

Richard J. Shields
940 Oakland Court
North Bellmore, NY 11710

Mr. Paul DeCotis
Energy Planning Board
17 Columbus Circle
Albany, NY 11204-6399

December 3, 2008

Dear Sir,

I realize you must be a very busy man. In my own small way I am a busy man also. However I am taking the time to sit down and write this letter to you today to encourage you to do all that you can to help reduce energy costs and our dependence on fossil fuels.

The cost of heating my home and providing power from LIPA has gotten way too high. A very large percentage of my income each month goes to pay for these very basic necessities. While I don't expect anything for free (except for my tax bills) I do wonder how much of these costs are justified. When I look at other areas of our country and the prices they are paying I have to ask myself why our costs are so very high.

Aside from the high costs it seems to me that we are beating a soon to be dead horse with our continued dependence on fossil fuels. Am I the only one to realize that there is only a finite amount of oil and coal available to us? The sun shines, the wind blows and the technology to use these self renewable resources does exist and is available today. Why aren't we making more use of these "free" resources?

My son thinks it's funny that I run around the house shutting off the lights. It's not because I like to be in the dark. It's because I'm trying in my own small way to save energy and also to save a few hard earned pennies. Pennies that will hopefully someday go for his college education.

I see what they are doing in other parts of our country with solar farms and wind power and I have to ask myself doesn't the sun shine and the wind blow also here in New York? Why are other areas already doing what we here in New York should have been doing many years ago?

I have done all the usual things, insulation, double pane windows, weather stripping throughout the house, energy efficient light bulbs and still my energy cost each year keep growing. Do I have to build my own solar power plant? Not that I could because I'm sure local regulations would forbid it. Not to mention I'm sure I couldn't afford it anyway.

I generally just mind my own business, go about my simple life and don't write to anyone about my problems. I guess you could say I suffer in silence. And suffering is exactly what we the people are doing. Why sir? Why?

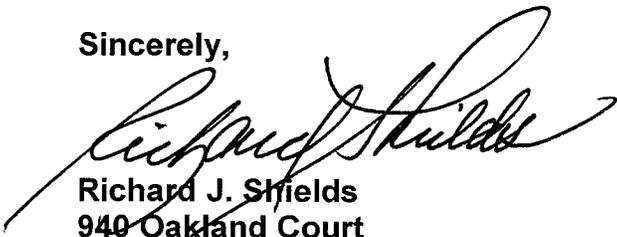
Aside from the current energy burden we are forced to bear, what will happen when my son becomes a man? Will there be any power left at any price when he's grown? Will the air be clean enough for him and his children to breath? I worry about his future and what will be in store for our children if we don't act now.

Short of living in a hole in the ground and lighting my way with candles I don't know what else I personally can do to save energy. I would be open to any realistic suggestions but keep in mind I've already done all of the standard suggested energy saving things. I have spent thousands on windows, insulation, etc. but haven't seen any reduction in my annual energy costs at all.

Now I know there is a new New York State energy plan but from what I've been able to understand it doesn't go anywhere near far enough (in my opinion). We need less expensive energy NOW and from non-polluting and renewable sources. It is no longer an option; it has now become an absolute necessity!

Please sir, I'm asking you to do whatever is within your power to address this critical situation. Thank you for taking the time to read this humble person's opinions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Shields". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "S".

Richard J. Shields
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