



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Budget Language Could Help Dunkirk Repowering

CATHARINE YOUNG March 25, 2013

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*Budget focuses on the benefits of repowering existing electric generation facilities*

**ALBANY** - Calling it a “major step forward,” Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I-Olean) announced that language is included in this year’s state budget that focuses on the benefits of repowering existing electric generation facilities, a development that could have a positive impact on a future of clean, reliable and affordable power for Dunkirk and all of Western New York.

“Governor Cuomo and the Assembly deserve a great deal of credit for working with the Senate to achieve this positive result. A priority of the Senate is to repower existing plants to the cleanest, and most efficient standards for the sake of our environment and our economy, and we truly appreciate the Governor’s leadership in moving us toward this greener and more prosperous future,” said Senator Young.

“This new development makes progress towards repowering the Dunkirk plant because it requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) to consider the overall benefits of keeping power production in New York State. We recognize that the PSC still has to complete an objective evaluation process, which I hope will be finalized in April,” said Senator Young, who is leading a coalition to repower the Dunkirk plant.

“The budget language codifies into law factors currently being considered by the PSC in studying whether to repower mothballed coal plants, namely our Dunkirk facility and a similar plant in Cayuga. The language recognizes the Legislature’s intent that in some cases, repowering existing power generation facilities produces significant benefits including enhanced system reliability, electric market competitiveness, and emissions reductions, over and above alternative scenarios such as power importation or local transmission upgrades.”

“The Legislature acknowledges that electric generation plants that are going out of business and not being repowered will leave behind abandoned or underutilized land that would negatively affect surrounding communities and impede economic development. Of course we know full well the devastating consequences of losing the NRG plant. We would suffer a terrible loss of revenues for the Dunkirk School District, our City and County, and a permanent total loss of career and family sustaining jobs,” she said.

“The budget language specifically states that it is in the public interest to develop clean power generation to meet the needs of ratepayers, support local and state tax revenue stability, promote economic opportunity, and enhance the state’s environment. By having these considerations put into law, it guarantees that balanced consideration will be given during the PSC’s evaluation process of NRG’s proposed repowering,” Senator Young said.

NRG Energy Inc., the current owner of the power plant, is proposing to convert the existing Dunkirk coal facility to an advanced combined-cycle natural gas plant with a generating capacity of at least 440 MW — enough to power approximately 350,000 average homes.

“I sincerely thank everyone who is supporting our efforts for repowering, including the more than 4,000 citizens who signed our petition. Our voices are being heard in Albany,” Senator Young said.