

1 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
2 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

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5 CHAMPLAIN HUDSON POWER EXPRESS, INC.

6 TRANSMISSION LINE PROPOSAL

7 -----

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9 Taken at Holiday Inn, 503 Washington Avenue,
10 Kingston, New York, on July 13, 2010, commencing at
11 7:35 p.m.

12

13 BEFORE: JERRY PELL, PhD, CCM, U.S. Department of
14 Energy 1000 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC
15 20585

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (7:35 p.m.)

3 BY DR. PELL:

4 Good evening. If we're all ready, I'd like to
5 start.

6 I'll tell you a little bit about who I am first,
7 tell you a little bit about myself so you know who the
8 guy is behind the mic. I'm Jerry Pell, an
9 Environmental Scientist, and I'm the Project Manager
10 for this particular project. I've been with the
11 Department of Energy for 34 years, and the reason I
12 haven't retired is because I still enjoy meetings just
13 like this one, and as long as I keep having fun, I'm
14 not going to retire. I've been doing environment and
15 energy work of one kind or another for 40 years,
16 everything from anthracite to wind, including global
17 warming, and now transmission line projects just like
18 this one.

19 The proposed project is not a Department of
20 Energy project. I want that clear from the outset.
21 The project is proposed to us by Transmission
22 Developers, Incorporated, of which Don Jessome here is

1 the President, and he will be telling you a little bit
2 about the project shortly.

3 It requires what we call a Presidential permit,
4 which is actually a requirement that was initiated
5 about 50 years ago by a White House Executive Order.
6 And the permit is required whenever a transmission
7 line wishes to cross the international border either
8 from Canada into the United States or from Mexico into
9 the United States -- and of course in this case, it's
10 from Canada.

11 When the Federal Government has to issue a
12 permit or consider issuing a permit, that triggers the
13 National Environmental Policy Act -- NEPA, as many of
14 you know, is the abbreviation -- and under NEPA, there
15 are several levels of environmental review depending
16 on the project. The Environmental Impact Statement or
17 EIS, which is the type of review we're doing for
18 Champlain Hudson, is the most comprehensive,
19 exhaustive environmental assessment there is, and it
20 literally embraces the entire spectrum of potential
21 impacts, good and bad, including issues like
22 environmental justice, socioeconomic impacts, purpose

1 and need, et cetera -- and alternatives, cumulative
2 impacts.

3 And that brings me to the reason we're here
4 tonight. We're having seven of these meetings, of
5 which this is the third one now. We had one in
6 Bridgeport, Connecticut, then in Manhattan -- sorry,
7 this is the fourth one. You lose track after a while.
8 Yonkers last night, now here in Kingston. Tomorrow we
9 go on to Albany, then Glens Falls, then finally
10 Plattsburgh. So what we're trying to do is give
11 people along the entire route an opportunity to meet
12 with us and to help us define the scope of the EIS,
13 and make sure if there are issues that you are
14 concerned about, that we know about them and include
15 them in our analysis. So the reason we're here
16 tonight is to obtain your input as to what we should
17 be looking at in the content of the EIS.

18 This will culminate in a scoping report -- which
19 is not actually required by NEPA, but which we do
20 because I think it's a valuable document -- that will
21 summarize the comments that we've received during the
22 seven meetings and during the open comment period

1 which closes on August 2nd. And of course, I'm
2 expecting that we will be obtaining comments in
3 writing either electronically or by mail between now
4 and the August 2nd deadline. It doesn't matter how
5 your comments come in, whether you speak here tonight
6 or mail them to me or e-mail them to me, your comments
7 receive equal weight no matter how they're received.
8 But that scoping report will summarize the comments
9 that did come in over the seven meetings. That will
10 be a public document, it will be on our website, and
11 if you subscribe to our website mailing list, you will
12 get a notice advising you that the report is on the
13 web and is now available.

14 That's essentially the calm before the storm.
15 The really large product is the draft Environmental
16 Impact Statement itself, which will come out sometime
17 thereafter, and that will be the document that now you
18 can comment on in terms of actually reviewing our look
19 at the impacts. And there will be a series of meetings
20 just like this one, but at that time you'll actually
21 have an opportunity to review our analysis. And those
22 comments that you provide to us at that point will

1 shape the final Environmental Impact Statement. And
2 in the process, we also produce a comment and response
3 document which identifies your comments and how we
4 dealt with things.

5 So it's an extremely transparent, open public
6 process. Everything we say and do is available to
7 everyone else and it's on the Internet and freely
8 available.

9 So that's basically the essence of why we're
10 here. I have a list of several people that have asked
11 to speak, I will take them in order. Then after that,
12 I will open the floor to anybody who has any thoughts
13 they wish to add, and we will not adjourn until
14 everyone has had a chance to say their piece.

15 But first, Don Jessome has some information to
16 share about the project itself.

17 BY MR. JESSOME:

18 Thank you Dr. Pell. As Dr. Pell mentioned, my
19 name is Don Jessome. I'm President and CEO of
20 Transmission Developers, Inc., who is a proponent
21 looking to develop this project.

22 The project's name is the Champlain Hudson Power

1 Express project. And when we first started to develop
2 this project, it was a 2,000-megawatt project, 1,000
3 into New York City and 1,000 into southwest
4 Connecticut.

5 The first statement I'd like to make is on July
6 6, we made a public announcement that we were no
7 longer developing the Connecticut portion of this
8 line. So the impacts at this point in time are only
9 with respect to the New York component of the project,
10 as we're no longer developing the 1,000 megawatts over
11 southwest Connecticut.

12 So the project is an HVDC or high voltage direct
13 current transmission project that's interconnecting
14 Canada to its New York City marketplace, 1,000
15 megawatts. And just in general terms, 1,000 megawatts
16 represents approximately a million residential homes
17 in terms of the energy usage. So it's a fairly
18 significant project in terms of size. However, to
19 also put it in perspective, the New York State
20 marketplace is about 35,000 megawatts in terms of
21 total capacity, so although it's a large project, it's
22 one of very many projects that are already in the

1 State of New York.

2 The project is what we call bipole, 1,000
3 megawatt bipole. There are two cables. Each cable
4 carries 500 megawatts. The cables are approximately
5 five inches in diameter. And all the information I'm
6 providing to you here is available on our website, and
7 certainly there are information packages over there,
8 and we have to go through a very rigorous
9 environmental permitting process through the Article 7
10 process and Public Service Commission. So all of this
11 is available and we encourage people to sign up for
12 our website to get all this information.

13 The cables themselves will interconnect with a
14 Hydro-Québec's transmission system at the border, it
15 will come down to the Richelieu River, and the cables
16 are physically buried in the waterways I'm talking
17 about. They're buried approximately 3 feet below the
18 sediment level. They're buried for one reason: To
19 protect the cables against anchors, and that's the
20 most important reason we bury them. The two cables
21 will come down the Richelieu River into Lake Champlain
22 into the Hudson River. They come down as far as Glens

1 Falls, then we come out of the waterway, still buried,
2 go onto the CP railway line, and go around the Capital
3 District and onto the CSX railway line. The reason we
4 do that is we're avoiding the PCB dredging area that
5 is in the Hudson River. It's something we're
6 obviously concerned about from an environmental
7 perspective, and we found an alternative route and
8 felt that that was appropriate for that area. We come
9 back into the Hudson River at Coeymans, down into the
10 Hudson to Yonkers, where we'll build a converter
11 station. A converter station just takes AC -- or in
12 this case, DC power, and converts it back into AC
13 power. All of the lights and other equipment that we
14 use today are AC power. And two cables will go out
15 back down into either a ConEd or a NYPA
16 interconnection point in New York City. We're
17 currently studying four different locations where we
18 can interconnect, but it's narrowing very quickly.

19 That transmission project is a \$1.9 billion
20 project, and we're actually going to be going out for
21 bids very shortly in early August to firm up the cost
22 of the project.

1 You know, a lot of people ask how do we pay for
2 this project. The easy answer is it's the shippers on
3 the line, so this is a little different model than
4 other transmission projects. We actually go out and
5 find customers who are interested in shipping their
6 power on our line. So as transmission line developers,
7 we never actually own the electricity, we simply
8 transport it. We're like the truck that takes it from
9 the manufacturing facility down to the retail
10 customer. We never actually own the electricity in
11 between. So our job is to have a transmission line
12 that connects generation to load in a safe, secure,
13 and environmentally respectful manner.

14 I appreciate the opportunity to hear your
15 comments this evening, and as Dr. Pell said, I will be
16 here all evening and happy to take questions once the
17 formal proceeding is over.

18 BY DR. PELL:

19 Thank you very much, Don. While Don was
20 speaking, it gave me a chance to think about what else
21 I might mention to you. A couple of things. There is
22 a DOE website separate from Don's website which is

1 specifically for the preparation of the Environmental
2 Impact Statement. And it's in the notice which is at
3 the registration desk, and I'll tell it to you again,
4 it's chpexpresseis.org. All of our environmental
5 documents will be on that site, and the two sites
6 actually are linked together, so if you go to one site
7 you can easily get to the other. That's done
8 deliberately as a convenience to you so you can see
9 everything that's out there that's in the public
10 domain. And our website actually also gives you a
11 link to the State of New York Public Service
12 Commission, because the applicant has filed a major
13 document with the PSC, and this will take you directly
14 to that site as well. So there's a great deal of
15 material for you to read, and also there's a link to
16 our Department of Energy Presidential permit site that
17 provides the original application that was filed by
18 TDI for a Presidential permit. So as I said earlier,
19 it's all there for you to peruse at your convenience.

20 This is not a DOE Environmental Impact Statement
21 alone. We have four cooperating agencies that are
22 partners with us in the preparation of the document

1 and that intend to use this same document for their
2 own regulatory purposes. They include the U.S. Army
3 Corps of Engineers; the United States Environmental
4 Protection Agency Region 2, which is headquartered in
5 Manhattan; and two other State of New York agencies:
6 the Public Service Commission, and the Department of
7 Environmental Conservation. So there are five bodies
8 involved in the preparation of this document. It's
9 conceivable before too much time elapses that other
10 agencies could join as well, because the process does
11 provide for governmental agencies to request
12 cooperating agency status if they have special
13 expertise in the subject.

14 So I think that pretty much covers most of the
15 things I could tell you. Of course, if I think of
16 anything else, I will do so.

17 Now I'm going to move to the actual presentation
18 of comments themselves. And the first speaker tonight
19 is a State Senator from the 42nd District of New York,
20 John Bonacic.

21 BY SENATOR BONACIC:

22 Thank you. I'll be brief. I want to thank you,

1 Dr. Pell, for coming, and I'd like to thank Mr.
2 Jessome for being here and making the brief
3 presentation.

4 I just have a few questions, just so I can
5 become more educated. We had a bad experience with
6 the NYRI line, which had eight counties very upset
7 with hurting property values, blight on the land, and
8 increasing the energy rates had that project gone
9 forward. I know that this will not affect property
10 values, I know it's not going to hurt the blight on
11 the land. My question specifically was the impact on
12 utility rates for the people living outside the City
13 of New York. And I had the opportunity to speak to Mr.
14 Jessome privately. His generic answer is that there
15 would be a tendency to be downward, but that is a
16 decision within the jurisdiction of the Public Service
17 Commission. So far so good?

18 BY DR. PELL:

19 So far so good.

20 BY SENATOR BONACIC:

21 How did you decide the capacity for this line to
22 enhance 1 million residents in Manhattan, and what

1 percentage of the City's needs would this cable line
2 take care of, if you know?

3 BY DR. PELL:

4 Mr. Bonacic, this is not intended to be a Q and
5 A, but let me add, they are fair questions and they
6 should be directed to Don Jessome. And like I said,
7 he's going to be here after the formal taking of
8 comments is completed, so please avail yourself of
9 him. I do not have those answers.

10 BY SENATOR BONACIC:

11 Last but not least, I like the idea of hydro and
12 wind coming out of Canada. Will there always be an
13 endless supply that this transporting of energy will
14 always have the capacity to feed the City?

15 BY DR. PELL:

16 Again, I am not familiar with the precise
17 sources of power that Mr. Jessome hopes to deliver.
18 Since the sources are in Canada, we do not look at
19 them in any great detail from my vantage point in the
20 DOE. Again, that's a fair question and Don's the guy
21 to answer it.

22 BY SENATOR BONACIC:

1 This may be a stupid question...

2 BY DR. PELL:

3 There are no stupid questions.

4 BY SENATOR BONACIC:

5 When you put a line in the Hudson River, you're
6 still above the ground, the cable itself, or is it
7 under the ground under the river?

8 BY DR. PELL:

9 It's submerged beneath the surface except where
10 there are rock outcrops that cannot be dredged, in
11 which case they'd place a concrete blanket or
12 something similar over the cable. The cable is never
13 exposed, because if it's exposed, then you run the
14 risk of the cable being snagged by a ship's anchor,
15 and that would be very serious damage.

16 BY SENATOR BONACIC:

17 So it's protected. Thank you very much.

18 BY DR. PELL:

19 Thank you very much for joining us this evening,
20 Mr. Bonacic. The next gentleman was also with us
21 yesterday in Yonkers, Phillip Musegaas. Tell us who
22 you're with, please.

1 BY MR. MUSEGAAS:

2 I'm here representing Riverkeeper. Thank you,
3 Dr. Pell.

4 What I'd like to do is give an overview of what
5 our written comments are going to be focused on. Just
6 to start, so everyone knows what Riverkeeper is, we
7 are a member-supported environmental organization,
8 non-profit organization that has been working for over
9 40 years to protect the ecological integrity of the
10 Hudson River and Hudson River Valley and Hudson River
11 watershed. So, as a result, of course, the proposal
12 to put the cable in the Hudson River is of great
13 interest to us.

14 I have four quick comments to make, and these
15 are basically requests for assessments of these
16 particular impacts, environmental impacts. The first
17 one has to do with the alternatives analysis under
18 NEPA. We would request that the Department of Energy
19 take a hard look at particularly two aspects of the
20 alternatives, and the first one is the route of the
21 cable. We know as Don Jessome described that a
22 portion of the cable route will be run under the

1 railroad right-of-way to avoid the GE PCB dredging
2 site, and we would like to have a full examination of
3 an alternative that looks at running the entire cable
4 under the land, under the railroad right-of-way,
5 comparing the environmental impacts of that to the
6 impacts of running the cable in the river.

7 The second alternative analysis would be dealing
8 with the converter station location. I believe the
9 primary proposal is for the Yonkers site to be the
10 site of the converter station. We would ask that the
11 alternative of, I believe, the Astoria, Queens
12 converter station be looked at very carefully.

13 Second, in terms of the disturbance of habitat
14 in the Hudson River, assuming the primary proposal of
15 running the cable in the Hudson would go forward,
16 looking at the disturbance particularly of designated
17 sensitive habitat for fish species and other wildlife.
18 The Hudson River has several areas that are very
19 important ecologically that are designated either by
20 Federal or State agencies as essential fish habitat or
21 significant coastal fish and wildlife habitat, and we
22 know that the cable has to run through some of these.

1 We know that there are some efforts to mitigate some
2 of the impacts, but we really urge the agency to take
3 a very, very careful look at the methods that are
4 going to be proposed for mitigating the impact to
5 these areas. The Hudson River is a very biologically
6 diverse and productive area, but fish species are
7 under great duress. Many fish species are in decline
8 in the river from a variety of impacts and sources,
9 and we don't want to see an additional source of
10 stress and source of disturbance to these sensitive
11 habitats.

12 Third, we would like to see a complete
13 assessment of the effects of the dredging itself so
14 any re-suspension of sediment in the Hudson River,
15 particularly sediments that contain contaminants like
16 PCBs and pollution that have accumulated over time in
17 the Hudson River. You know, there are different types
18 of dredging techniques that are proposed to be used,
19 so we'd like to see a kind of a cumulative impact
20 analysis of all the different dredging techniques, as
21 well as the laying of concrete matting or other types
22 of protective covering over the cables in general.

1 And then in terms of the sediments, looking at what
2 kinds of impacts result from re-suspension settlement.

3 Fourth, we would like to see a full review of
4 the impacts of once the cable is installed in the
5 river and operating, the impacts of electromagnetic
6 fields basically in two areas: one for the HVDC cable.
7 We know there's not a typical EMF field produced like
8 there is with an AC cable, but we would still like to
9 see a full literature review and analysis of if there
10 are any impacts to fish species, and particularly to
11 fish migration and fish spawning patterns and habits.
12 And then, with the section of AC cable that's proposed
13 for , I believe, the Harlem and East River going from
14 the converter station to the substation, we would like
15 to see a full analysis of those impacts as well from
16 that EMF field.

17 And we will be submitting more detailed
18 written comments by the August 2nd deadline. Thank you
19 very much.

20 BY DR. PELL:

21 Thank you very much, Phillip. It's probably
22 worth mentioning the difference between AC and DC.

1 Your car battery is a DC device, direct current
2 device. Your flashlight battery is direct current.
3 Your wall outlet is an AC current device, alternating
4 current device. The difference is, if you were to put
5 a voltmeter or gauge on the device, on a direct
6 current device, the meter would go up to the level of
7 the voltage and then just continue straight across.
8 With alternating current, if it were a good enough
9 meter or oscilloscope, you would see that the current
10 actually goes in a 60-cycle sine wave. In an altering
11 current situation, when you do have electromagnetic
12 fields, in other words, the current does generate both
13 a magnetic and an electric field. In a direct current
14 situation, there is no magnetic field generated, but
15 there does remain an electric field. So I just
16 thought I'd mention that by way of clarification.

17 Also, with regard to fish and wildlife in
18 general, I suspect we'll be doing consultations with
19 the Fish and Wildlife Service specifically on that
20 subject. We will probably find ourselves doing a
21 biological assessment, and if that's the case, we will
22 then request a formal biological opinion from the Fish

1 and Wildlife Service. So this area will be given
2 appropriate scrutiny.

3 I'd like to move onto Hayley Mauskapf with the
4 Scenic Hudson.

5 BY MS. MAUSKAPF:

6 Thank you, Dr. Pell.

7 As you said, my name is Hayley Mauskapf, I'm
8 with Scenic Hudson, and by way of introduction, we're
9 a 47-year-old non-profit environmental organization
10 and a separately incorporated land trust. We're
11 dedicated to protecting and enhancing the scenic,
12 natural, historic, agricultural, ecological, and
13 recreational treasures of the Hudson River and its
14 valley.

15 We understand and appreciate that our future
16 relies on a shift towards clean, renewable energy, and
17 for that reason, we believe the proposed project could
18 possibly have some positive environmental benefits.

19 It could have the potential to help make the
20 transition to a greater future powered by a more
21 clean, renewable energy, which could therefore help
22 improve our air and water quality and avert the

1 consequences of global climate change.

2 However, any project of this magnitude, which is
3 unprecedented in the Hudson Valley, needs to be
4 designed and implemented in a manner that's not going
5 to harm the sensitive Hudson River estuary or the
6 communities through which the transmission lines will
7 pass. Therefore, we urge the Department of Energy to
8 carefully assess the potential negative environmental
9 effects in the EIS.

10 I'm just going to go over a few of the main
11 concerns that we have, which we will expand upon later
12 in written comments. The Hudson River, from Hudson
13 Falls to Manhattan, has been designated a superfund
14 site due to the PCBs that were dumped into the river
15 by GE, and they remain on the river bottom as far as
16 we know. And the proposed route for the transmission
17 line as Don said, avoids the area in the upper Hudson
18 where the dredging has begun and where the
19 concentration of PCBs is greatest. However, the EIS
20 needs to address the potential for re-suspension of
21 PCBs and other contaminants in the mid and lower
22 Hudson River due to the burying of cable in that

1 contaminated sediment and the process for installing
2 that cable. While some areas of cable are going to be
3 buried by methods which might be less likely to
4 greatly stir up sediment, other areas are going to
5 need to be mechanically plowed or dredged, which will
6 significantly increase this risk. The EIS should also
7 investigate and analyze the method by which TDI is
8 going to determine which method of burial to use in
9 which area.

10 The re-suspension of PCBs and other contaminants
11 would not only affect wildlife and aquatic species,
12 but also human health. In addition to the
13 recreational uses of the Hudson such as swimming,
14 boating, and fishing, there are several communities
15 that still have drinking water intake along the
16 Hudson, which includes Rhinebeck, Port Ewen, and
17 Poughkeepsie.

18 On to effects on sensitive species and habitat
19 in the Hudson River. We know that the Hudson River
20 and surrounding tidal wetlands are home to a number of
21 sensitive species, including species protected by
22 Federal and State law, including short-nosed sturgeon,

1 Atlantic sturgeon, and the bald eagle. We believe the
2 potential detrimental effects of the project on
3 aquatic resources and wildlife need to be thoroughly
4 evaluated, and especially the cumulative impact of the
5 installation, the operation, and then later on, for 30
6 or 50 years of maintenance of the cable.

7 The impact of the siting and installation of the
8 cable on subaquatic vegetation, the New York marine
9 habitat, and the riverfront riparian habitat, as well
10 as a potential for shoreline erosion and the
11 destruction of wetlands during the installation of the
12 cable needs to be evaluated. And also the potential
13 for the installation process to possibly spread to
14 some of the invasive species that we've seen over the
15 past several years.

16 BY DR. PELL:

17 Excuse me, Hayley, let me interrupt. What
18 water-based species are at stake here?

19 BY MS. MAUSKAPF:

20 The zebra mussel is one that I know of off the
21 top of my head, and I know there are a couple of
22 aquatic plant species whose names I don't remember,

1 but we will be listing them specifically in our formal
2 written comments.

3 BY DR. PELL:

4 Thank you. Great.

5 BY MS. MAUSKAPF:

6 Also one thing we're particularly concerned
7 about would be would be what would amount to the
8 permanent alteration of the habitat in those areas as
9 we mentioned where concrete matting will have to be
10 placed over the cable rather than having it buried.

11 We also urge that the EIS evaluate how the
12 electromagnetic field and thermal effects of the cable
13 might affect the sensitive aquatic species, especially
14 including the segment of the alternating current
15 downstream from the converter station. The
16 electromagnetic field and thermal impacts specifically
17 on fish migration and spawning behavior should be
18 analyzed, as well as the impact on benthic organisms
19 and shellfish, as their habitat is obviously much
20 closer to where the cable will be buried.

21 We also urge that the EIS thoroughly evaluate
22 the potential of the alternative routes, including the

1 alternative land routes, and whether any of these
2 alternative routes might further mitigate
3 environmental impacts to an extent more than what has
4 been the chosen alternative.

5 It's important that the EIS identify that on any
6 particular segment of the river. Depending on the
7 characteristics of the soil, geology, and aquatic life
8 in that particular segment of the river, the cable
9 should be strategically sited at such a depth and in
10 such an area in that segment where it would have the
11 minimal environmental impact as opposed to simply
12 putting it either in the shortest route or the easiest
13 route.

14 So we hope these comments will inform the
15 Department of Energy EIS on this project, and that the
16 EIS will then allow Scenic Hudson and other
17 intervening and interested parties to better
18 understand the potential impacts of the project.

19 Thanks for the opportunity to provide comments, and we
20 will be submitting the formal written comments by
21 August 2nd.

22 BY DR. PELL:

1 Thank you, Hayley. We'll be looking forward to
2 your comments. I appreciate your being with us
3 tonight.

4 The next speaker is William Ovenstone.

5 BY MR. OVENSTONE:

6 Since the other people already mentioned what I
7 was going to talk about, it doesn't leave me much to
8 say.

9 BY DR. PELL:

10 I have every confidence in you.

11 BY MR. OVENSTONE:

12 There are legal questions involved in a right-
13 of-way for people who own property on the river and
14 boatyards. In other words, you got a cable that's
15 nearby, will they have to pay the company for the
16 right to drive a boat over the cable that may be near
17 their property on the water line or boatyard, or do
18 they have to pay an annual fee to the company or
19 whatever?

20 Another thing that strikes me as strange is we
21 have tons of power transmission lines all over the
22 place. Why can't we upgrade a few of them instead of

1 playing around with the Hudson River? It's also a
2 little crazy because the entire length of the Hudson
3 River is an ancient earthquake fault, so let's work
4 with the transmission lines that we have and leave the
5 Hudson River alone.

6 The Hudson River is our friend. I live a mile
7 away from there. Thank you.

8 BY DR. PELL:

9 Thank you, Mr. Ovenstone. You'll be pleased to
10 hear we do look at seismic potential impacts and
11 geology and quakes, and those kinds of things will be
12 in the EIS to review.

13 I'd like to move on now to Mr. David Laudenheim.

14 BY MR. LAUDENHEIM:

15 I will be sending in written comments.

16 BY DR. PELL:

17 Thank you. Jurgen Wekerle, and he's with the
18 Sierra Club.

19 BY MR. WEKERLE:

20 Good evening, Dr. Pell. My name is Jurgen
21 Wekerle, I'm conservation chair of the Ramapo-Catskill
22 group of the Sierra Club.

1 The Champlain Hudson Power Express is a very
2 impressive project. It stands alone from traditional
3 applications since it is a long distance transmission
4 cable only. As Senator Bonacic mentioned earlier, it
5 is very similar to the NYRI project, which was a power
6 line on towers, but it was the same principal. It
7 does not generate or produce electricity, nor does it
8 serve as a utility which distributes electricity to
9 retail customers. This presentation is a classic
10 example of segmentation, and that is something that
11 the whole NEPA and the Article 7 process should
12 acknowledge and should be a little bit more careful in
13 terms of the source of the electricity and the end
14 users of that electricity. The project takes no
15 responsibility for the supply, for the reliability,
16 for the need, or for the end use of that electricity.

17 It is the cumulative environmental, social,
18 economic, public cost impacts that will both drive
19 this project and will be driven by this project that
20 must be examined by the EIS, not just the construction
21 aspects in isolation of the total picture.

22 The EIS must establish whether a need actually

1 exists for the new source of supply to the New York
2 City/North Jersey metro region. NEPA and Article 7
3 both require a declaration of public need and the
4 taking of a hard look at a full range of alternatives
5 to any added supply. If there is no need, the no
6 action option should prevail.

7 As late as April of this year, the New York
8 State Independent Systems Operators, the outfit
9 comprised of all merchants in the field that govern
10 the distribution of electricity throughout New York
11 State, indicated that there was no existing or
12 anticipated need for electricity in New York State
13 during the next ten-year planning cycle.

14 New York ISO has declared, however, that the
15 priority goal for New York State is to upgrade the
16 existing substation and distribution system of each
17 utility and to modernize the regional grid.

18 The EIS must evaluate the results of efficiency.
19 An example is a closing of a plant in Rockland County
20 further downstream on the Hudson River. During the
21 spring of '07, the Mirant-owned Lovett coal fired
22 power plant located on the Hudson at Stony Point was

1 under a consent decree to upgrade the emission system.
2 Instead, Lovett and Mirant petitioned to be
3 decommissioned. Due to the fact that the Orange and
4 Rockland Utilities reconstructed a major local
5 substation and power line, efficiencies were created
6 which made up for the loss of the Lovett power
7 production in its totality -- just the efficiency
8 alone. The request was granted by the Public Service
9 Commission for decommissioning, and the plant has
10 since been deconstructed and dismantled.

11 The EIS must evaluate recent additions to the
12 supply, such as the cable under Long Island Sound from
13 Connecticut to Suffolk and Nassau Counties, and the
14 cable across New York Harbor from New Jersey to Long
15 Island.

16 The EIS must evaluate the current projects in
17 advance planning on the books here in New York right
18 as we speak, which also probably have no need as I'm
19 describing this scenario. But there they are in
20 competition, so to speak. The Cross Hudson cable from
21 north Jersey to mid Manhattan, the 49th Street ConEd
22 station, has been on the books for a generation now,

1 has never been constructed, will get fast-tracked when
2 the time comes, because there has been no need. The
3 time has not been right. It's ready to go.

4 The Transco gas pipeline extension through north
5 Jersey to lower Manhattan, that's in the pipeline so
6 to speak.

7 The 1,000-megawatt Cricket Valley Power Plant in
8 the Town of Dover across the Hudson just east of us
9 here near the Connecticut border, that gas-generated
10 power plant will feed into the ConEd transmission line
11 that leads to the Bronx.

12 The 630-megawatt competitive power venture power
13 plant in the Town of Waywayanda outside of Middletown
14 in Orange County that will feed into the Marcy-South
15 power line.

16 The 63-megawatts to be generated from existing
17 New York City reservoirs in the Catskills.

18 Cumulatively, there's an awful lot of
19 electricity that's needed above and beyond the
20 estimates of no additional need by ISO. All of the
21 projects I just mentioned use existing transmission
22 infrastructure with little or no additional expense to

1 create new transmission lines.

2 The EIS must evaluate the applicant's own New
3 England project, the Maine Express, I believe it's
4 called, which will transport the same sources of
5 Québec-generated electricity by back cable to Boston
6 and to the New England ISO. Also, the ability of
7 sharing that electricity with the New York State ISO
8 must be evaluated and detailed in the EIS.

9 The EIS must examine the full range of demand-
10 side initiatives from improved building codes and code
11 enforcement to smart meters, which include the simple,
12 really dated time-of-day meters to the fully digitized
13 systems that are planned.

14 The current heat wave in New York City is
15 another example where ConEd has arranged through radio
16 transmission to cut back on major building central air
17 conditioning systems to reduce the need for the
18 overloads, and again, that's where the problem has
19 been identified. The overload within the
20 distribution, within the city limits from substations
21 to the neighborhood distribution to the consumer.

22 The EIS must evaluate alternate supply from

1 renewable sources such as programs funded by NYSERDA,
2 the New York agency, including household solar and
3 wind net metering projects for residences, and now
4 that's been expanded for commercial property.

5 The issues of cogeneration, which are coming
6 online, are getting special subsidies that -- that's
7 from heat, will produce electricity for many
8 generators -- also has to be looked at.

9 Several routes are proposed for this cable. The
10 EIS must describe the role of eminent domain in
11 acquiring the properties for those routes.

12 Sources of electricity. The applicant states
13 that electricity to be transported will be renewable,
14 which is related to its U.S. government-funded
15 subsidy. During a prior presentation -- actually, I
16 think it was right here in this very room earlier this
17 spring -- the applicant indicated that the sources
18 would be both hydropower and wind power. The
19 hydropower would be from the Hydro-Québec lower
20 Churchill Falls project yet to be constructed. The
21 wind power would originate from wind turbines in New
22 York State, with power being wheeled north across the

1 Canadian border and east to the Hertel substation
2 outside of Montreal, and then south to the project's
3 cable connection as described earlier.

4 The EIS must detail the sources of electricity
5 and evaluate if they really are a net renewable eco-
6 friendly source. Dams are yet to be built and forests
7 are yet to be cleared and flooded. What effect will
8 the loss of forest and habitat have on increasing
9 greenhouse gases and on the wildlife to be displaced?
10 What is the chance that methane and other climate
11 changing chemicals will be introduced into the
12 atmosphere as a result of the flooding? The
13 hydropower is to be generated from artificially
14 created reservoirs, not streams and rivers.

15 BY DR. PELL:

16 Excuse me. Do you have a great deal more? I'm
17 afraid of being unfair to the other speakers.

18 BY MR. WEKERLE:

19 I could stop, and when everyone else is
20 finished, I could pick up.

21 BY DR. PELL:

22 Let me ask you this, were you planning to submit

1 written comments?

2 BY MR. WEKERLE:

3 I can submit written comments, yes.

4 BY DR. PELL:

5 Because I think it's very useful to have a
6 transcription of your comments. Let me give you a few
7 more minutes. If you could perhaps skim over what
8 you've got or summarize the rest of what you've got,
9 that will be appreciated. Then whatever you submit in
10 writing, you can make it as long as you want.

11 BY MR. WEKERLE:

12 Just to shorten this one here, the factor of
13 reservoirs and the high evaporation rate, how reliable
14 can we depend on that form of electricity in the
15 middle of summer and drought conditions when the water
16 flow is lowest and the demand is highest? A cost
17 benefit analysis must also be included in the EIS.

18 The applicant stated that a fast-track permit
19 approach process is requested not just to supply the
20 required demand, but to obtain U.S. government
21 economic stimulus subsidies. All the subsidies have
22 to be looked at from Federal, State, and local

1 government, including county and municipal government
2 agencies which provide tax abatements, interest free
3 loans, and property tax exemptions.

4 Construction issues. The construction of the
5 cable under water appears to have been carefully
6 considered, avoiding the GE PCB dredging in the Fort
7 Edward to Troy vicinity is a very good example.

8 However, hot pockets of PCB accumulation from the full
9 length of the Hudson River exist, as well other buried
10 pollutants such as cold tar deposits from electric
11 utilities which produced coal gas from another era.

12 The EIS must document those deposits and also evaluate
13 the consequences of riverbed channeling, especially in
14 the active, dynamic tidal river as is the Hudson. The
15 underwater shifting of channels are akin to shoreline
16 wave action and the shifting beach dunes. The Army
17 Corps of Engineers took that into consideration when
18 they were going through the review process of the PCB
19 dredging.

20 BY DR. PELL:

21 You know that they're a cooperating agency with
22 us, and I assume that they're going to be looking at

1 these things very carefully.

2 BY MR. WEKERLE:

3 And it's one of those things that we overlook
4 because no matter how well this is buried, the channel
5 moves. And it can be unburied, it can expose other
6 pollutants, and the comments earlier about the re-
7 suspension of pollutants is important. And what was
8 discovered were these hot pockets right to the
9 Atlantic ocean of PCBs that accumulated from the Troy
10 Dam area.

11 BY DR. PELL:

12 We'll be sure to look at that. I do have a
13 question for you. I'm not sure I'm familiar with the
14 NYRI project. Is that the New York Regional
15 Interconnect?

16 BY MR. WEKERLE:

17 Yes, it is. It's NYRI. And the similarity is
18 post deregulation is a whole new era of evaluating
19 electricity projects. Once a separation from
20 generation to the distribution by utilities took
21 place, that took a while to digest. A project like
22 this is a transmission only, and that creates a unique

1 problem in how do we actually handle this and what are
2 the responsibilities of the applicant. And it creates
3 that kind of a segmentation where nobody's really in
4 charge of the cause and effect, and we're dealing with
5 the middle part of the project. Value that it has, it
6 can't be really and truly evaluated until the entire
7 cause, transmission, and effect are also taken into
8 consideration.

9 BY DR. PELL:

10 Thank you very much. I'll look forward to your
11 written comments.

12 I should make a couple points in clarification
13 in response to some of the things that Jurgen raised.
14 There are no Department of Energy or other Federal
15 subsidies involved in this project per se. The
16 company has applied to another office of the
17 Department of Energy independent of mine, to the Loan
18 Guarantee Program Office for a loan guarantee that
19 employs monies from the ARRA, American Recovery and
20 Reinvestment Act. That application of that review
21 process is totally separate from the Presidential
22 permit process that I'm representing here tonight.

1 There is an overlap in that they will be interested in
2 our Environmental Impact Statement for their own
3 purposes if they decide to go forward with considering
4 the application, but there are no subsidies involved,
5 so I just wanted to make that clear.

6 And again, I reiterate what I said earlier. This
7 is not a Federal government or Department of Energy
8 project. It is a private sector investment by a
9 private sector entity, Transmission Developers, which
10 is headquartered in Toronto, Canada.

11 I'd like to now call on Randolph Horner.

12 BY MR. HORNER:

13 Thank you. First of all, Dr. Pell, I would like
14 to correct a couple of misstatements made by Mr.
15 Jessome just for the sake of clarity in the record.
16 This is a one-gigawatt project as it's now been
17 downsized, and Mr. Jessome said that's about a million
18 households. Just as a matter of common sense, that
19 would be about ten conventional light bulbs or one
20 small hair dryer per household. It would be more apt
21 to say this is about 250,000 households at four
22 kilowatts per household.

1 Additionally, notwithstanding my ardent support
2 for Scenic Hudson, I believe the comments made were
3 apt, but I would note that there is no assurance --
4 and all of my remarks have to do with scoping, please
5 interpret them as urgently requesting that these
6 matters be thoroughly looked into because this is a
7 scoping hearing. But although this has been
8 represented to be a renewable energy related project,
9 actually, merchant transmission projects are
10 indifferent to the source of electricity as we just
11 heard from the Sierra Club. In fact, the proponents
12 have admitted that these resources do not now exist as
13 we just heard in the previous presentation. So to
14 characterize this with all respect to the fact that we
15 want more renewable energy, more greenhouse gas
16 abatement, more global warming abatement -- and I'll
17 relate this remark to the core of the scoping document
18 as I see it -- but notwithstanding the fact that we
19 want these things to happen, because the resources do
20 not now exist, there is no assurance whatsoever that
21 whatever the source of the investment, once this
22 merchant transmission facility is constructed, it will

1 be able to transmit the dirtiest of power as well as
2 the cleanest of power. There will be an overwhelming
3 necessity to obtain tariffs or revenues from
4 transmission in order to repay the financing.

5 As to the matter of financing, this proponent
6 has made it quite clear. I will not say that this
7 project has been rushed ahead to try to make an
8 inappropriate access to the 1705 loan guarantee.
9 However, whatever the circumstances, the 1705 was
10 designed to stimulate job creation and reinvestment in
11 the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. The
12 intention is that those funds, even when they are loan
13 guarantees -- which are, Dr. Pell, with all respect, a
14 very important subsidy -- those loan guarantees place
15 the faith and credit of the United States government
16 behind the borrower, in this case, a foreign borrower,
17 even though I have the warmest of feelings to our very
18 fine neighbor to the north, and I have extensive
19 business involvement with Toronto and other
20 enterprises in Canada and I'm very fond of those
21 connections. Nevertheless, we're talking about 1705
22 loan guarantees, and it is impossible, since these

1 intentions have been made clear by the proponents,
2 it's impossible to separate those issues.

3 So driving in the interest of time to the core
4 issue, the core issue is that, loving the river as I
5 do, concerned with the benthic environment as I am,
6 the real issue is, why will this arguably unneeded
7 facility be constructed with what is tantamount to
8 American taxpayer subsidy in the form of loan
9 guarantees, when it is itself uneconomic? We're
10 taking the proponent at its word that this will be a
11 \$2 billion project, give or take, to create one
12 gigawatt of transmission capacity, not one gigawatt of
13 generation.

14 We in the beneficiary area -- the goal, the
15 target, metro New York -- we, for merely three times
16 this investment per watt, at small scale, we can
17 create distributed generation on-load on-site, making
18 tens, maybe even hundreds of thousands of new jobs in
19 the manufacturing, in the installation sector for New
20 York. If there's any appropriate application of a
21 1705 loan guarantee, that would be it. Leaving aside
22 whether the applicant goes forward to attempt to

1 obtain these loan guarantees, the project is itself
2 uneconomic, because when we move to utility scale,
3 we're already able to create solar energy generation
4 on-load on-site for in the neighborhood of \$4 a watt,
5 electricity on-site for only twice what this facility
6 would cost to capitalize before it has to obtain the
7 energy from off our shores, pay for the energy
8 charges, and then pay the transmission tariff. So
9 this project, besides the excellent comments that were
10 made by the Sierra Club about the fact that there is
11 no need, and many other projects including energy
12 efficiency and demand-side measures are in play at
13 this moment reducing the load in metro New York.
14 Finally, a 9-plus gigawatt solar development
15 opportunity has been identified, not by wild-eyed
16 visionaries, but has been articulated by ConEd's
17 Director of Strategic Planning herself at the recent
18 New York City solar summit.

19 So the point I'm making is that the scoping
20 document must rigorously take not only a hard look,
21 but dig very, very deeply into the way in which this
22 proposed project would undercut and undermine the

1 infant renewable energy industry in the State of New
2 York, which we intend to grow into a major force.

3 And finally, this is not timely. The reservoirs
4 that would provide additional Hydro-Québec power to be
5 introduced into this merchant transmission facility do
6 not now exist, as has been freely admitted by the
7 proponents and has been reiterated in tonight's
8 hearing. Between now and 2015, we're dealing with a
9 stated goal of the State of New York to reach 45 by
10 '15. That's 30 percent renewable energy when we only
11 have about 18 at present, and about a 15 percent
12 efficiency reduction. So over the same period of
13 time, when scarce and valuable resources -- including
14 the regulatory and review efforts of the Public
15 Service Commission, the United States Department of
16 Energy, and all the other concerned agencies -- during
17 the same period when we seek to mobilize our resources
18 to make many, many thousands of jobs and real economic
19 development that's sustainable and useful, during that
20 same period of time, we could first be taken up with a
21 lengthy proceeding for this questionable project, and
22 then see it take up a great deal of attention when we

1 need to be building renewable energy and energy
2 efficiency resources on-site in the five boroughs of
3 New York where the path is clearly ahead of us.

4 So I would say with all respect to all of our
5 colleagues here tonight, the most overwhelming
6 environmental consequence is that actual sustainable
7 action to ameliorate the global warming problem, to
8 increase our independence from imported oil -- we're
9 not going to increase that independence by buying
10 foreign electricity, that's just a different sort of
11 overseas expenditure -- real progress along these
12 lines needs to be made by concerted action. And in
13 the case of a 35-gigawatt ISO, even if this project
14 had any measure of success -- and I believe that this
15 Environmental Impact Statement must rigorously
16 investigate all the things that have been cited here
17 and at other hearings -- even if this project were
18 successful, it would not generate one single kilowatt
19 hour of electricity, it will merely transport
20 electricity, and the amount of electricity it imported
21 would be less than 3 percent of the New York ISO.

22 So thank you for the opportunity to address

1 these remarks to the issue of a thorough comprehensive
2 and effective scoping.

3 BY DR. PELL:

4 Thank you very much, Randolph.

5 A couple thoughts that came to my mind while I
6 was listening to you. First of all, you might wish to
7 consider submitting your remarks about the loan
8 guarantee application to the Loan Guarantee Program
9 Office, where it would be much more relevant than the
10 process that I'm involved in.

11 The other thing too is, you probably know this,
12 but for the benefit of some of the others here, the
13 project has to go through a very lengthy series of
14 permitting requirements, not just the Presidential
15 permit. The Presidential permit would actually be the
16 least of it. One of the things the project has done,
17 and Don, correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe you've
18 been before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission,
19 FERC, and received favorable review from FERC and also
20 state and local Public Service Commissions -- and as I
21 mentioned earlier, the Public Service Commission is a
22 cooperating agency.

1 There are a lot of hurdles for Don to cross
2 before the project can be built, so those of you who
3 have views you wish to see expressed, you have many
4 outlets for those views within the confines of your
5 own state and local governmental structure.

6 BY MR. HORNER:

7 Dr. Pell, as I mentioned during my remarks, that
8 takes up a great deal of regulatory and review
9 capacity. What we really need to be doing is building
10 a sustainable energy system for the State of New York,
11 for the northeastern region, and the United States of
12 America.

13 BY DR. PELL:

14 I'd like to believe that one does not
15 necessarily displace the other, but thank you.

16 Let's move on now to Geddy Sveikauskas. You're
17 with Ulster Publishing Company, are you not?

18 BY MR. SVEIKAUSKAS:

19 That's correct. Mr. Jessome was kind enough to
20 talk to me a couple months ago when the project was a
21 little bit different, and I've had some time to
22 reflect on it. I very much appreciate what the other

1 people have said and your willingness to listen to it
2 all. You're a patient man.

3 I think the question of demand studies is at
4 least one central core to what we're talking about
5 here. I have seen in recent days these full page
6 advertisements from Indian Point where they talk about
7 the importance of what they supply to megawatts to the
8 New York City area, and I notice particularly the
9 statement, "And no one else has proposed an
10 alternative that would do the same thing." Now that
11 just isn't congruent with what Mr. Jessome is saying
12 and what the gentleman said about the various projects
13 that are in different parts of the pipeline. The
14 possibility of Canadian power has been kind of a holy
15 grail in this state for something like 30 or 40 years,
16 and if it's still a good solution, I think there's
17 much to be said for finding a way to do it.

18 In addition, as you know, New York City has been
19 increasing in population every year more than probably
20 double the population of Kingston, about 40,000 a
21 year. We don't know if this pace is going to
22 continue, but there are -- people's predictions are

1 based on so many factors that the predictability of
2 demand seems to be very difficult to do. So some
3 people focus on the solar power being the solution,
4 others talk about that it's not the amount of power
5 but how to get it to the City, et cetera and so on,
6 and the bottom line is that the scoping document has
7 to contain some kind of analysis bringing in all those
8 factors: The economic, the demographic, the nature of
9 New York City, what's likely to happen in new energy,
10 our desires, the State energy plan, and other things.
11 It's clearly a very complex analysis and requires a
12 lot of research and work. The second thing that has
13 been said about this project that I think is important
14 is, of course, the environmental impact. I only
15 mention this because nobody else has yet. But
16 apparently, projects using direct current are quite
17 numerous in other continents and places, and by now,
18 there should be quite a record of what the
19 environmental consequences are of these projects. And
20 I would like to see part of what the Energy Department
21 is going to do, a real search of the literature, both
22 of the projects all over the world that use direct

1 current and studies about the environmental
2 consequences. I think that's pretty important.

3 Third and finally, this cable is kind of a --
4 it's a complex thing in terms that, as you know, it
5 seems sort of free in that it uses the bottom of a
6 body of water which is invisible. And the
7 consequences of it, of doing that, kind of always seem
8 to come up over time. And the question is who should
9 be responsible for those consequences. There's
10 something about looking at when cable was laid after
11 the Civil War to Europe -- in Europe and the United
12 States -- and the history of that was fascinating.
13 And as you know, some of the early cables were rather
14 primitive and broke, et cetera, et cetera, and there
15 is a huge -- and there's still environmental
16 consequences of them finding pieces of cable in
17 various places. So I think it's important that part
18 of the indirect cost of this project would be to
19 include all the possibilities. If, for instance, the
20 cable is disturbed by dredging, what are the
21 consequences of that, who should pay? Does that go to
22 court for ten years, or is that clear from the

1 contract at the very beginning who's responsible
2 financially?

3 There are things like not only the dredging and
4 other forms of cable disturbance, but really the
5 interruption of the power for whatever reason. We
6 tend to get dependent and take for granted things that
7 perhaps we shouldn't, and it seems to me, all things
8 being equal, that it's better to have more sources of
9 power and projects that provide power as long as I
10 don't have to pay for it.

11 And the Blackstone Group, which is or was
12 connected, is not lacking in financial capacity and
13 ability to calculate risk. And if they want to take a
14 bet on something, which is a good form of insurance
15 for our society, economic, et cetera, I think it's
16 certainly worth looking at as long as the contract
17 makes sure that it's not a free ride for the
18 developer.

19 Thank you very much.

20 BY DR. PELL:

21 Geddy, thank you very much. I appreciate that.

22 Geddy is the last person who has signed up, so

1 now it's open mike. Anybody who would like to
2 contribute? Yes, ma'am. Please come to the mike and
3 tell us your name.

4 BY MS. SANDERSON:

5 June Sanderson, I live in the Town of Clinton 20
6 minutes from here. And I really -- I'm so happy I
7 came to hear more than I would be reading in the
8 newspaper.

9 My initial impression of this is renewable,
10 hidden, not disturbing the landscape, wonderful. More
11 issues came up, but I'm going to direct my comments,
12 which might not on the surface be related, but we care
13 about it. And it relates to what Senator Bonacic
14 mentioned was utility rates, specifically electricity
15 rates. Can you imagine how we felt here in the Hudson
16 Valley when Central Hudson increased their rates
17 because of conservation? That gets right down to the
18 issue that we all care about, and it just isn't fair.
19 On the other hand, the good part of what we're here
20 tonight about is that we're not in China, and we do
21 care about input, and we do care about the
22 environment, and there are hints from the speakers of

1 unintended consequences.

2 So you've seen both views from me and let's say
3 almost everyone here is grateful for Central Hudson's
4 relatively low rates, but if you don't encourage
5 conservation, we're going in the wrong direction.

6 Thanks.

7 BY DR. PELL:

8 Thank you. Anybody else like to speak? Yes,
9 sir. And then the lady behind you I believe also
10 wanted to speak. You'll be next.

11 BY MR. SANDERSON:

12 This is a quickie. I'm George Sanderson from
13 the same place, Clinton, across the river.

14 One thing I would like to find out somewhere
15 along the line is what's the end gain/loss of power in
16 the transmission line so that you can essentially
17 compute from that what the local temperature rise
18 might be, and also the same number including the two
19 up and down converter stations at each end so we note
20 the efficiency?

21 BY DR. PELL:

22 Thank you very much. That's actually an

1 interesting question because one of the reasons DC is
2 popular for long distance transmission is because
3 there are lower losses than AC. You're absolutely
4 correct. Any time you pass current through a wire,
5 there is warming, and it is something we will be
6 looking at, yes.

7 BY MS. TILLOU:

8 Hi, I'm Sondra Tillou from Kingston. I
9 appreciate everyone's comments and your presentation
10 here and the concern we have around our energy usage
11 and our production.

12 I'm glad I came tonight because I had been
13 thinking I would pull for anything that supported
14 getting more alternative energy into anything, and I
15 appreciate having to go home and think about -- I also
16 thought there were already things on the bottom of the
17 river doing this, and I guess not, and obviously, you
18 guys have to figure out a lot of stuff.

19 I hope that image of what's going on in the Gulf
20 is in everyone's mind of how stupid we get around what
21 we intend to do if something goes wrong. We have
22 pulled too many years to get this river cleaned up. I

1 grew up on this river, everybody here I bet grew up on
2 this river. We watched it be beautiful, we watched it
3 become polluted, and it's been hard to get it back.

4 If as it's been said we don't need this project
5 or we don't need it from Canada, or why can't we get
6 it from our own rooftops, I'm all for anything.
7 Having failed to cash my rebate check during Bush's
8 administration because I didn't want to participate, I
9 am going to send it back and ask for a little
10 converter box. I always thought, why a check? Why
11 not something to help us get going? It's not the big
12 projects. That's up to you guys. But as he was
13 saying, on-site, right here, I want my car wheels
14 spinning to make electric that feeds into a line on
15 the road. How come that isn't happening?

16 BY DR. PELL:

17 Thank you very much. By the way, Geddy, I meant
18 to mention, there is a large body of documentation on
19 high voltage DC transmission, and it's been very
20 common and popular in the European countries. And so
21 yes, you are right, there's a lot of material to
22 review.

1 Was there someone else wanting to speak? Yes,
2 sir.

3 BY MR. VOGEL:

4 Hi. I'm Kenneth Vogel from Plattekill, New
5 York.

6 Taking an assessment of what I've heard so far
7 tonight and what I've heard pretty much since energy
8 prices increased in 2007, and having been in the
9 construction business since the early '80s, that I've
10 always seen these kind of scoping hearings for the
11 likes of pro-developer and the environmentalist. And
12 what I've seen today is actually a pro/pro, and what
13 I've and seen since 2007, which is a hard way to put
14 this, but it was more like environmentalist against
15 environmentalist rather than environmentalist against
16 the developer.

17 There being, as you heard, as many concerns
18 about the environment, it's still a product utility.
19 It seems like that's not the issue. What I've seen
20 tonight also, and I'm guessing at this one, but the
21 gentleman mentioned about a line that didn't get built
22 between New Jersey and New York City.

1 BY MR. WEKERLE:

2 It's in the wings.

3 BY MR. VOGEL:

4 That sort of goes along the lines of other
5 things that I've heard, that it seems more of an issue
6 of crossing borders: For example, US and Canada, New
7 York and New Jersey, New York and Connecticut. That
8 may be one of the reasons why you got this one line
9 instead of the offshoot, it's more of an issue than it
10 is the actual building of it.

11 BY DR. PELL:

12 I don't know if you realize just what an
13 important energy issue you just mentioned, because I'm
14 talking about not this project now but in terms of
15 national power grid improvement and modernization.
16 One of the biggest issues we have in the Department of
17 Energy is the concept of regional transmission line
18 planning. Communities in general have a great deal of
19 concern about transmission lines that pass through
20 their neighborhoods or pass through their states or
21 counties and don't deliver power as they pass through,
22 and yet the lines do have a certain amount of

1 environmental concerns for those people even though
2 they don't get any benefit from it. This is a very
3 difficult issue. There are no easy answers to this
4 issue. I'm certainly not going to propose an easy
5 answer. But it's a major concern because inevitably,
6 in final analysis, when you look at the continental
7 United States, the lower 48, you look at it as a
8 whole. There are vast areas with terrific wind and
9 solar power capacity not near the people that will use
10 it, and the only way to get from point A to point B is
11 a straight line, and that straight line has to pass
12 through areas where people are concerned. And anyone
13 that has any suggestions, we sure appreciate hearing
14 them, because this is an age old policy issue and, as
15 I said, no simple answers. I know there have been
16 several attempts in Congress. We've made several
17 attempts. As you know, my office has issued a
18 National Interest Energy Transmission Corridors of
19 concern for designation in the northeast and the
20 southwest, and they have been very controversial --
21 the NIETC, it's been called. So thank you for
22 mentioning that because it's worth hearing about, it's

1 worth speaking about.

2 Would anybody else like to speak? Okay. Yes,
3 sir.

4 BY MR. McCABE:

5 Michael McCabe from Kingston, New York.

6 I don't understand a lot about this. This is
7 the first time I've been to something like this, and I
8 understand all the environmental concerns and they do
9 concern me, too. But one thing I haven't heard of,
10 from what I've been reading on, it looks like this
11 transmission line will either follow public land or
12 very specific private land, being the railroad right-
13 of-way. So I don't know how that works in terms of
14 taxation for the communities it goes through. I would
15 assume if it's running down the middle of the river,
16 the adjacent city's probably not getting anything out
17 of it. However, is there a taxation base along the
18 railroad right-of-ways? I don't know how that works.
19 My point being is that even though it is on a railroad
20 right-of-way, there will be impact to the villages and
21 townships that it goes through, whether it's street
22 crossings, or you mentioned the bridges, any kind of

1 culvert work, any of that kind of stuff. So I'm just
2 wondering anywhere where it affects the towns, outside
3 of the initial cost of building it, is there any
4 maintenance or any services that the localities have
5 to take care of, do they do it on their own, is that
6 being funded by the company that puts the line in?

7 Thanks.

8 BY DR. PELL:

9 Thank you very much. Those are interesting
10 questions. Once we adjourn, you may want to ask Mr.
11 Don Jessome, he may have some answers for you. But I
12 personally know nothing about implications on tax
13 structure or taxing capacity and what have you.

14 Anything else, anybody else? Okay. If that's
15 the case, I want to thank you very much again. It's
16 been a most useful evening. I hope you got something
17 out of it. I certainly did. This will certainly go a
18 long way to improve our environmental impact
19 assessment process. So thank you, have a good night,
20 and we hope to see you again when we have the draft
21 document itself available to review.

22