

TOWN OF BURRILLVILLE



TOWN BUILDING
HARRISVILLE, R.I.

NEWS RELEASE
May 26, 2017

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The Burrillville Town Council Calls on General Assembly to Take Action on Bill to Change Energy Facility Siting Act

Town Says Window to Protect all Communities from Unjust Act is NOW!

BURRILLVILLE, RI - The Burrillville Town Council is renewing its call for Rhode Island legislators to act in this session to change the Energy Facility Siting Act. The Act empowers the Energy Facility Siting Board (EFSB) with sole decision-making on whether power plants are located in a city or town.

The current law effectively eliminates all municipal decision making authority regarding power plant siting. Cities and towns are left with minimal flexibility in deciding the viability of a project, even on an advisory basis.

This is the case with Invenergy's proposed Clear River Energy Center (CREC) in Burrillville. Throughout the application process Burrillville has experienced numerous problems and financial drain under current EFSB law. The current law makes no provisions to properly reimburse any impacted city or town.

Under the existing act, the EFSB can be as subjective as it chooses due to minimal regulations or standards required to evaluate and approve a project, rendering a city or town essentially helpless to make any decisions in its own best interest.

"The Town of Burrillville has been forced to watch almost powerless as Invenergy is utilizing its plentiful resources, political muscle and almost limitless finances to try to persuade the EFSB," said Burrillville Town Council President John F. Pacheco III. "This is not a fate I would wish on any community."

The Burrillville Town Council has set out to change this unacceptable situation. At its request, [House Bill 2017 – H 6051](#) and [Senate Bill 2017 – S 0769](#) have been introduced that would change the Energy Facility Siting Act. The proposed legislation would increase the membership of the EFSB, adding local representation and incorporating meaningful local participation of host communities in the hearing and decision making process of the board.

None of the proposed legislation, including the Town Council's bills, will be retroactive to the already in process CREC or the National Grid Interconnection project associated with CREC. However, if the Town can stop the current application now, or CREC withdraws its application, a new law would be in place should CREC re-file later. If CREC only receives an EFSB permit for 500 Megawatts, and has to re-file for an additional 500 megawatts, a new law would be in place to protect Burrillville and other cities and towns in the future.

"There is a chance this legislation may help Burrillville, but more importantly, we don't want to see other communities experience what we are going through," said Pacheco. "The time to act is NOW, in this session, to protect Burrillville and all Rhode Island communities that fall prey to the existing Energy Facility Siting Act."