



New Hampshire Senate News Release

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Senate Moves to Improve State's Site Evaluation Committee

Concord, NH – The Senate today unanimously adopted legislation to update and improve the state's Site Evaluation Committee (SEC), which is charged with approving the locations of power generating facilities and transmission lines in the state. Senate Bill 245 stems from the recommendations of a legislative study committee which called for changes in how the SEC operates in order to increase efficiency, public input, and community benefit.

"As energy markets change and mature, the process by which New Hampshire makes the critical decisions about the siting of new generation and transmission facilities must also evolve with the times," said the legislation's prime sponsor Sen. Finance Chairman Jeanie Forrester, R-Meredith.

"This legislation makes the statutory and administrative changes necessary to allow the SEC to fulfill its mission effectively while fairly balancing the interests of property owners and communities with the needs of the state to maintain a strong and reliable energy supply."

Specifically, SB245 restructures the public hearing and information process, provides the SEC with additional funding and staffing resources, and reduces the number of agency heads who sit on the committee. The bill also requires that the SEC make a finding of public interest before approving any new projects.

"This legislation is the result of months of conversation and compromise among environmental protection organizations, industry, regulators, and elected officials," said Senate Majority Leader Jeb Bradley. "Together, we were able to put together a well thought-out bill that creates a more responsive, more efficient Site Evaluation Committee that can protect both our environment and our state's energy infrastructure well into the future."

Senate Bill 245 now moves to the House of Representatives for consideration

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