



Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

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Chief James W. Ransom
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PRESS RELEASE

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MOHAWK TRIBE RESPONDS TO GOVERNOR PATERSON'S ACTIONS

Tribal Council Expresses Disappointment with NYPA Decision

AKWESASNE TERRITORY – The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council reacted strongly on the news that the New York Power Authority (NYPA) plans on diverting nine megawatts of electrical power to a Long Island business concern. The electrical power had previously been committed to the Akwesasne Territory in a 2002 relicensing agreement.

“The action by NYPA is not a total surprise, but the lack of consultation with us is. As a neighbor, they should have had the courtesy to reach out to us before they went public with their announcement. That is shameful on their part and gross misrepresentation of the relationship described by NYPA President and CEO Richard Kessel when I met him at ALCOA in February,” stated Tribal Chief James W. Ransom.

The Tribal Council sent a strongly-worded letter to the Governor today reminding him of his commitment to “...forge a fundamentally different government-to-government relationship - one grounded in mutual respect and with common purpose.” Governor Paterson also made a commitment to work together with tribal nations in New York to create a brighter future for all citizens.

“We have welcomed the Governor’s indications that he intends to strive for improved relationships between the State and us. Unfortunately since then, his actions have not matched his words,” said Tribal Chief Barbara Lazore. Instead, the Tribe contends that the Governor has done the following:

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- Promised in the media to meet with tribal officials on tax issues, but then failed to respond to repeated requests to meet;
- Ignored tribal requests to meet to negotiate payments for casino regulatory fees;
- Ignored the request to make the transition from the State Police officers providing casino oversight to state-certified Tribal Police officers providing the oversight; and
- Took action, without any notification, to divert nine megawatts of electrical power, that had previously been committed to the Tribe, to downstate business concerns.

“This is truly not the ‘fundamentally different government-to-government relationship - one with mutual respect and a common purpose’ that the Governor promised,” noted Tribal Chief Monica Jacobs. “This is a relationship that is one-sided and disrespectful.”

Chief Ransom added, “We have used a cooperative approach in becoming the economic engine for Northern New York. We have added hundreds of North Country jobs, purchased millions of dollars in goods and services from our neighbors and have contributed in excess of \$35 million to the state in revenue-sharing payments over the past four years. We know that these are difficult economic times and that many political pressures exist from many constituent groups. But that is no excuse to act in such a disrespectful and indifferent manner towards us.”

The letter also reminded the Governor that the long-term economic health of our community, the North Country and the State depends on cooperation amongst all interests. Peaceful solutions can be achieved only if strong communications and a mutual commitment to overcome differences exist and when words and actions match. The Tribal Council also called upon the Governor to meet immediately to discuss the issues that are important to creating a brighter future for all people and to honor the promises made.

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The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the St. Regis Mohawk People.