



Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe

128 Herring Pond Road

Plymouth, MA 02360

August 2, 2020
Governor Charles Baker
Massachusetts State House
Office of the Governor, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Governor Janet Mills
1 State House Station
Maine State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Governor Baker and Governor Mills:

As Chairwoman of the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe of Plymouth Massachusetts, I write to you today to express our support for the Penobscot Nation, in their opposition to the Central Maine Power Company's intent to partner with Hydro-Quebec to create a transmission corridor extending into Massachusetts. As the Penobscot Nation has made clear, this proposed 145-mile corridor would be constructed at great cost to the waters, lands and wildlife that remain profoundly important to the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples in the region. As you may know, Penobscot Nation leadership has made clear that their Nation stands in solidarity with the people of the Innu Nation, who know all too well how destructive Hydro-Quebec's projects are to the lives of Indigenous people. Hydro-Quebec enriched itself when it flooded nearly 2,000 square miles Innu territory at Churchill Falls – without Innu consent or concern for the devastating impact on Innu people's livelihood and wellbeing. As a June 2000 article in *Cultural Survival Quarterly* makes clear, hydroelectric projects place their heaviest and most damaging burdens on Indigenous peoples (see Annette Lutterman, "Draining Energy from the Innu of Nitassinan").

Today, the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe is proud to stand with our sisters and brothers of the Penobscot and Innu Nations in rejecting such hydroelectric projects that directly impact the human rights of First Nations and tribal communities in both Canada and the US. As I know very well, Indigenous peoples in New England are often overlooked, or ignored, with respect to matters of "energy and resource development." Yet, at the same time, as a Tribe whose ancestral homeland--along with the forests, fish and other wildlife in Plymouth--was used by the Pilgrims to serve their interests as colonists, we know that we, and our history as a Tribe, are directly connected to decisions that the

Commonwealth of Massachusetts makes about projects such this transmission corridor proposed by Central Maine Power Company and Hydro-Quebec.

We agree fully with Chief Kirk Francis of the Penobscot Nation in his call for a thorough Environmental Impact Study of this project. As Chief Francis emphasizes in his letter of July 22, 2020 to the Army Corps of Engineers, the Penobscot Nation's "close spiritual and cultural ties" to their homeland along the Penobscot River and to their hunting territory remain as strong as ever. Likewise, the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe remains deeply connected, culturally and spiritually, to our homelands and to the waters our people continue to fish. We know that any environmental injustices and threats to community well-being faced by the Penobscot Nation, and the Innu Nation -- or faced by any other Indigenous communities whose homelands and sacred places are ravaged by dams, flooding, transmission corridors, or pipelines -- are environmental injustices and threats to well-being that we may also face in the near future. As Indigenous peoples, we stand together to protect the homelands and the waters that sustain us. We know that land, water, and wildlife are our relatives, to whom we have a responsibility. Most importantly, we know that we have a primary responsibility to our tribal youth to ensure that they, and their children, inherit a planet that has been nurtured by us. The Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe's recently established Land Stewardship and Traditional Ecological Knowledge Youth Education Program is one example of how our Tribe continues our Indigenous traditions and responsibilities today.

Governor Baker, as Chairwoman of the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe, and as a voter and lifelong resident of Massachusetts, I ask you to stand with my Tribe on this matter, and to call for a full Environmental Impact Study of the transmission corridor proposed by the Central Maine Power Company.

Governor Mills, I ask you to act on the concerns of the Penobscot Nation.

Sincerely,



Melissa (Harding) Ferretti

Chairwoman, Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe

508.304.5023

cc:

John Peters, Jr., Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs

Maura Healey, Attorney General of Massachusetts

Speaker Robert A. DeLeo, Massachusetts House of Representatives

Senate President, Karen E Spilka , Massachusetts Senate

Kathleen Theoharides, Secretary, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environment

Patrick Woodcock, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources

Matthew Nelson, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities

Senator Anne Gobi, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture

Representative Smitty Pignatelli, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture

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Mark Suuberg, Commissioner of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection