

By Patrick Chilcott  
Member of the Pembroke Republican Town Committee  
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## **Pembroke Republican Town Committee member Patrick Chilcott discusses gas expansion**

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Massachusetts's residents have seen upwards of a 100 percent increase in their electricity bills over the past year. Social media has been abuzz with people asking how their bills could go from \$150 per month to over \$300. With natural gas prices at historic lows, the cost of oil stabilized and lower than it had been in several years, this simply made no sense.

The answer to these questions is the most basic tenant of economics – supply and demand. Many electricity generating stations have been forced, due to federal and state regulation, to move away from coal burning generators and to cleaner natural gas burning generators. Since the year 2000 we have gone from 15 percent of stations burning natural gas to upwards of 67 percent of stations burning natural gas. Many residential homes being built are now heating with gas, to save money and insulate their budgets from the price swings in the oil markets. These factors have left New England with some of the highest electricity prices in the country. We are consuming more gas, but our infrastructure to deliver the resource is lacking and outdated.

We have more natural gas in the United States than almost anywhere else in the world; we are considered the Saudi Arabia of the gas industry. However, without pipelines to get that to our homes and electrical generating plants it is useless. The Baker Administration has supported the completion of a new pipeline to run from Pennsylvania and Central New York through Dracut. However, the out of touch zeal of the extreme left is stopping it, this includes many local state representatives. The fervor and zeal of these extremist activists is responsible for the skyrocketing rates we have seen, and may be endangering the foundation of our economic infrastructure. The opposition is not because the pipeline is dangerous, hazardous, or even environmentally damaging. It is because the gas being pumped through the pipeline is either generated from fracking, or is not a fad energy source they have deemed “clean.” The bottom line is we are allowing political zeal to prevent us from helping families and our economy.

This pipeline must move forward. Recent studies have shown that without new sources of delivery, our energy consumption will so outpace the delivery that we will be in a catastrophic situation unable to heat homes, generate electricity and afford the fuel we do get. Those protesting are simply a push of the extremist agenda that prevents jobs and hurts families. It is a myopic vision of our resource use and is nothing more than the regulatory arm of the left imposing their views into your homes. Allowing the pipeline does not prevent further spread of solar, wind and other alternate fuel sources. Combining alternate and traditional energy sources will further increase supply of energy and drive down all costs.

Call your legislators, support Governor Baker, and demand that they support the Massachusetts portion of this pipeline.

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