February 10, 2022

Honorable Michelle L. Phillips
Secretary to the Commission
New York State Public Service Commission
Agency Building 3
Albany, NY 12223-1350

RE: Case Number 15-E-0302

Dear Secretary Phillips,

I am writing to you today to express the Greene County Chamber of Commerce’s support for the contract agreement between New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE).

Under New York’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) the State is committed to achieving 70% renewable energy by 2030. This is a laudable goal, yet one that will be difficult of reach. New York needs large scale, ready-to-go projects that will free the state – especially New York City – from its dependence on fossil fuels. At present, 90% of New York City’s power is reliant on fossil fuel-based electricity. The situation is urgent. We need solutions now.

With NYSERDA entering into this agreement with the Champlain Hudson Power Express, CHPE will deliver 1,250 MW of low-cost, clean, renewable hydropower from the Québec grid to a substation in Astoria, Queens, rapidly reducing New York State and New York City’s carbon emissions by at least 37 million metric tons between 2025 and 2040.

CHPE is a fully permitted clean energy infrastructure project that will create 1,400 jobs for Laborers, Operating Engineers, IBEW, and other specialties. We are talking about good-paying jobs, the kinds that can sustain a family. In addition, it is estimated this project will create upwards of 3,200 addition indirect jobs. To help prepare our workforce for New York’s clean energy future, CHPE will establish a new $40 million Green Economy Fund, working with existing programs to increase access to clean energy job training for fossil fuel workers.

That’s only part of the economic benefits that will come with CHPE. 73 localities and 59 school districts throughout the state will benefit from $1.4 billion in new tax revenue over the first 25 years of the project. And because the transmission lines will be buried, they won’t drain taxpayer-funded municipal services during weather events or even for regular maintenance.

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To protect our waterbodies, CHPE will establish a $117 million environmental trust to fund projects that improve water quality in the Hudson, Harlem, and East Rivers and Lake Champlain.

All told, NYSERDA estimates CHPE will generate over $19 billion in benefits for New York and its people.

Most exciting is the indigenous participation in this vital project. As part of its contractual agreement with NYSERDA, Hydro-Québec will purchase electricity from the Apuiat wind farm, partially owned by Innu communities in Québec, as well as establish a partnership with the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake for joint ownership of the line in Québec that will connect to the Champlain Hudson Power Express.

New York needs renewable energy. The CHPE project will deliver a lot of it in short order, creating jobs, helping communities, and benefiting indigenous peoples in the process. For these reasons and more, I encourage you to support the contract agreement between NYSERDA and CHPE. Let’s get started building New York’s clean energy future!

Sincerely,

Jeff Friedman
President / Executive Director
jeff@greenecountychamber.com