

October 21, 2016

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

Governor Baker,

I write to bring to your attention concerns that have been raised regarding Eversource's proposed Sudbury to Hudson Transmission Reliability Project. Continuing to strengthen our regional electric grid is important but should be done in a way that does not harm the environment and conservation land and is respectful of local communities.

The communities of Sudbury and Hudson that would be impacted by this project, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other stakeholders have all expressed concern about the project as it is currently proposed. The preferred route for this project would create an 82-foot wide transmission corridor for high voltage, above-ground power lines through these communities and which could impact a National Wildlife Refuge.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has written that it opposes the installation of an above ground transmission line and associated corridor because of the impacts on the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and neighboring conservation lands. The Service wrote that the creation of such a transmission corridor would fragment wildlife habitat, which can potentially create conditions "unsuitable for certain wildlife species." The Service continued, "this is an important consideration since so many of the species which exist in this area are State-listed or special concern species." They also expressed concern that the above ground transmission lines could interrupt prescribed periodic burning that serves as an important and necessary habitat management tool and adversely impact the outdoor experience for visitors to these conservation lands. Finally, the Service has stated that the use of herbicides within the right of way "could impact vernal pools, wetlands and any wildlife species utilizing the vegetated areas under and around the powerlines."

The communities of Hudson and Sudbury that would be affected by this proposed transmission project have also raised concerns. Local residents and community representatives have voiced concerns about the potential impacts on the environment and the potential financial costs that may be imposed upon these communities associated with this proposed project.

I hope that you will closely evaluate these issues and continue to work to address the concerns that have been raised by impacted communities and conservation land management agencies regarding this proposed project.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator