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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

April 3, 2007

The Honorable John Murtha
United States House of Representatives
2423 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Murtha,

I am forwarding this letter to secure your assistance with a most important matter, which is of considerable concern to the citizens of my 50th legislative district in Greene County. As you may be aware, Allegheny Power, in an attempt to facilitate siting and construction of a 240-mile, 500 kilovolt high voltage transmission line, has petitioned the Department of Energy (DOE) for early designation of a proposed transmission project as a "*National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor*" (NIETC). NIETC designation is authorized pursuant to § 1221 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L. No. 109-58, 119 Stat. 594); commonly referred to as EPact 2005.

Briefly, Allegheny Power's project, the *Trans-Allegheny Interstate Line* or TrAIL, is a coordinated effort between Allegheny Power and Dominion Power to site and construct an interstate transmission line. The proposed route would traverse parts of Washington and Greene Counties in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and parts of Virginia. The DOE filings indicate that the purpose of the project is to improve Allegheny Power's transmission infrastructure to better serve the electric reliability and energy needs of electric consumers in the Washington, Baltimore and Northern Virginia urban centers. However, Allegheny ratepayers will be required to assume the over \$800 million cost of the project through higher electric rates.

I am gravely concerned about the adverse quality-of-life and economic impact that may result from this project. I am also concerned about the long-term effect NIETC designations will have on the powers of states to develop, supervise and manage land use policies and other activities within their individual borders. Therefore, I respectfully ask that you do everything within your congressional powers to assist the people of southwestern Pennsylvania with this matter. I also ask that you support legislation that would either modify or repeal § 1221(a) of the EPact of 2005. As some observers opine, the proliferation of high voltage transmission lines to improve electric capacity and reliability is a 20th century response to a 21st century problem. I thank you for your assistance and kindly await your response.

Best regards,



Bill DeWeese
The Majority Leader
50th Legislative District

HWD/app