



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

September 27, 2023

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
U. S. Senator
90 State House Square, 10th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103

Richard_Kehoe@blumenthal.senate.gov

The Honorable Jim Himes
U. S. Representative
350 Fairfield Ave. Suite 603
Bridgeport, CT 06604

RE: **DOCKET NO. 516** – The United Illuminating Company (UI) application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the Fairfield to Congress Railroad Transmission Line 115-kV Rebuild Project that consists of the relocation and rebuild of its existing 115- kilovolt (kV) electric transmission lines from the railroad catenary structures to new steel monopole structures and related modifications along approximately 7.3 miles of the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s Metro-North Railroad corridor between Structure B648S located east of Sasco Creek in Fairfield and UI’s Congress Street Substation in Bridgeport, and the rebuild of two existing 115-kV transmission lines along 0.23 mile of existing UI right-of-way to facilitate interconnection of the rebuilt 115-kV electric transmission lines at UI’s existing Ash Creek, Resco, Pequonnock and Congress Street Substations traversing the municipalities of Bridgeport and Fairfield, Connecticut.

Dear Senator Blumenthal and Congressman Himes:

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) is in receipt of your correspondence dated September 26, 2023 concerning the above-referenced application. Thank you for taking the time to provide the Council with your comments.

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §16-50l(b), a copy of each application is required to be submitted to each member of the legislature in whose assembly or senate district the facility is to be located for review.

Before reaching a final decision on an application, the Council must carefully consider all of the facts contained in the evidentiary record that is developed by the Council, the applicant, parties and intervenors in the proceeding, and consider all of the concerns received from members of the public who speak at the public hearing or submit written statements to the Council.

Please note that you can view all of the documents related to this proceeding on our website at portal.ct.gov/csc under the “Pending Matters” link. You may also keep apprised of Council events on the website calendar and agenda.

Thank you for your interest and concern in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Melanie A. Bachman".

Melanie A. Bachman
Executive Director

MAB/MP/laf

c: Service List, dated August 29, 2023
Council Members

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 26th, 2023

Melanie Bachman
Executive Director
Connecticut Siting Council
Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

Re: CT Siting Council Docket #516: UI Transmission Line Proposal through the National Historic District in Southport

Dear Director Bachman,

We urge the Connecticut Siting Council to reject the United Illuminating Company's application for a certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the Fairfield to Congress Railroad Transmission Line 115-kv Rebuild Project. The proposed transmission line would run through the Historic Southport Village, through downtown Fairfield along the Post Road, and over to the Fairfield Train Station.

UI is proposing to replace existing structures with monopoles that range in height from 95 to 145 feet above ground. The proposal will permanently remove many trees and encroach more deeply into the surrounding neighborhoods.

We join the Town of Fairfield and residents in opposing this application because the project would significantly impact the environment of the neighboring communities by reducing tree cover and natural noise barriers and negatively impact the aesthetics of the National Historic District through which this project will run. The project's new monopoles will be constructed outside the current utility easement and directly impact private homeowners' properties because of the loss of up to 18 feet of private property. In total, 19.25 acres of primarily private property between Fairfield and Bridgeport would be lost to this new permanent easement. Furthermore, Fairfield's natural community would be detrimentally affected by the removal of 6.5 acres of trees, 5.5 which would be a permanent loss.

This project, in its current terms, would negatively impact generations to come. We urge the Connecticut Siting Council to reject the current proposal and seek alternatives that would address the need to upgrade the transmission lines while reducing or eliminating the substantial negative impacts on the Fairfield community including the burying of these proposed electrical lines.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Blumenthal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL

U.S. Senator

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Himes". The signature is cursive and includes a large, stylized initial "J".

JIM HIMES

U.S. Representative