



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

Jacobs, Schimminger Announce Funding to Offset \$6 Million Huntley Losses

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(Albany, NY) – Assemblyman Robin Schimminger (140th AD) and Senator Chris Jacobs (60th SD) announced what they called a “major win” for taxpayers in the Town of Tonawanda and the Ken-Ton School District in their one house budget bills approved today. The lawmakers successfully included language in both the Assembly and Senate spending plans that would significantly enhance the impact of a state funding program designed to mitigate the financial fallout of the closing of the Huntley Generating Station.

"Securing this amended language is progress that Senator Jacobs and I are both very pleased to see. While the enhancements made to the Electric Generation Facility Cessation Mitigation Program in last year's budget were a win, more still needs to be done," said Assemblyman Schimminger. "By proposing these further improvements to the program, we are ensuring more time for municipalities and school districts to stabilize in the wake of Huntley's closure and providing more financial help if needed. These changes are in response to an ongoing conversation with community leaders. Now that we have achieved this initial step, we will continue fighting the same fight for inclusion of these important changes in the final budget. Our community's future depends on it."

"I am extremely pleased that Assemblyman Schimminger and I were successful in amending budget language in our respective houses that will protect taxpayers in Tonawanda from the disastrous effects of the closure of the Huntley Station," said Senator Jacobs. "In addition to providing more temporary relief for the town and school district, the extended schedule for receiving assistance gives all stakeholders much needed additional time to replace any tax shortfalls as a result of the Huntley closure as well as evaluate and plan for the future of the site," the Senator added.

The Huntley coal-burning power plant had been operating on approximately 100 acres in the town since 1916. Its closure last March resulted in an annual loss of roughly \$6 million in local tax revenue to the town, [and] school district and county.

Language secured by Schimminger and Jacobs modifies the Electric Generation Facility Cessation Mitigation Program by increasing the length of time and amount of support a municipality can receive. The current program is limited to only five years and reduces the amount of financial support at a faster rate.

Both the Assemblyman and Senator stressed that while this is a significant development, it is a first step in the process, and they will continue to fight for its inclusion in the final state budget that is scheduled to take effect on April 1.

"Assemblyman Schimminger and Senator Jacobs both have fought hard for their constituents on this matter, and they both have stated that Tonawanda can't be forgotten about since Huntley was not only a community asset but also a regional and state asset that benefited people across New York State," said Town of Tonawanda Supervisor Joe Emminger. "If this language is approved and stays in the final budget, it will allow the Town to plan for what lies ahead without impacting the quality of life and public safety in our community," the Supervisor added.

“The Ken-Ton School District is very appreciative of the efforts of Senator Jacobs and Assemblyman Schimminger to help further mitigate the loss of revenue from the NRG Huntly closing,” stated Interim Superintendent Stephen Bovino. “The proposed time extension and possible increase in funding will better enable the district to maintain programming to meet the needs of our students. Further, the time extension will assist in the transition of the property to one that once again supports the community,” said Bovino.