



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

PowerUpWNY Announces Petition Drive to Support Dunkirk Repowering Project

CATHARINE YOUNG October 1, 2012

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Proposal would allow the coal-fueled plant to run on cleaner, more-efficient natural gas

OLEAN – Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- Olean), Chair of the PowerUpWNY Coalition, was joined by other members of the coalition in launching a petition drive today to gather support for NRG Energy, Inc.'s proposed Dunkirk Repowering Project. The group is seeking approval from the state to replace the existing coal-fueled power plant with a brand new, state-of-the-art natural gas power plant. If approved by the state, the new plant would produce cleaner energy, create up to 500 jobs and provide energy and resources to attract more businesses to the area.

“We are urging all of our residents, those who work in or near the City of Dunkirk, the Dunkirk City School District, businesses, organizations and friends of Dunkirk, Chautauqua and Erie Counties and our whole region to support this project by signing on to our petition to Governor Cuomo,” said Senator Young. “The more people we have contacting the Governor and the Members of his New York Energy Highway Task Force to express support for this project, the stronger our message will be to them about how critical this new plant is to our economic future. They need to know this project is hugely supported and wanted by our whole community.”

The current facility is a huge contributor to the local economy, providing over \$40 million a year in direct benefits to upstate New York. It pays annual property taxes of approximately \$10 million, making it the largest taxpayer in both the city of Dunkirk and Chautauqua County. In addition, the Dunkirk facility spends \$20 million in annual labor payments and \$10 million in operational expenses, including locally-procured goods and services, which are then multiplied across the area.

On top of securing local jobs and boosting the economy, repowering the plant would provide employment for up to 500 workers during the 36-month construction period. In addition, local businesses, from shops and diners to suppliers and vendors, would see a much-needed boost. Just as importantly, when compared to the existing, coal-burning plant, a new natural gas plant would significantly reduce emissions including: mercury by 100%; sulfur dioxide by 99%; nitrogen oxides by 98%; particulates by 80%; and greenhouse gases by 69%.

“The NRG electric plant in Dunkirk is incredibly important for Chautauqua County residents,” said Assemblyman Andy Goodell (R,C,I- Chautauqua County), member of the PowerUpWNY Coalition. “That is why Senator Young and I have joined together to help add the facility to the ReChargeNY program. However, our voices are strongest when it comes with the support of local residents across Chautauqua County. I’m excited to join with my colleagues in the PowerUpWNY Coalition to build support for our efforts to keep the hard-working employees at NRG on the job.”

“Without a doubt, this is most important petition that people in Dunkirk and all of Chautauqua County can sign this year,” said Chautauqua County Executive Greg Edwards, member of the PowerUpWNY Coalition. “This will have the biggest impact of any potential project in the area and would be the largest construction project ever in the history of the county. I urge anyone who cares about the local economy to sign this petition and share it with their family, friends and co-workers.”

"I am very excited about this project and what it would mean for the City of Dunkirk and Chautauqua County and that's why we are 100% supportive," said Anthony J. Dolce, Mayor of Dunkirk and member of the PowerUpWNY Coalition. "This petition drive will show the wide-spread community support for the project, and it is my goal that the Governor and the New York Energy Highway Task Force recognize the tremendous economic benefits for the area."

"It is vitally important to Dunkirk, as well as the entire region, that this natural gas power plant be built," added Senator Young. "Not only will the plant support dozens of high-paying jobs, but it will be a huge contributor to the local tax base. Without it, government budgets would be strained beyond belief and funding for the Dunkirk City School District would be dramatically reduced. It would be difficult to attract, and even maintain, existing businesses. It is imperative that the community help us show their support for this plant. I am confident that if Governor Cuomo realizes how much this project means to Chautauqua County, he will help push to get the project approved and allow it to move forward."

"The NRG power plant in Dunkirk is vitally important to the area and needs to remain here," said Doug Stock, president of the Dunkirk Area Central Labor Council, a member of the PowerUpWNY Coalition. "It is imperative that we keep jobs here for the future."

"At a time when the upstate New York economy is struggling, we need to do everything we can to keep important businesses here and allow them to expand and alter their processes so they stay competitive," stated Senator Young. "This new plant would be state-of-the-art and become a fixture of the community for decades to come. We can all help Governor Cuomo and the Energy Highway Task Force to see that if we show a united front. That's why we need the whole community to come on board with our coalition and sign this petition so we can send a message to him as soon as possible."

The online petition can be accessed [here](#). To learn more about the coalition, please visit their website at PowerUpWNY.org.

About PowerUpWNY

PowerUpWNY is a coalition of Western New Yorkers coming together to advocate for a sensible, practical energy agenda for the State and one in which Western NY and its people will play a role. For a list of members, their websites, and news about the coalition and the Dunkirk combined-cycle project, visit www.PowerUpWNY.com.