

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510
March 9, 2004

Mary Peters
Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Room 4218
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

RE: KeySpan Energy Gas Transmission Main – Long Island Expressway

Dear Ms. Peters

As you may be aware, I called upon the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in January 2002 to grant a waiver that would allow the construction of a natural gas pipeline by KeySpan Energy within the controlled access area of the Long Island Expressway. At the time, FHWA was unable to act upon my request, as KeySpan had not yet provided a proposal or detailed information regarding the proposed activity.

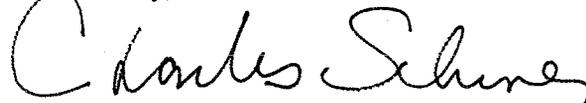
I have been informed that KeySpan Energy has recently applied to the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the FHWA with a proposal and documentation for the proposed activity, which will run from Manorville to Calverton – a distance of approximately 5 miles. This is a continuation of an ongoing project that, since 1992 has upgraded KeySpan's gas system to meet the energy requirements of Long Island with an environmentally preferred source of energy. The existing portions of the gas main have been constructed within the LI Expressway right of way but outside the limited access areas. In some locations, this has necessitated the pruning or removal of trees that are important components of an important ecosystem. The NYSDOT has previously granted a waiver for the installation of underground electrical cables along Sunrise Highway; also in the Pine Barrens.

In order to meet its statutory requirements to supply natural gas to Long Island's east end, the pipeline's route must traverse the Core Preservation Area of Long Island's Central Pine Barrens. The Pine Barrens sit atop the nation's first federally designated Sole Source Aquifer and are State Statute. KeySpan wishes to continue to utilize the LI Expressway ROW for this phase of the project and is eager to locate gas pipeline within the shoulder of the Long Island Expressway in order to minimize the number of trees impacted in the Core Preservation Area. The pipeline would still be situated a safe distance away from the travel lanes of the Expressway and be buried with a safe depth of cover.

As such, I once again urge the FHWA to grant KeySpan a waiver to allow for the installation of the new pipeline within the controlled access area of the Long Island Expressway, which would allow for the protection and preservation of a unique and vital natural resource – the Central Long Island Pine Barrens.

It would be greatly appreciated if this matter can be addressed at your earliest convenience. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate