



THE LEGISLATURE NIAGARA COUNTY

LEGISLATOR KARI ANN BULLMAN
3rd DISTRICT

July 1, 2011

Mr. Garry L. Brown, Chairman
New York State Public Service Commission
Empire State Plaza
Agency Bldg. 3
Albany, New York 12223-1350

Chairman Brown:

I am writing you, and copying the other Public Service Commissioners, to express my absolute opposition to the proposed modifications to the existing National Fuel Conservation Incentive Program sought by the "PUSH Buffalo" activist group. PUSH Buffalo's demands make no sense from a business standpoint, and it is my sincere belief that these changes will harm Niagara County's families.

As a legislator representing thousands of those families, as well as the downtown of the City of Niagara Falls, I find those outcomes completely unacceptable.

Due to a summer recess that prevents the Niagara County Legislature from formally meeting until July 26, I am unable to present you a formal resolution from this county opposing the PUSH Buffalo proposals. However, my colleagues and I will introduce and pass such a measure at that time, provided the Public Service Commission has not yet acted on this matter—and our opposition will be nearly unanimous. The opposition of the government of a neighboring county should give the PSC pause in considering this proposal from PUSH Buffalo.

As a businesswoman, I am stunned that the PSC would even entertain PUSH Buffalo's demands. Should the PSC enact these proposals, in addition to the many thousands of families that would be hurt, so would hundreds of businesses. Since its 2007 inception, CIP has benefited nearly 1,000 commercial customers by rewarding them for increasing their conservation of natural gas. That has included businesses in virtually every single community served by National Fuel. However, given PUSH Buffalo's record of only working to benefit the West Side of Buffalo, it is doubtful that any business operating in the City of Niagara Falls would benefit. In fact, they would see their fuel payments redistributed to their competitors in Buffalo. And that is completely unacceptable.

In recent years, New York State government has, on multiple occasions, acted as an agent for the City of Buffalo, and done so to the detriment of Niagara County. Just last year, the Empire State Development Corp. actually used its offices, funded by the taxpayers of New York State, to encourage First Niagara Bank to relocate its high-paying headquarters jobs to downtown Buffalo from Lockport and Pendleton. Should the PSC endorse PUSH Buffalo's efforts, and deprive Niagara County businesses and families of CIP, this would be a continuation of bad faith by New York State's government.

I urge the PSC to do the right thing, and block this egregious proposal by PUSH Buffalo.

Sincerely,

Kari Ann Bullman

Cc: Patricia L. Acampora, Commissioner
Robert E. Curry, Jr., Commissioner
Maureen F. Harris, Esq., Commissioner
James L. Larocca, Commissioner
David F. Smith, CEO, National Fuel