

RE: S230: an act improving the siting of energy projects.

I always appreciate the work you do, but I have a few concerns about this bill.

First of all, I think renewable projects should be small scale, providing energy for local use, and should be decided under Act 250.

Renewable Energy Credits are creating an economy where big money is the goal rather than sustainable practices, and it is scaring our landscape. Small scale local energy production makes people responsible for their own energy use.

I think part (1) creating a Public Assistance Officer has the potential to help with communication and transparency, and I like (2) companies not being able to use eminent domain when nondisclosure agreements are used.

Other than that, the bill appears to place more hoops through which companies must jump, but does little to clean up the system, and the system is in need of reform. My opinion comes from my personal experience and carefully following the Vermont Gas pipeline docket.

Things that are desperately needed at this time:

- 1) The PSD needs to return to representing ratepayers and not utility companies.
- 2) Legal representation for landowners who decide to participate as intervenors, in order to level the playing field.
- 3) More detailed or specific guidelines by which the PSB makes its decisions. Currently the Board has far too much leeway in their decision-making process that leaves the process open to making decisions based upon political influence rather than facts. For example, the Board recently decided to not reopen the CPG for the Vermont Gas pipeline despite the fact the cost went up by over 40%. I think there needs to be a threshold that creates an automatic trigger for reopening a CPG.
- 4) Clearly defined timelines for submitting updates and corrected information. Toss out filings and make a company start over when it is evident it has misrepresented information, makes grievous errors in calculations, and/or delays notification of updated information that would have an impact on the decision.
- 5) Move the PSB Section 248 process from the executive branch to the Attorney General's office.

I hope to see you Saturday at Monkton Town Meeting.

Thank you.  
Renee McGuinness