

Date: Friday, August 26 2016 05:11 PM
Subject: FYI - Article on natgas
From: Beth Treseder
To: Northeast Infrastructure Campaign [REDACTED]

All,

Redacted

Thanks,
Beth

From: State House News Service [mailto:[REDACTED]]
Sent: Friday, August 26, 2016 4:56 PM
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Subject: ADVANCES - WEEK OF AUG. 28, 2016

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STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, AUG 26, 2016....Regional energy issues loom as Gov. Charlie Baker prepares to host the governors of New England and officials from eastern Canada for meetings in Boston on Sunday and Monday. The gradual shift to more renewable energy sources combined with the mothballing of nuclear and coal power and obstacles to natural gas pipeline capacity are in play as state CEOs look to get greener in the energy sector, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and ensure that power supplies are reliable and affordable.

The Baker administration is working within the confines of two recent high court decisions. On May 17, the Supreme Judicial Court affirmed the state's obligations under a 2008 global warming law and ordered state government to create and implement regulations that apply to multiple carbon sources to meet its emission reduction mandates.

Then, on Aug. 17, the court ruled that utilities cannot ask electric ratepayers to help finance the construction of gas pipelines. Asked Friday about his message to regional energy officials, Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton told the News Service the administration plans to continue working with other states and Canada to pursue a "combo platter" of energy solutions, one that includes expanded access to natural gas and development of transmission projects to facilitate the flow of renewable energy.

Other New England states have the legislative authority to expand pipeline capacity in the manner disallowed by the Massachusetts SJC, Beaton said, acknowledging the possibility of a power supply crunch ahead as Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant prepares to shut down and with major hydropower and offshore wind power sources still years away. "This is exactly why we need more natural gas capacity," said Beaton. "Natural gas is that one critical piece that we're missing right now." His position on that matter is at odds with other public officials and many in the environmental movement who say Massachusetts is already too dependent on natural gas. "Other New England states recognize the severity of the situation that we're in and the need for additional natural gas capacity and have taken a legislative action to pursue that. We unfortunately did not have that same opportunity here in the Commonwealth so we find ourselves in Massachusetts actually holding back some of the other states in pursuing their desire to move forward with a diversified energy portfolio that has a balance," Beaton said after a Cabinet meeting.