has put a lot of spin on things in their own way. We get these ForwardNH letters about once a month in Franconia. And, one of them, maybe -- might have been, I guess, in December, said "Good news. Our Application got accepted as complete."

Now, I applied to be an intervenor,
because I happen to be an abutter, and I'm also on the Conservation Commission in Franconia, and we're intervening separately. But, so, I was talking to someone else that's a neighbor, and I said, you know, "Are you going to apply to intervene?" And, they said "Well, no. It's a done deal. We got this letter that said it was accepted." So, even the spin on their letters is sort of putting out this false perception, which is I'm sure what it's designed to do.

And, I guess the main point I wanted to make tonight was just I guess I would plead with you all, the SEC Committee -- Subcommittee, to just be aware of spin as you read through applications, their Application.

I'm a physician. And, when I went through residency, which was in -- at Concord Hospital maybe fourteen years ago, something like that, one of the very first things that we learned was "Don't let the drug reps in your office." You know, "Any data that's generated by the pharmaceutical industry to push their product is tainted." You know, "Read studies that are by people that aren't funded by drug companies."

And, I guess that's what I would say
when I hear experts, you know, with all due respect, who are experts and various other people, wetland experts and so on, stand up, is that they're being paid for by the opposition. And, that just, by definition, taints things. So, keep that in mind as you read through this.

If I had a lot of money, you know, I'd hire my own experts to produce data. But I don't have the billions of dollars that these people are able to put into it, millions of dollars, not billions. I don't even have $10,000 to go hire an environmental firm to kind of do my own mitigation study.

So, that's, I guess, the only thing I wanted to say. One more thing, before I go. First, I'm not sure if anybody else from Easton is speaking tonight. But I was interested in what the woman from the AMC -- okay -- said about the 215 power poles with creosote all over them that were at Reel Brook, I think it was Reel Brook. In Easton, someone was explaining at the meeting they had with Northern Pass a couple weeks ago that Normandeau Associates had -- they've had helicopters flying overhead [inaudible] and their assessment of the environmental impact, despite the fact that 215 is not a small number of power poles.
So, it's --

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Please bring it to a close now, Ms. Jeffryes.

MS. JEFFRYES: Okay. All right. So, take it with a grain of salt. Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Jim Page, to be followed by Henry Ahern, and Steve Darrow.

MR. PAGE: My name is James Page, P-a-g-e. I'm a property owner in Easton. Northern Pass will cross my driveway. I also have property in Deerfield, New Hampshire. So, I'm affected in two places. I spoke at a prior non-SEC hearing about jobs, 2,600 good-paying jobs. Where does this come from? Up from 1,200, to 2,600. I'll give less than 1,200 good-paying jobs. How do I know that? I've been a project manager and a superintendent on power line projects, such as for the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power, 500 kV line, 100 miles long; Salt River Project, 765 line; Bonneville Power Authority, 345; City of Austin, Texas; and others.

Most jobs are not full duration. Most are very short duration. I know IBEW wants and deserves jobs, as others. The numbers aren't there;
make me a believer.

Northern Pass stated that low-contact ground equipment was generally not owned by the average company bidding the work. Your contractor selected boasts five -- an inventory of 5,000 pieces of equipment, with their parent company owning and having access to over 20,000 pieces of equipment. The biggest and the best, how is it that equipment is not a consideration, this type of equipment?

Northern Pass has stated that the project will be built by conventional methods; no heavy lifting by helicopter. On two projects in the United States, 45 miles of towers were flown, 500 kV towers, much bigger, much larger, and a lot rougher terrain than what's here in New Hampshire, in seven working days under my direction.

In different applications, on another issue, Northern Pass has stated the amount of ledge to be removed on one document says "unknown", on another document it says "500,000" -- or, "5,000 cubic yards" will be blasted. How about probably upwards of ten times that amount. Northern Pass -- how does Northern Pass intend to monitor -- monitor or mitigate the effects of releasing blasting agents and residue into
adjacent [inaudible]. The State of New Hampshire just released a state-funded study that should be read. How do I know this will happen? I've been a licensed blaster for 30 years. I've been blasting for lines in utilities in several states across the United States. Not just on power lines, roads, bridges, pipelines, tunnels, jackings, borings.

On another note, has anybody ever witnessed a bentonite release? It was mentioned by the parties over here. Has anybody actual seen one? That's with bentonite, when you're drilling, whether you're drilling vertical shafts, horizontal shafts, anything, when bentonite is released in an underground strata, you probably won't see it. In my case, I live along the wild Ammonoosuc River. There's probably a lot of riverine cobbles and deposits along there. You'll see the bentonite release probably in the river, and it will be too late. You can't stop [audible] suspensions of bentonite. Bentonite is simply a clay product, it's a driller's mud. It's very difficult to contain, and it has to be used in this type of work.

I also would ask the SEC to look into the roadway easements, which they're asking for 24 to 30 feet wide, encompassing entire roads. I continually
read "nothing is an impact to the property owners and
the residents of New Hampshire." Makes us believers.

Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Henry Ahern, to be
followed Steve Darrow, and Jane Difley.

MR. AHERN: Good evening. My name is
Henry Ahern. First, I'd like to thank the Committee
for spending this late night here in Plymouth with us.

I am a resident of the Town of Plymouth.

I have sort of a unique thing, that I will be one of
the few that will actually have burial and tower that I
will have to look at from my property. I own the deer
farm south of Plymouth, Bonnie Brae, on the Plymouth
town line, and I will have to deal with both.

With that said, 93, that's where it
should go. If they can drill under 93, or put power
lines underneath Route 3, all the way through the Town
of Plymouth and in front of my property, with the
cement slabs that are under that road, then they
certainly could deal with the small inconveniences that
it might take to go down 93.

The other thing -- advantage of 93
that's going on right now is we are spending a lot of
money in this state, millions, to expand 93. That
means there's digging, there's excavators there,
there's equipment there. All of that could be used at
the same time to bury these power lines.

The other major thing that I heard
several people mention is all the money that we're
going to save by doing the Northern Pass. The State of
New Hampshire is a power exporter. We produce more
electricity in this state than we use, and yet we still
have the highest electric rates in the United States.
There's something disconnected there. And, that is
because we're members of the New England grid, and our
power goes to Massachusetts and Connecticut, and every
other place that the grid wants to send it, and this
project is not going to decrease your electric rates,
because that power is all going to the same places
also. Where it does, it will be a miniscule amount.
Good supply and demand, in just the State of New
Hampshire, we would have some of the least expensive
power costs in the country.

Thank you very much for your attention.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Steve Darrow, to be
followed by Jane Difley, and Mary Martland.

REP. DARROW: Mr. Chairman and members
of the Committee, thank you very much for letting me have an opportunity to speak. And, for the record, my name is Stephen Darrow, S-t-e-p-h-e-n, D-a-r-r-o-w.

I am a New Hampshire State Representative, from Grafton District 17. Among the towns that I represent are Ashland, Bridgewater, and Bristol. These municipalities will have a direct impact from the planned underground towers — overground towers and underground lines from the Hydro-Quebec and Eversource Northern Pass.

I understand the importance of progress, and the need for an ever-increasing demand for affordable energy. I have many constituents who have written me saying that they can no longer do business in New Hampshire unless something is done about the electricity rates.

However, I come before you this evening to express my opposition to the Northern Pass as proposed. It is my belief and hope that the proposed project should be entirely buried. Much of the economy in this portion of central New Hampshire is tourism. The power line corridor of 90 to 100 plus foot towers will permanently alter the lands they cross, fragmenting forests, disrupting wildlife habitats,
disfiguring communities, and lowering property values.

Placing this new transmission line underground resolves much of the visual impact and greatly reduces the electromagnetic field strength. But this option is more expensive. With one study indicating that burying the line may cost ten times more than an overhead installation. However, when the following cost of an overhead study summed for a 100-year transmission line, the burial is actually a bargain, at least for those who live with the project, property value loss, decreased farm and forest productivity, health costs, tourism income losses, visual impacts, and environmental damages.

If other states can require the transmission lines be put underground, and as I heard Mr. Quinlan say earlier this evening that other states are not doing that, and that's really not the case. It's a fallacy. Then, let me rephrase that. If 52 miles of the Northern Pass can be put underground, then the whole thing can be put underground.

All that is necessary is -- to see what happens is to drive the proposed route of the Northern Pass, and see the landscape that will forever change, in order to save money in the short term.
The towers supporting the transmission line may be 90 to 150 feet tall or more. The right-of-way, which may measure 150 feet in width, is frequently cleared of all vegetation, except for grass and other low-growing plants. Depending on topography, forests, and other factors, the transmission line may be visible from a distance of three miles or more. In fact, those who study the effect of new transmission lines on views commonly begin their analysis three miles out. When passing through a forest, a transmission line corridor appears as an ugly gash across the landscape. Such a scene detracts from the beauty of an otherwise natural view. When located near a community, transmission lines can lend an industrial feel to what is otherwise tranquil residential neighborhoods.

Why should any part of New Hampshire be left with the scars of towers and transmission lines, when it is possible to bury them and get them out of site?

A project of this scope does not come along frequently. I'm almost done. When it does, all impacts and opinions should be considered before making a decision. As I said before, the importance and need
for affordable energy exists. So, does the need to do
the right thing the first time. My hope is that this
will be done.

Thank you very much.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Jane Difley, to be
followed by Mary Martland, and Anita Craven.

MS. DIFLEY: My name is Jane Difley.
I'm the president/forester at the Society for the
Protection of New Hampshire Forests. I want to once
again thank you for your attention and for being here.
And given the latest of the hour, and since I have
copies for all of you, I know you will take a look at
it and read it later, I do have some new things to say.
And, they're on that piece of paper. And, given the
latest of the hour, I will leave it at that.

And, just in case it's not clear, the
Forest Society is, in fact, opposed to this project as
it is currently proposed. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you,
Ms. Difley. Mary Martland, to be followed by Anita
Craven, and Carol Dwyer. I think it's Mary Martland.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think it's "Nancy
Martland". And, Dr. Martland is out-of-state. My name
is Chuck Phillips, and I'm going to read --

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: You are correct.

It is "Nancy". I apologize for that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

M-a-r-t-l-a-n-d. My name is Chuck Phillips,
P-h-i-l-l-i-p-s. And, I'm, for a long term, a
Franconia resident, currently in Bethlehem.

I would like to take this opportunity to
reflect on some of what I've seen and heard at these
hearings. I happen to believe that we are very
fortunate to have the solution to our shared problems
staring us right in the face.

RSA 162-H:16 sets out four findings
required in order to issue a certificate. Most of the
statements I have heard in these hearings have centered
on two of these findings: Subparagraph (c), "The site
and facility will not have an unreasonable adverse
effect on aesthetics, historic sites, air and water
quality, the natural environment, and public health and
safety." And, Subparagraph (e), "Issuance of a
certificate will serve the public interest."

Opponents have focused mainly on
demonstrating the project's adverse effects and
proponents have focused mainly on demonstrating how the
Opponents, myself included, point out unreasonable adverse effects on the remarkable essence of New Hampshire, our majestic yet intimate scenic treasures, mainly due to visual impacts. Unreasonable adverse impacts on the aesthetics of our landscapes, our historic and cultural resources, and the natural environment in particular, will result in deleterious effects on preserved and protected public and private lands, private property owners, real estate, our recreation economy, and other related arguments. Preventing these unreasonable adverse effects serves the public interest.

Proponents seem to say that the project serves the public interest, because it could supply renewable energy at lower cost, construction jobs would result, the infusion of capital a big project produces will be beneficial to the state and local economies, there could be considerable tax benefits to the New Hampshire towns in which the project is located, and other similar arguments.

I thought the SEC's task was to site an energy project, not a jobs program, a tax relief program, or an economic stimulus program.
Nevertheless.

We are extremely fortunate that there is
a solution to the longstanding, painful, and
unnecessary dispute this project has created. It
addresses the unreasonable adverse effects noted by a
project opponents, and actually enhances the public
benefits described by the proponents.

Full burial of Northern Pass would (1)
eliminate nearly all adverse effects having to do with
visual impact; and (2) result in more jobs, more
capital infusion, and higher taxes paid to towns,
according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

For years, the Applicant claimed it
could not bury any of its line. Opponents repeatedly
pointed out modern technology that made burial
practical and economically feasible. Last summer, the
Applicant announced that it could bury 60 miles after
all, to protect an important landscape, and adopted the
technology suggested by opponents.

By its action, the Applicant admitted
that the line can, in fact, be buried, and that
important landscapes are worth protecting.

All that remains, all that stands
between us and an end to this never-ending battle that
is hurting so many of us and poisoning our discourse, is for the Applicant to figure out the financing. I have every confidence that they can do that, if they have the will to do so. Especially, if you ask them to. Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Anita Craven, to be followed by Carol Dwyer, and Peter Powell.

[Short pause.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Is Anita Craven here?

FROM THE FLOOR: She's gone.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: How about Carol Dwyer?

FROM THE FLOOR: She's gone, too.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Peter Powell?

MR. POWELL: Peter Powell, P-o-w-e-l-l, from Lancaster. I join in thanking everyone here for their endurance.

I am about to start my 43rd year of service as a realtor to the region above the Notches. Like politics, all real estate is local. Studies not performed here are irrelevant to the outcomes that can be expected here. No study has been performed here,
because lines of the magnitude of those proposed do not exist in the areas that will be affected. Be assured that the impacts here would be far greater than in urban or suburban areas, near job centers, where studies have been done and degradation already exists, where more degradation is added with less incremental impacts, and where trade-offs have already been made for the sake of convenience.

Here, where little degradation exists, and money is spent for beauty, at the sacrifice of convenience, the impact of a project like this would be much more severe. You cannot put ugly objects on a beautiful landscape without negatively impacting the marketability and value of all those properties which gaze upon it.

Even Mr. Chalmers, who did an interview with NHPR, saying that he -- that the towers are not assets, and he wouldn't want them in his backyard, was quoted as saying "It is basically a view lot. And, your view is down -- And, if your view is down the valley, and you string transmission lines across that valley, right in the middle of the viewshed, and that becomes kind of the dominant feature of the view, I can easily imagine your $200,000 second home might only be
a $75,000 second home or a $100,000 second home, something like that." This is the man who performed the study for Northern Pass.

I need not elaborate, but will say the language used still registers a disconnect between where he has focused and where we live, where it isn't just view lots with vacation homes, but primary homes, farms, communities, holdings of acreage, where views are long and beautiful, and where looking down or looking up or looking across a landscape is all the natural part of every day. There is so much at stake.

The market has been speaking to this with its own eloquence for five years, as properties have been rejected or sold at great discount. In like fashion, where the line is now planned for burial, I understand that values are recovering and properties are again marketable. This from Andy Smith, down in the Franconia/Sugar Hill area.

This isn't a manipulation of numbers. It is the reality of the behavior which predicts the numbers, which can only be tallied in retrospect, after it may be too late to do so honestly.

And, the impacts are true not only for individuals, but for businesses. Northern Pass is a
threat to our brand, and a threat to business properties and business people, where towns -- towers and lines would foreclose success, and discount the future with cumulative impact effects. And, it is the statement of our values to say that, if some of us lose, we all lose.

I've got a number of other things. I'm going to just basically give you a bullet. Because I'm worried about other things, other than the things that I know of from my daily work in my own profession. I wonder what the impact is on supply and demand? When we lost the jobs and the mills closed, up north we sat many of us, on economic development committees, and wondered what our future could be. How do we handle the economic transformation? We felt that one possibility would be the generation of energy by alternative means, using the new technologies that we hear about every day that is changing the landscape and the prospects for new industries and new jobs.

I worry about the politics[?] and allure that we experienced from cheap foreign oil that we had 20 to 30 years ago, and which turned out to be such a debacle. It makes no sense to me to import power and export capital, when it's the tradable sector of our...
Our economy is fragile up north.

Tourism is of vital importance. Dr. Lee, who did a study for the North Country Economics Index here at the University, tells us that the only strong point that we had in 2015 was in tourism.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Powell, either wrap up or you can come back at the end, after others --

MR. POWELL: I'll wrap up now, simply by saying that the rest of our economy struggled, and we had the sixth quarter of decline in the index.

We can bury -- if we bury this thing, if it has to happen, then it can -- the only way, not to ask so much of us to sacrifice so much is to bury. Our contractors will get more, the towns will still tax, and we'll have an opportunity to be a less negative impact.

Thank you very much.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Kelly Wieser, to be followed by former Senator Deb Reynolds, and Roz Lowen.

MS. WIESER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
My name is Kelly Wieser, spelled K-e-l-l-y, W-i-e-s, as in "Sam", -e-r.

I thank you for this opportunity to speak to the Committee, who has, obviously, an extraordinarily large amount of work in front of them. I'm going to submit my extremely extensive comments that I've been working on while we've been sitting, in writing, to the Committee later. But I wanted to introduce myself, so that you could connect a face with the name when you read them.

The most important thing that I need to say to you here tonight is that I lost my job because of Northern Pass, this proposed project. It's not something that's going to happen in the future. This is something that has happened to me already. And, my family lost our business. Owl's Nest Resort and Golf Club, just up the road, in Campton, New Hampshire, which is where I'm from, and where I was born and raised, and where we have chosen to raise our children.

So many things that people have said here tonight I would echo. In terms of the importance of our sense of place here in New Hampshire, and how threatened that so many of us feel it is by this project, how it was initially proposed and how it
continues to be proposed.

Some other thoughts I have, so I'm not repetitive, are I keep hearing the term how "prohibitively expensive to bury this project", and this does echo some of the sentiments that have been addressed earlier. If this project had been proposed in a reasonable way, in a well thought-out way initially, we would not still be sitting here today, we would not be having this same conversation.

Yes, this Committee has a lot of work to do. But, for six years, a lot of the people that were concerned previously, and are still sitting here, have done our work and shaping the proposal that's in front of you right now. And, I think a lot of the opposition deserves credit for having there be something in front of you now that's better than what was initially proposed.

My thoughts on the ForwardNH Fund are that it's extremely ironic to me that a conservation easement that I helped to fund was then somehow given to a developer, a development, of which I consider to be a very dubious benefit to people in the North Country who actually live up there. Now, that developer is being paid off by the Northern Pass to
give his support for the project. It's extremely ironic to me.

I guess the final thing that I'll say, since my time is almost up, is that I've been hearing a lot of people talk tonight, and hadn't thought about this before I came here, that they have a level of concern -- a high level of concern with the buried -- where the buried line would go through, how it's going to impact their land in front of or around their home. And, I heard the Northern Pass folks express that they were actually ready to go out now and start working with people. And, this causes me a very high level of dismay, because of the personal struggles that we had as a family with the proposed project, that they would actually go out and start to disrupt people's lives with a proposed project that had not even received approval yet, I find that to be extremely alarming to me. And, I think that the Northern Pass folks should consider that.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Deb Reynolds, to be followed by Roz Lowen, and Michele Noyes.

Is Deb Reynolds still here?

[No verbal response]
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: How about Roz Lowen?
[No verbal response]
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Michele Noyes?
[No verbal response]
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Jason Lauze?
[No verbal response]
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mark Templeton?
[No verbal response]
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mark Monahan?
[Short pause.]
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Other cards I have are Ryan Barber, Jeanne Menard, and Matt Denhart.

MR. MONAHAN: Mark Monahan, M-o-n-a-h-a-n. I support the Northern Pass, because it will be one of the biggest economic development projects our state has seen in decades. And, it's because -- and because it will provide jobs for people like me. I'm a apprentice lineman and a member of Local 104. I support the project, because local New Hampshire workers will build it, and because I'm sure I'm not alone in seeing my energy bills keep going up and up. Not only will the Northern Pass decrease energy prices across the region, but it will also bring
clean, reliable hydropower, instead of using fossil fuels that pollute our state today.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Ryan Barber.

MR. BARBER: I'm Ryan Barber, from Rumney, New Hampshire, Class of 2006 --

[Court reporter interruption.]

MR. BARBER: Class of 2006 at Plymouth State University.

Happy to speak at my alma mater on this controversial issue. I'm also an inside wiring apprentice, so, I will be involved in working on the project. Although, I don't directly benefit from any overhead transmission lines, I still am in support of the project at large, in whatever way it can be accomplished.

What I see today is a decaying infrastructure, roads, bridges, and electrical transmission lines, and a cheap fossil fuel-based economy, which can't last forever. So, we, as a species, I believe, have to use our resources now to create an infrastructure in which someday fossil fuels won't be required.

So, what we have in front of was is a
modern equivalent of a Roman aqueduct. It will, in essence, lead to a progressive future that will benefit, ultimately, it will act as a springboard through which we will have the energy we need to create an infrastructure that is diverse, and we can also create other forms of renewable energies as well. Diverse forms of them, not just wind or solar or hydro, but, specifically, noncombustible forms.

New Hampshire is a very special place, certainly. I have lived here most of my life. But we aren't an island of ourself, we are also part of the greater community, a greater nation. So, we do have to share some of the responsibility in distributing electricity through our grid at large.

Right now, there's an overabundance of hydroelectricity being produced that is going into the ground, not being used. This is going to give us the ability to tap into that, and to distribute it and use it effectively, which will allow us to shut down some of those dirtier sources, and, again, springboarding us towards a progressive future.

As far as jobs are concerned, yes, there will be temporary jobs. However, this project will represent up to ten percent of an apprentice
electrician's career. Ten percent is not a small temporary job. It's a very large part of it. New Hampshire has a very strong and skilled organized labor force, electrical workforce. And, interestingly, when Senator Bernie Sanders visited our training center in the fall during his campaign, he asked a business representative about if we wire up houses and stuff like that. And, he replied "well, basically, we have the skill to build anything from a nuclear fission reactor plant, down to a switch in your house."

The New Hampshire electrical workforce is very strong. And, we prefer to work in this state, as opposed to working in New York, Boston, or everywhere, when there aren't jobs available for us to stay in our homes. We prefer to do that, than taxing the Unemployment Insurance Program.

What I see in front of this company, Eversource, is, and the Department of Energy and all these people working towards it, is a highly skilled team of engineers, environmental scientists, working endlessly to try and create a project that's going to benefit everyone, and listen as best they can of the concerns of everyone in this state.

As a rural New Hampshire -- As a rural
New Hampshire resident, I understand the fear and
cynicism towards a corporate industry making a change
to our landscape and our resources. Being a citizen of
the humanity at large requires us to make some
sacrifices for the greater good. I have witnessed a
powerful form of democracy go on throughout this
project. They have been passionate-based on both
sides. And, it's my hope that we can transcend the
differences and create a future for the greater good of
our state and our nation and our species at large.

Thank you.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Jeanne Menard, to
be followed by Matt Denhart.

MS. MENARD: J-e-a-n-n-e, M-e-n-a-r-d.
Good evening, everyone. My comment tonight pertains to
the cost of the AC line upgrades. In the Transmission
Service Agreement of 2014, between Northern Pass
Transmission, as the owner, and Hydro Renewable Energy,
as the purchaser, there is language that addresses that
ISO-New England may determine that the costs of AC
upgrades are eligible to be included in regional rates.

It is in this Transmission Agreement
that references an appendix entitled "The Cost of AC

{SEC 2015-06} [Joint Public Hearing/Holderness] {03-14-16}
Upgrades", and it's clearly noted that this appendix is not attached. There may be a good reason for this that I don't understand.

The point of bringing this question forward to the SEC this evening is to respectfully request that there be further discussion as to not only the cost and impact of the Northern Pass Project, but also the cost and the impact to plug this project into the grid, and who bears the cost of this.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Matt Denhart.

[Audience interruption.]

MR. DENHART: Good evening. I'm not sure if the claps are that we finally reached, I think, the last speaker. I assume, maybe those are what those claps are about.

Thank you. Matt Denhart, M-a-t-t, D-e-n-h-a-r-t. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and SEC members, for running what has seemed to be a very civil and useful session tonight. Something you might not expect in a hockey arena.

I support the Northern Pass Project because it will provide energy, for that basic reason.

So, in my short comments tonight, then I'd like to just
take a step back and talk a little bit about the
importance of energy itself.

If we look back in history, harnessing
and transmitting energy has ushered in America's second
industrial revolution. In brought power into
Americans' homes, allowing them to have lights; it
powered factories, which brought forth iconic firms;
and ushered in prosperity we've never seen in the
history of the world.

Today, electricity continues to be very
important. It still powers our factories, it still
heats our homes, lights our rooms, powers our
universities, and lets us live more fulfilling lives,
by pursuing things like leisure in hockey arenas and
all the different pursuits that we enjoy.

I fear that we often take electricity
for granted. I certainly do. I assume, when I plug in
an appliance, that it will just work, and it more or
less does. When it doesn't, we panic. You know, we
call the power company very quickly when the power goes
out to report it, assuming that others had not already
done so, and, you know, sort of wonder with some alarm
when it will come back on. In many cases, it can be a
matter of life and death for people, particularly
during the cold New England winters.

Now, other places in the world, they
don't always take power for granted. I've had the
opportunity to spend some time in rural Africa. And, a
power line isn't seen as a threat, it's seen as a
lifeline. Bringing power allows the people to
transform their lives and live a higher quality of
life.

So, the point is, I'm just asking the
Committee and all of us here to not take power and
electricity for granted. Particularly, that sources
like nuclear energy and coal are retired, it's
important we continue to support efforts like Northern
Pass to provide reliable and affordable energy to New
Hampshire, New England, and, indeed, to our country and
the world.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Hoertdoerfer.
I hope you will tell us what your comments are on the
proposal, rather than your comments on the process.

MR. HOERTDOERFER: It is, it is on the
process, and it is important.

I was going, following the next
paragraph, to say, how can one justify imposing time
limits on the public, and not do the same for Northern Pass? More so even as these "public hearings" are expressly for the public's input. Northern Pass is not the public, and the Commission allows them to take front and center stage and more.

So, why does my feeling of discomfort with the Commission and fear of eventually being pushed off the tilted playing field get worse rather than better? So, we keep coming back to these stage shows, trying like hell to hang on and try to reduce the tilt of the playing field before we get pushed off, and we still hope to get a fair process.

It seems there's not even an effort to make this process at least appear to be fair and balanced. Where is the sensitivity to fairness when Northern Pass sits up front next to the Commission? And, as one comes in through the door, it already looks like the Public versus Northern Pass and Commission. I don't want to be there, it just feels that way.

Where is the sensitivity to the appeal for postponement of hearings by a multitude of individuals, municipalities and organizations? Where is the sensitivity to the public's voice? I have heard the comment from the public that Northern Pass is not
listening to us. I personally do not expect Northern Pass to listen to us. They have one single goal, and they will pursue this goal with all means possible and available to them. That is their right and a given.

Rather my question is, is the Committee and not only the Chair, listening?

Is the Commission overwhelmed by the legal power of the Applicant and is thereby in reaction and acquiescence to their demands, and how much is this exemplified in the Chair's actions or reaction, instead of action based on sensitive judgment?

It would needless to say that Northern Pass has only one goal, as I stated above, and, thereby, one should be aware that many of their positions and statements have to be considered with critical judgment, and cannot be embraced solely on their assurance. And, this does not mean that they provide outright lies; it is simply that their perspective of an issue is driven by their goal and how they define issues to serve their purpose.

That is where the Commission has a responsibility to take the perspective and interest of the public into contribution before making any and all decisions, regardless of what the issue. That is what
RSA 126-H says -- 162-H says. So far, that does not always seem to be the case.

Just a little more. Many of our elected state officials have spoken out against this project and are on record with their voices. And, let me quote Jeanie Forrester, who spoke here earlier tonight. And, I quote: "The legislative changes made to the SEC statute were intended to improve public trust and confidence in the SEC decision-making process. It would be a great misfortune for all of us in New Hampshire if the implementation of these changes were to subvert this very goal."

And, end with this quote, and I quote State Representative Brown, from this very district here. Quote: "It is vitally important that the process regarding Northern Pass is fair and transparent. At a time when public trust in government at every level is at an all-time low, it would be most unfortunate if these hearings proceed as planned and give the appearance of an unfair and unresponsive process."

And, the larger question for me still is, do the hearings just appear to be unfair or is the process rigged, and in the end we, the public, get just pushed off the edge and the Commission operates just
like in the past?

I'd like to believe that today is a different time, where push opinion counts and is considered. That we can get due consideration of the public's voice, and in a better way than how it was managed here today. It does not feel that we are there yet.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: And, that's the last word from the public this evening, Mr. Hoertdoerfer. I will not respond. Although, you clearly have challenged the process in ways that I think, if you were to poll the folks who were here tonight, all 300 plus, I believe there are many who would disagree with you. And, we will get into that --

[Audience interjection.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Excuse me, sir, it's not your turn.

Now, we're going to adjourn this hearing in just a moment. If there's something you would like to speak -- say, I know you've spoken at other events. Do you have a public comment you'd like to make on the project?

MR. MULLEN: Very quickly. I would like
to comment that I observed the Committee all evening tonight. They were very carefully paying attention to everything that was said. I take my hat off to you all for sitting through these meetings, meeting after meeting after meeting.

I don't know where you stand on things, but I have to congratulate you for paying so much attention to us. I appreciate it.

[Audience interruption.]

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you, sir.

I'll check with our Administrator and my lawyer, to see if there is anything else we need to do?

(Atty. Iacopino conferring with Chairman Honigberg.)

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Right. For those who were interested in the prehearing conference, check the website, check e-mails for where the location will be.

With that, we will adjourn. Thank you all.

(Whereupon the public hearing was adjourned at 10:50 p.m.)