



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Joins Bipartisan Coalition to Support Upstate Jobs

PATTY RITCHIE May 15, 2012

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Leads Call for Transmission Upgrades Over New "Champlain Express"

State Senator Patty Ritchie is joining forces with a bipartisan coalition of Upstate lawmakers to push for upgrades to the state's power transmission system over plans for a new underwater cable that will speed energy from Canada directly to New York City—without stopping to support domestic jobs.

"We can do more to meet the needs of power-hungry downstate by modernizing and upgrading our existing generating and transmission facilities, while creating jobs for New

Yorkers,” Senator Ritchie said. “That’s a better investment than increasing foreign imports, which won’t help our Upstate economy and jobs in Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties.”

Senator Ritchie spoke at a State Capitol press conference Tuesday in support of legislation (S.7391), sponsored by her Senate Energy Committee colleague, George D. Maziarz, of Western New York, that would prevent the use of eminent domain for companies that are seeking to import energy from outside the United States.

The measure is being prompted by plans for a new, \$2 billion electric transmission line that would run underneath Lake Champlain and the Hudson River to bring electricity from Quebec to New York City.

Power companies in Upstate fear they won’t be able to compete with the new line because the state’s outdated electric transmission system is so congested that it can’t handle the power needed to satisfy downstate demand, and that the money would be better spent upgrading lines and facilities to support more electric generation inside the state.

“As a Senator who represents a region with more than 170 electric generators, I think it’s important to maximize their potential. Right now, much of the power generated Upstate can’t reach downstate customers, and the market’s potential could mean thousands of new jobs for skilled workers in our communities,” Senator Ritchie said.

“By upgrading transmission systems that already exist, we can take advantage of an opportunity to maximize power generation in the state and put New Yorkers back to work.”

Senator Ritchie said that there are 77 generating facilities in St. Lawrence County, 49 in Jefferson County and 45 in Oswego County, including three nuclear power stations. Increasing demand for electricity could help proponents of a fourth plant.

