



March 6, 2014

On behalf of the board of directors and members of The Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce, I am writing today in support of New York State Senator Terry Gipson's plan to address the many energy issues facing the Hudson Valley.

We stand behind Senator Gipson's five point reformation agenda, which includes: a comprehensive statewide energy conservation plan, the creation of an Independent Consumer Advocate for residential consumers in New York State, stopping capacity zone rate increases until New York State has commitments from new energy providers, new energy providers must invest in renewable energy and energy tax relief on the state and local level.

Of particular concern to the business community are the currently proposed capacity zone rate increases. Central Hudson has informed me that if certain changes are enacted by the federal government, Dutchess County energy costs could rise by as much as \$99 million each year, enough to increase the average bill by 10% and as much as 18% for large industry customers. Hudson Valley business owners are already faced with an exceptionally high tax rate, ballooning property taxes and many more fees and assessments. Continuing to pile on will not help to grow our economy, will not help to create jobs, and will not attract new business to the Hudson Valley.

The Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce stands in solidarity with Senator Gipson on his proposed plan of action and strongly in opposition to any capacity zone rate changes. I thank you for your consideration in this matter, and encourage you to contact me directly with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles S. North", written over a horizontal line.

Charles S. North
President & CEO

Corporate Leaders: **Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corp., Health Quest, and KeyBank**

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