

Millwright and Machinery Erectors Local Union No. 740

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BOB SEEGER
BUSINESS MANAGER



MEETS 1st THURSDAY NIGHTS

FRANK IPPOLITI
RECORDING SECRETARY



September 21, 2009

The Honorable David A. Paterson
Governor
State of New York
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

My name is Bob Seeger and I proudly serve as Business Manager for Millwrights Local 740, based in Woodhaven, Queens. Local 740 covers New York City, Long Island, and the northern suburbs of Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Dutchess and Orange Counties.

Union Millwrights such as my Union Brothers and Sisters in Local 740 install, repair, replace, and dismantle the machinery and heavy equipment used in many industries – including power plants. Our members are highly-trained, highly-skilled professionals who work within tolerances of .001"; ½ the thickness of a human hair.

Millwrights are also very active in the debate regarding our energy future. With our experience and extensive knowledge within this field, Millwrights such as myself are interested in building an energy future that is truly sustainable. This is one of the key reasons why Millwrights such as myself have monitored the construction and release of the proposed State Energy Plan.

I would recognize yourself and your Energy Planning Board for constructing a comprehensive energy plan – and for facilitating public meetings where interested members of the public can weigh in with our thoughts.

There is certainly much to like within the proposed plan, including the development of new wind energy, support for extracting natural gas from the Marcellus Shale formation, supporting the reauthorization of a power plant siting statute...and the list can go on and on. The proposed plan is largely solid, and certainly befits New York's reputation as a progressive entity.

However, I do have some concerns that I would wish to share with you.

First, the plan does not truly support the creation of new baseload power generation; a concern of the Millwrights – and an even greater concern when evaluated against the reliability of the grid. This concern is heightened in light of the plan's support for closing Indian Point. This proposal should be withdrawn immediately.

The proposed plan does provide support for nuclear power in general – and even supports the creation of a new reactor in Upstate New York. These are points that I would not argue – but would rather congratulate you on. However, the basis for which you rule against Indian Point is not based in science – nor is it based on reason. And that is truly unfortunate.

The proposal cloaks closure of Indian Point under the blanket of safety and environmental concerns. However, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in the past several weeks stated that Indian Point passed its own rigorous safety tests as part of its license renewal. And if Indian Point was truly an environmental hazard, that would certainly come as a shock to the scores of fishermen, outdoor enthusiasts and the recreationalists who utilize the Hudson River near the facility on a daily basis. As someone who has spent a significant period of time working at the facility, I know these facts first hand.

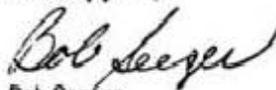
Indian Point is also a union workplace, with my union brothers and sisters involved in nearly every aspect of maintaining the facility. During scheduled outages, skilled union trades representatives such as the Millwrights are the ones called upon to modernize the facility's infrastructure, and keep the plant running smoothly.

And finally, let's use some common sense. Removing more than 2,000 megawatts – a figure that can make up nearly 1/10th of our state's total power supply – without a clear plan for fully replacing this baseload power is a recipe for disaster. It will leave our grid vulnerable – and place all New Yorkers at risk for another blackout. This is a prospect we cannot afford.

As you construct the final energy plan, I urge you to consider these arguments to fortify what is a largely-positive plan. As a region continuously growing and demanding new power, we must do what is necessary to address these issues. Safeguarding our current baseload portfolio – including Indian Point – is a critical part of this effort.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely yours,



Bob Seeger
Business Manager