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PowerUp Western New York Coalition Launches

Promotes Smart Energy Projects; State Senator Cathy Young Chairs

(Dunkirk, N.Y.) July 12, 2012 – Business, civic and labor groups as well as local and state elected officials today launched a coalition to support progressive energy projects in Western New York. The coalition, “PowerUp Western New York,” broadly endorses the Energy Highway plan that Governor Cuomo announced during his 2012 State-of-the-State message, and specifically urges the State to support a project that would repower the 625 MW coal-fueled power plant in Dunkirk, New York with modern and efficient combined-cycle gas turbine (CCGT) technology.

In the words of Governor Cuomo, the “Key to powering our economic growth is expanding our energy infrastructure.” The centerpiece of PowerUp Western New York is the Dunkirk CCGT development project, which can be completed by 2017, and will provide a number of benefits to the region, including:

- Improving the reliability of the electrical grid in Western New York
- Preserving local jobs
- Ensuring a predictable and stable tax base in Chautauqua County and Dunkirk, New York
- Generating dramatically cleaner energy, including:
 - Mercury reduced by 100%
 - Sulfur Dioxide reduced by 99%
 - Nitrogen Oxides reduced by 98
 - Particulates reduced by 80%
 - Greenhouse gases reduced by 69%
- Increasing system efficiency with technology that can ramp up quickly and “load follow” as demand rises and falls
- Providing support for renewable energy generation such as wind power

PowerUp Western New York is chaired by NY State Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I - Olean), who remarked: “Losing the NRG Dunkirk plant would be a major blow to Western New York, while repowering the plant represents an incredible opportunity to save and grow jobs, and preserve prosperity and our tax base.”

Senator Young added “We have been fighting for a short-term solution to establish a power purchase agreement to keep the plant operating. We’re also making progress in our negotiations with the Governor, and we’ll continue to fight. The Dunkirk repowering project to construct a new, state-of-the-art gas-fired, environmentally-friendly facility builds on these near-term efforts to create a permanent solution that benefits our community and all of Western New York.” Senator Young concluded “Our coalition is strong, but we need the public in Dunkirk and in fact all of Western New York to get behind us to make this new, cleaner and repowered facility a reality.”

Said Assemblyman Andrew Goodell, “The proposed NRG project to convert the Dunkirk electric generating facility to natural gas is consistent with Governor Cuomo’s stated policy of promoting reliable, efficient, and environmentally clean electric power for New York. This investment in the future of the Dunkirk plant would ensure that Western New York has a great source of additional electrical power for further economic development, which would further strengthen the efforts of the Regional Economic Development Council to create more jobs in this area,” said Assemblyman Goodell.

NRG has very strong support in the New York State legislature. Senator Young was successful in obtaining passage of legislation designed specifically to help NRG. This legislation was co-sponsored by Assemblyman Goodell in the State Assembly and has more than 30 cosponsors. The change from coal to natural gas will substantially enhance the project.

Added Dunkirk Mayor Anthony J. Dolce: “NRG’s Dunkirk plant can certainly be the model of an efficient resource for NY’s public-private initiative to upgrade and modernize the State’s electric power system along the lines envisioned by the Governor.”

NRG Energy Inc., the owner of the Dunkirk plant, proposes to convert the existing coal facility to a combined-cycle plant with the generating capacity of up to 600 MW, enough to power approximately 480,000 average homes, in two phases. In phase I, which could be operational by 2013, NRG will build natural gas infrastructure to the plant allowing it to operate on either coal or natural gas. During Phase II, NRG will build the CCGT units which will take the place of the coal units, operate solely on gas and become operational by 2017. The proposed project was submitted to the New York Energy Highway Task Force (<http://www.nyenergyhighway.com/About>) on May 30, 2012, in response to the State’s Request for Information (RFI) process.

AboutPowerUpWNY

PowerUpWNY is a coalition of Western New Yorkers coming together to advocate for a sensible, practical energy agenda for the State and one in which Western NY and its people will play a role. For a list of members, their websites, and news about the coalition and the Dunkirk combined-cycle project, visit www.PowerUpWNY.org.

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