



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George D. Maziarz

Senator Maziarz Decries Latest Legislative Effort to Undermine Local Benefits of Hydropower

GEORGE D. MAZIARZ July 23, 2009

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Senator George Maziarz (R-C, Newfane) held a press conference this afternoon in Buffalo to denounce a bill that will deprive Western New York of the benefits of low-cost power generated at the Niagara Power Project, the New York Power Authority's largest hydropower facility. Senate Bill 6050 was debated, voted on, and passed in the State Senate at 3:00 AM on July 16. "Most robberies occur in the middle of the night, and this one was no different," Senator Maziarz said. "This time the scene of the crime was the floor of the State Senate chamber, and the perpetrators were none other than Western New York's own Senator Bill Stachowski and Senator Antoine Thompson. Because they pushed this bill forward, at the request of Governor Paterson, it will be harder than ever to make sure that hydropower revenues generated locally will be used to benefit businesses locally.

Senator Stachowski and Senator Thompson co-sponsored S. 6050, along with the three other Democrats in the Senate who live north of Westchester. Specifically, the bill enables the New York Power Authority to subsidize and finance energy efficiency projects in partnership with 'any public entity' in the state.

"This bill is a Trojan horse," Senator Maziarz added. "Clean energy looks good and sounds good, but this bill will primarily end up benefiting entities like the City University of New York, the Port Authority of New York, and the Metropolitan Transit Authority which needed a bailout—not the businesses in Western New York that desperately need to see their energy costs reduced."

"Congressman Brian Higgins found that over 75% of the Power Authority's revenues are generated in Western New York," Senator Maziarz added. "Shouldn't we get preferential treatment from these types of programs? How a representative from Western New York could have their name attached to this bill, without any kind of protections for our region, is beyond me."

The measure was introduced in the Assembly on June 22 and was approved on the same day in that chamber, with a message of necessity provided by Governor Paterson.

"This whole deal raises several questions," Senator Maziarz said. "Why was a message of necessity needed to jam this bill through the Assembly at the eleventh hour? Why was the Senate forced to debate this in the middle of the night with virtually no study or analysis? And if this program is so great, why is the Long Island Power Authority not included in the bill as potential

financing agent?”

Senator Maziarz also pointed out that last month Governor Paterson nominated Mark O’Luck, a New York City businessman, to be a Trustee of the New York Power Authority.

“Western New Yorkers should be extremely wary of the rising influence of downstate in energy issues,” Senator Maziarz said.

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