



Protect Sudbury

March 18, 2016

Massachusetts State House
Office of the Governor
Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Sudbury to Hudson Transmission Line Project

Dear Governor Baker,

I am writing to you on behalf of Protect Sudbury, Inc., and personally as a Sudbury resident who cares deeply about my community and conservation, as a father, and as a scouting leader who enjoys the outdoors. I ask for your immediate support as the residents of our town, along with our elected officials, work to stop Eversource from using the MBTA right-of-way to run high voltage power lines through Sudbury's neighborhoods and cause irreparable damage to our conservation lands.

Time is of the essence. The Sudbury community was just notified of the project and Eversource intends to file with the Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) in April. We have learned that the plan would clear cut an 8.9 mile long, 82 foot wide swath along an MBTA right-of-way and erect 75'-100' towers carrying overhead high voltage wires through Sudbury into Hudson. The proposed route for these lines was not the only option: alternate underground routes were discarded without regard to environmental or community cost. We do not believe the proposal is appropriate to submit to the EFSB. Our concerns are heightened as we have not identified a single instance in which the EFSB has ruled against a utility's "preferred transmission line route" since 1995.

The proposed transmission route will go directly through the Hop Brook Conservation Land, the Sudbury Valley Trustees Memorial Forest, and the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge. These lines will destroy surrounding ecology, traveling through multiple DEP Wetland areas, through vernal pools identified by the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species (NHESP) list and over the Hop Brook which is listed as a Major Stream and a River by the DEP on their 2002 and 2012 Integrated Rivers List. The use of herbicides and pesticides used to maintain the right-of-way poses an unquantified risk to surrounding ecology and to our water supply. The irreparable damage to our conservation areas is unacceptable.

Over 500 Sudbury homes are in neighborhoods impacted by this proposed route as a clear-cut the width of the Mass Pike runs through our town. Along with unknown health risks, the lines will cut our property values which drive our overall town revenue and school budget. Currently Sudbury has one of the highest percentages of revenue coming from property taxes among Massachusetts towns, and our town also has one of the highest concentrations of households with children. The tax burden on our residents will only increase if Eversource builds lines along the MBTA ROW.

Personally, I believe this project as planned will forever make my neighborhood unattractive and unsafe to live in, and by devaluing my home, make it harder for me to pay off college bills and retire. As a community, we are highly concerned with the impact on our neighborhoods, the potential health risks to our residents near these wires, the damage to our environment from pesticides used to maintain the right-of-way, the alteration and damage to our conservation areas' ecology, and the loss of our town's historic beauty and character. In just 3 weeks, over 3,000 citizens have united to form a 501(c)(4) organization to fight this proposed project. We have the backing of our Town Manager, the Sudbury Conservation Committee, and the Sudbury Historical Commission, all of whom have written formal letters of support. Please visit our website: www.protectsudbury.org to learn more about our position and efforts to fight this proposal.

I urge you to stand with Sudbury as we work to prevent Eversource from using the MBTA ROW for this project. The impact on our environment is unacceptable. The burden on Sudbury is unacceptable. The plan is unacceptable. In the 1960's Senator Ted Kennedy and Massachusetts Governor Francis Sargent helped preserve Sudbury from an identical Boston Edison project that would have been located in what is today the Great Meadows Wildlife refuge. The situation is dire, but together we can steer Eversource toward a better solution which addresses electric grid issues and avoids irreparable damage.

Governor, I believe you are in the unique position to insist that Eversource and the Energy Facilities Siting Board revisit the route selection process for utility projects and appropriately factor environmental and community costs into the equation before petitions are filed. Let's start preferring environmentally conscious and community-friendly choices (under existing roads) over minimum construction cost options. Please give Eversource and the Siting Board the opportunity to do the right thing for the long term health of my town and our state.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing what action you will take to help your constituents in this matter.

Yours respectfully,



Bill Schineller
37 Jarman Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
Director and Government Liaison, Protect Sudbury Inc.

Cc:

Lt. Gov Karyn Polito
Marilyn M. Petitto Devaney, Governor's Council
Senator Elizabeth Warren
Senator Ed Markey
Congresswoman Katherine Clark
Congresswoman Niki Tsongas
Senator James B. Eldridge
Representative Carmine Gentile
Sudbury Board of Selectmen
Sudbury Conservation Commission
Sudbury Historic Districts Commission
Bev Schultz, Eversource
JoAnne O'Leary, Eversource
Mark Kimball, Eversource
Britney McNamara, Metrowest Daily News
Bailey Putnam, Boston Globe
Richard Kanoff Esq., Burns and Levinson
Melissa Rodrigues, Sudbury Town Manager