



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

Sen. Parker, NYCHA Residents and Tenant Leaders Announce Support for NESE Natural Gas Project

KEVIN S. PARKER April 26, 2018

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Sen. Parker: “The NESE project is a no-brainer for the future of our city, and especially the health and safety of lower income people of color who need reliable, affordable heat.”

1,000 NYCHA residents send petition to New York leaders backing NESE; seven NYCHA tenant presidents send support letter, citing natural gas supply concerns

New York, NY – Brooklyn Sen. Kevin Parker joined New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents and public housing tenant association presidents today to announce their support for the Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE) natural gas project.

The infrastructure project – which would meet growing demand for natural gas in New York City – will be considered at a federal public hearing in Brooklyn this evening. Natural gas demand in New York City increased 25 percent over the past six years, according to Con-Edison. National Grid has told the federal government it will need additional peak day supply beginning in the winter of 2019/2020 in order to facilitate customer conversions from dirty fuel oil to natural gas.

“The environmental and economic benefits of natural gas for New Yorkers is obvious—and now we’re facing a potential supply crisis,” said Sen. Parker, the ranking member of the New York State Senate’s Energy Committee. “The NESE project is a no-brainer for the future of

our city, and especially the health and safety of lower income people of color who need affordable, reliable heat.”

Sen. Parker will join NYCHA residents and tenant leaders at tonight’s hearing, where they will submit testimony on behalf of the NESE project. NYCHA leaders will also submit more than 1,000 petition signatures in favor of the project.

“NYCHA residents deserve the same quality of life as all New Yorkers,” said Valerie Bell, tenant association president of Wyckoff Gardens Houses in Brooklyn. “That includes dependable heat infrastructure and the long-term natural gas supply to ensure their homes are never cold again.”

The NYCHA residents, who have been organizing since a winter cold snap led to widespread heat outages in January at complexes across the city, backed the NESE project after seven different NYCHA complex presidents sent a letter to New York’s elected leaders earlier this month. The residents are calling for the approval of NESE as well as other measures to ensure public housing tenants do not lose heat on the coldest days of the year.

The petition in support of NESE calls for approval of the project, fully funded upgrades to NYCHA’s heating systems, reinvestment of energy cost savings from conversions to natural gas in to new infrastructure, and assurances that NYCHA residents will be hired to install and maintain the new heating systems.

The letter from the tenant association presidents of Linden Houses, Park Rock Houses, Reid Houses, Brown Houses, Ocean Hill Apartments, Pink Houses and Wyckoff Gardens Houses also called for approval of NESE to provide additional natural gas supply to ensure reliable heat in their homes.

“As we learned with Sandy, without reliable energy infrastructure, our residents can easily lose power and heat — the solution to which has been to run noxious oil-burning generators attached to our buildings for months while repairs are made,” the letter states. “Fortunately, there is a proposal on the table to construct a new natural gas connection to New York City, which would provide vital, affordable energy supply to NYCHA homes and other city residents, and create a far more dependable energy infrastructure.”

The NYCHA residents and tenant presidents also suggested that the cost savings from more efficient natural gas systems be reinvested in NYCHA’s own infrastructure, creating a virtuous cycle of savings and upgrades. [According to a report from the Citizens Budget Commission, NYCHA saw a \\$48 million decrease in utility costs between 2013 and 2016, in large part due to costs savings from increased natural gas use.](#)

“By providing the needed supply, NESE will allow NYCHA to continue upgrades to its infrastructure and, with it, greater and greater energy cost savings,” the tenant leaders wrote. “Those savings from natural gas should be immediately reinvested into boiler conversions and other infrastructure upgrades to improve quality of life at NYCHA complexes.”

To deal with the natural gas supply pinch, NESE would provide an additional 400 million cubic feet of natural gas per day (enough natural gas to serve the daily needs of about 2.3 million homes).

The privately funded NESE project could also displace the equivalent of 3,005,797 gallons of heating oil, reducing CO₂ emissions by up to 2.4 million tons per year, significantly improving local air quality. New York banned types of dirty heating oil 10 years ago, leading to thousands of building conversions to natural gas. Since then, the city has experienced a 67 percent decrease in sulfur dioxide.

NESE is undergoing a government review process overseen by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which is holding tonight's public hearing.

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