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Press Release

December 21, 2017

Long Island Businesses for Responsible Energy, Inc. (LIBFRE)

The Long Island Businesses for Responsible Energy, Inc., is pleased to announce that the Town Board of East Hampton unanimously passed a resolution today, joining LIBFRE's fight against PSEG-LI/LIPA to remove 267 toxic utility poles with high-tension lines, and to clean up the contaminated soil along a 6.2-mile route from East Hampton to Amagansett. LIBFRE hopes the Town's involvement will help the momentum of what has already been a long legal battle by members of LIBFRE.

In the wake of Super Storm Sandy, PSEG-LI and LIPA could have used FEMA funds to bury the lines rather than risk contaminating the Town's air, soil, and groundwater, thus endangering the health of both the Town's residents and the environment.

The devastation of Puerto Rico's energy grid by Hurricane Maria reinforced what everyone has always known – the burial of power lines not only avoids health risks, it also protects residents from power outages. Saving money in the short term by installing weather-prone poles covered with toxic chemicals was a travesty that can easily be rectified in the Town of East Hampton.

East Hampton is an area of unique beauty and natural resources. The Nature Conservancy designated the area as one of the "Last Great Places" in the Western Hemisphere. Preservation of its significant scenic vistas and open spaces is imperative to protect its rural character and natural beauty. The 267 toxic utility poles, which are significantly taller and wider than the previous ones, were installed along a 6.2-mile route, in some places less than 25 feet from children's bedrooms, passing through significant scenic vistas. Strung up on these newly installed larger poles are high-tension wires that emit dangerous levels of electromagnetic energy. The poles, covered in Pentachlorophenol, also known as "Penta," leach into the environment. The EPA has described Penta as "extremely toxic," and a "probable" human carcinogen. Penta enters the human or animal body through inhalation, ingestion of contaminated food or water, and through dermal contact with the treated wood. Children are more susceptible to the dangers from the toxic chemicals that are continuously leaching into the air, soil, and groundwater. Children are also more susceptible to the dangers associated with the increase in electromagnetic energy.

We hope the Town's decision to join this fight will help convince PSEG-LI and LIPA to stop poisoning our land and water resources. If not, we will have to rely on our courts to compel them to do the right thing, which they have refused to do thus far.

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