

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, October 23, 2014 – 11:00 a.m.

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Coalition to Lower Energy Costs Announced; Launches Campaign to Reverse Skyrocketing New England Electricity Cost Increases

Dr. Barbara Kates-Garnick to serve as Senior Energy Policy Advisor

The Coalition to Lower Energy Costs has announced its formation and the beginning of a campaign to increase the supply of natural gas to New England by at least 2 billion cubic feet per day and thereby dramatically lower the region's energy costs. The Coalition also announced that Dr. Barbara Kates-Garnick, who recently served as a senior Massachusetts energy policy official, will serve as Senior Energy Policy Advisor to the effort.

The coalition is made up of energy consumers and others who are concerned about the energy cost crisis in New England, which is paying far more for natural gas and electricity than the rest of the country. This winter, energy costs are expected to skyrocket in the region. National Grid has already announced that the cost of electric supply for its Massachusetts consumers will increase by 96%.

"It is an economic tragedy for New England that we are unable to access the low cost, domestic natural gas being enjoyed by the rest of country, even though Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale is less than 250 miles from Boston", said Tony Buxton, General Counsel and Spokesperson for the Coalition. "Our businesses and families are struggling with skyrocketing energy costs and we know that we need 2 bcf of gas in order to end this crisis."

The New England States Committee on Electricity, which is composed of the Governors and leading energy policy officials from each of the six New England states, called for new pipeline construction to increase the supply of natural gas into the region based on numerous expert reports. An August 2014 Boston Globe poll found that 52% of Massachusetts voters support the construction of a new natural gas pipeline from the western part of the state to Dracut to fulfill this objective.

"We know that we need new and upgraded pipelines bring additional natural gas supplies to the region to lower energy costs and increase electric reliability," said Dr. Kates-Garnick. "Cutting our state's rising energy costs is essential if Massachusetts is going to remain competitive economically and livable for working families."

In support of its campaign to ensure the construction of the new pipeline and other pipeline capacity, the Coalition announced that it has established a website (www.energycostcrisis.com) and will be running a television ad in the coming weeks which is available on the group's homepage.

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