



A.8284 (SWEENEY, ET AL.) S.2802 (LITTLE)

Summary

This New York State Senate resolution proposes to amend Section 1 of Article 14 of the State Constitution to allow National Grid to construct a 46kV power line along State Route 56 in St. Lawrence County on forest preserve lands. By using forest preserve lands along an existing road right-of-way, the amount of land disturbed by the power line will be minimized and new lands will be added to the forest preserve.

Explanation

Constitutional amendments are required to lease, sell or exchange forest preserve lands. The proposed amendment would facilitate the transfer of six acres of forest preserve lands to National Grid in exchange for 10 acres to be added to the forest preserve elsewhere in St. Lawrence County. The land swap will allow National Grid to construct a 46kV power transmission line along State Route 56. The lands to be acquired are adjacent to the existing right-of-way for the county road and would slightly enlarge the existing right-of-way.

If the constitution is not amended to allow this land transfer, National Grid has already received approval for an alternative plan that would allow the company to construct the power line in a manner more disturbing to the Adirondacks. The alternative plan would cut a 70-foot wide swath through six miles of forested lands that are home to sensitive and significant areas. While the alternative plan would not cut through forest preserve lands, it would be more disruptive to forested areas. The preferred option is to slightly enlarge the existing right-of-way for the county road to allow construction of the power line.

This bill was passed in 2007. Per the New York State Constitution Article XIX, to change state forest preserve a bill must be passed by two consecutive, separately elected legislatures. Once passed in 2009, the bill will be placed on the November ballot for referendum in the general election.

Environmental Advocates of New York supports this bill.

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