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ABLI and LIBI Partner to Request a Mediation Role to Confront Northport “Energy Tax” Shouldered by Long Island Ratepayers

Representing largest power consumers in the region, coalition requests participation in Tax Certiorari proceedings among LIPA, National Grid, the Town of Huntington, and the Northport-East Northport School District

Hauppauge, NY (September 10, 2018) – The Association for a Better Long Island (ABLI) and the Long Island Builders Institute (LIBI), two of the largest business organizations on Long Island, whose members include many of the primary energy consumers in the region, are seeking permission to participate in mediation efforts that would address the unfair property tax burden placed on every ratepayer by the Long Island Power Authority’s (LIPA) Northport Power Plant.

In a letter to the Hon. Elizabeth Emerson and arbiter Martin Scheinman, ABLI and LIBI have requested the opportunity to participate in the upcoming mediation between LIPA, the Town of Huntington, National Grid, and the Northport-East Northport School District, to ensure that the public interests are well-represented and preserved.

“There has been virtually no progress toward a settlement between LIPA and the Town of Huntington, and we are concerned that if we’re not a part of the negotiations, on behalf of all Long Island ratepayers, an unfair resolution will be reached,” said Kyle Strober, ABLI’s Executive Director. “The challenges for the tax assessments on these power plants have been pending since 2010. The people of Long Island deserve better and we want to make sure that a decision isn’t reached that only serves to benefit a few.”

ABLI and LIBI further requested that the December 3, 2018 court trial date remain in place to provide both an impetus for the parties to reach a resolution and a backup if mediation is unsuccessful.

“It is time for this excessive taxation to end and for this power plant, along with all of the others on Long Island, to be taxed at an appropriate rate, which is related to the amount of use of the plant, said Mitchell H. Pally, Chief Executive Officer of the Long Island Builders Institute. “For all of my members on Long Island who have been paying their own property taxes as well as those on these plants, we would like to have our money back. The only way to ensure fairness for all is to be in the room when such decisions are made.”

A move toward settlement is apparent in litigation between LIPA and the Town of Brookhaven, the Village of Port Jefferson, and Nassau County. It is the belief of ABLI and LIBI that the combination of both mediation and the pending court case will encourage LIPA and the Town of Huntington to reach an agreement.

Strober added, “We can’t change the past, but we can ensure that any settlement reached will result in a significant reduction in taxes paid by LIPA customers, while providing for an equitable, multi-year step-down in tax payments made to the school district. Only by being in the room and at the table can we ensure that Long Islanders are protected.”

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