

# Letters & Opinion

## TOWN OF AMHERST, August 10, 2015

Town Hall, 2 Main Street  
P.O. Box 960 Tel: 603/673-6041  
Amherst, NH 03031 Fax: 603/673-6794  
www.amherstnh.gov

Margaret Wood Hassan, Governor  
State of New Hampshire  
107 North Main Street, Room 208  
Concord, NH 03301

## Letter to Gov. Maggie Hassan Regarding Kinder Morgan Pipeline

Dear Governor Hassan:

Thank you for your letter dated July 7th in response to our letter of June 8th to you and to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) expressing our significant concerns regarding the proposed Northeast Energy Direct (NED) natural gas transmission pipeline project (FERC Docket No. PF14-22) proposed by Kinder Morgan (KM) that is slated to run through our town. While we understand your position that New Hampshire should remain a member of the New England States Committee on Electricity (NESCOE) so that we have a seat at the table at all New England regional power discussions that was not really the main thrust or point of our original letter.

Our letter to the FERC (and to you) laid out a number of cogent and well researched arguments developed by our highly-credentialed, volunteer Pipeline Task Force, who have put in more than a thousand hours of work on the issue, that show the proposed NED pipeline does not actually serve the energy needs of either New Hampshire or of the Town of Amherst. Specifically, they found:

1. Perceived lack of power generation is not a real problem, as New Hampshire is already a substantial net exporter of power — mainly to customers in Massachusetts;
2. The real power problem driving prices for New Hampshire and state power consumers is the need for better distribution through infrastructure improvement and deregulation;
3. An emphasis on improved generation capacity over improved distribution is a very costly distraction from our real capital investment requirements;
4. The enormous capital requirements of the NED pipeline will very possibly require a tax imposed after the project is approved through a tariff on some or all New England power consumers, thus raising not lowering electricity prices;
5. The real beneficiaries of this project will be the residents of Massachusetts who consume the lion's share of power in the region but who, apparently, don't want the pipeline that will meet their future needs to be built through their own backyards (as NED was originally proposed to be); and therefore
6. Seizing property from our residents to benefit people in another state while imposing other costs on us likely constitutes an unconstitutional taking and we are prepared to litigate on that basis.

The above argument is even more compelling when you consider that New Hampshire does not lie between Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. If the Granite State were on the direct path between the start and the terminus of the pipeline, that would be one thing, and the pipeline would HAVE to pass through New Hampshire. But this is not the case. New Hampshire is not on the direct path between Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. The diversion of 71 miles of gas transmission pipeline from Massachusetts north to New Hampshire appears to be a purely political maneuver by Kinder Morgan to reduce the pressure put on it by the residents and government of a large state with numerous political representatives, by shifting the burden of this proposed pipeline to the residents of a smaller state with far fewer voters and political representatives. Numerous public statements made by Kinder Morgan around the time the change in route was announced support this interpretation.

Shifting this pipeline from Massachusetts to New Hampshire is only made easier by the obliviousness—or complicity—of New Hampshire's elected representatives. The silence from Concord on this matter has been deafening. One hope we had in copying you on our recent letter to the

FERC was that you would be motivated to take a public stand on the proposed NED pipeline. And, if you are for it, that you would detail the reasons why residents of seventeen New Hampshire communities should have their quality of life impaired, their property potentially seized by eminent domain, their public safety budgets strained, their roads damaged by construction equipment, and their environmental resources compromised, all so that Massachusetts voters might avoid these burdens.

Your recommendation that we take our substantive concerns about the project to the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (NHSEC) suggests that you are willing to accept Kinder Morgan's proposal to shift the pipeline to New Hampshire, as the NHSEC lacks the authority and jurisdiction to tell Kinder Morgan to shift the route back to Massachusetts and out of New Hampshire. Only the FERC can do that, and the FERC is much less likely to instruct Kinder Morgan to do so if the representatives of the State of New Hampshire are AWOL on the issue during the pre-filing phase of this project.

We are aware that you have made public statements that are generally supportive of this proposed pipeline. We genuinely do not understand your reasoning, and how you believe this taking from the residents of seventeen New Hampshire communities will ever have a commensurate benefit to our state. Please explain. If you believe this pipeline proposal and its route through Amherst are good for the residents of our town and our state, please make the case to your constituents. Better still, please come to Amherst and address the issue directly with our residents in a town hall discussion. As our governor, we hope that you might have answers supported by research of your own that would contradict the volunteer work that our townspeople have put in on this issue, and therefore support this pipeline route through Amherst and New Hampshire.

As the duly elected officials responsible for directing the municipal government of the Town of Amherst in line with the wishes of its residents, and as specifically empowered by Warrant Article of the voters to intervene on behalf of the Town and residents in all issues pertaining to the pipeline we take this issue seriously and we are preparing to litigate. On a daily basis, we find more evidence that our arguments are sound and correct. (Note: for examples of the latest information concerning this pipeline please see our Pipeline resource page for Amherst residents at <http://amherstnh.gov/advisories/tennessee-gas-pipeline-company-l-l-c-tennessee/>)

Madam Governor, we hope you will take our arguments to heart since this proposed pipeline will profoundly affect, and may endanger hundreds of families and many communities across southern New Hampshire. The populated and powerful eastern half of Massachusetts successfully pushed the pipeline out of their communities even though the residents of those areas stand to gain the most from the project. Forcing New Hampshire residents to accept this pipeline over our strong objections, and over the logical fairness that the costs should accrue most to those who benefit most, is a disservice to our state.

Sincerely,

Dwight Brew, Chairman

John D'Angelo, Vice Chairman

Tom Grella, Selectman

Nate Jensen, Selectman

Reed Panastiti, Selectman

## Editorial

### The Amherst Citizen Adopts a "Digital Newsroom"

To our readers, contributors and advertisers:

It seems hard to believe that we start our 24th year of publishing *The Amherst Citizen* next month. This endeavor has been made possible by the efforts and hours of work expended by contributors, the generous financial support of businesses and institutions, and the kind words of support by readers.

Now we are looking forward and embracing the future.

Over these past 23 years, so many advancements have been made in technology, that it is now possible to consume news and information from anywhere, at anytime, in so many ways at home, on the road and during vacations. Our goal has always been to continue to provide an attractive, easy-to-read format using methods most convenient to everyone.

The publishers have just launched a first edition in a series of "e-newsletters" to be published online between print issues of *The Amherst Citizen*. Easily accessible on your desktop computer, mobile tablet or smartphone. Brief snippets of upcoming events, abridged articles worthy of immediate attention — some with appropriate hyperlinks to access more information.

Further, postings to our social media pages on Facebook and Twitter will alert you when a new edition is ready. Or, subscribe by submitting your e-mail address to: [www.amherstcitizen.com/e-news/index.html](http://www.amherstcitizen.com/e-news/index.html) to be directly notified by e-mail.

We wish to thank you ALL for helping make *The Amherst Citizen* the publication it is today. We look forward to serving you in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely, co-publishers,  
Cliff Ann Wales, Editor  
Jim Wales, Advertising,  
Design & Production

## You Cannot Compare Souhegan To Other Area High Schools

To the editor:

This letter is in response to Terri Behm's letter published in *The Amherst Citizen's* edition dated June 23 July 28. Terri's title was, "What Have I Gotten Myself Into?" Terri will be a new community member of Souhegan's Community Council beginning this fall, and in preparation she did all of the right things. She went to school; she spoke to members of the School Board. I feel certain she spoke with members of the Administration. She checked many of the statements attacking the School Board this past year. She learned that the sky is not falling. She ferreted out the facts!

I graduated from Community Council in the spring, having served four years. Beginning in September it will be a joy to slip into council meetings, for it will be impossible to stay away. Never have I been a part of a legislative body so sound and so interesting. Community Council is what Democracy looks like. If only this group could give lessons to the legislative bodies in Concord and Washington, DC.

Community Council discussions are fabulous. The students are civil, kind, respectful, and well prepared. There is probably no rule about devices, but at these meetings they are rarely in sight. The speaker's list was something I had never experienced. The moderator simply takes note of quietly raised hands and adds members' names to a list, so that each member has an opportunity to speak, to question, to comment in turn. Interruptions are rare. It is the same in classes. Students bounce off the thoughts of previous students, either agreeing or disagreeing with thoughtful cause. Never is a student belittled. If disagreement occurs, there are always positive suggestions that follow. In the four years of my membership, it was truly a great joy and an honor to attend council meetings.

Two points I wish to make are the following: You cannot compare Souhegan High School to Hollis, Bedford, Milford or any other school in the area. Any student will tell you that! Ask them.

Ask them too if they find themselves prepared for college following graduation. Hannah Dean is now attending Tulane University in New Orleans. She told me she felt ready to stand up and speak out the first day, and she credits Souhegan with her preparation. She now serves on the City Council of New Orleans, as a junior starting back this fall. Bobby Graham attends Keene State, and has been elected Student Body President two years in a row. He helped the school recover from the pumpkin fiasco of a couple of years ago. Graduates in 2015 are nearly ready to start their freshman years at the finest schools in our nation. The graduation rate at Souhegan is awesome.

So Terri, you are getting yourself into an enviable position, and I am happy to give you my chair. Get to know as many students as possible, for you will be rewarded far more than you can imagine. Attend school events. I missed too many. Enjoy Fang Fest, for this past year the seniors made improvements to that event that they hope will be long-lasting. In meetings, start by listening carefully. You will be amazed. The administration and staff members of council will become good friends. And I leave you with other community members who are seasoned and wise. You will love each of them. Best wishes as you begin your time on Souhegan High School's Community Council.

Nan Stearns  
Amherst

## Thanks but....

To the editor:

I want to shout out a "Thank You" to the DPW for repaving Baboosic Lake Road.

However, a "Big Frown" for leaving your pink marking spray cans on the side of the road contributing to the burgeoning trash along Baboosic Lake Road.

Madeleine O'Mara  
Amherst

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*The Amherst Citizen* is eager to serve as a community forum. We welcome your letters, opinions, and commentaries and make every effort to run them in their entirety. We do reserve the right to edit. The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the position of the staff of *The Amherst Citizen*.

Please direct your letters, views and commentary to the Editor, *The Amherst Citizen*, P.O. Box 291, Amherst, NH 03031-0291, or e-mail your submission to: [news@amherstcitizen.com](mailto:news@amherstcitizen.com). We will attempt to run your letter as submitted (space permitting) providing it is signed and phone number is included.



Cliff Ann Wales  
Publisher & Editor

Jim Wales  
Advertising & Production

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P.O. Box 291, Amherst, NH 03031-0291

Phone: 672-9444 Fax: 672-8153 e-Mail: [news@amherstcitizen.com](mailto:news@amherstcitizen.com)



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Watch future issues for schedule updates.

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e-Mail: [news@amherstcitizen.com](mailto:news@amherstcitizen.com)

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## How to contact us:

Phone: 603-672-9444

Fax: 603-672-8153

Mail: PO Box 291  
Amherst, NH 03031

eMail:

News: [news@amherstcitizen.com](mailto:news@amherstcitizen.com)

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