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LONG ISLAND / POLITICS

Senators urge 'conditional' state approval of proposed natural gas pipeline



State Sen. Todd Kaminsky (D-Long Beach), seen here in Mineola on April 30, 2018. Credit: Howard Schnapp

By Mark Harrington

mark.harrington@newsday.com [Twitter: MHarringtonNews](https://twitter.com/MHarringtonNews)

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Six Long Island Democratic state senators on Wednesday urged the state's top environmental official to approve a contested natural gas pipeline "on an emergency basis" if certain conditions are met, just days after Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo publicly expressed his opposition to it.

The lawmakers, led by Sen. Todd Kaminsky (D-Long Beach), who chairs the Senate's environmental conservation committee, argued in a letter to the state Department of Environmental Conservation that a moratorium enacted by the pipeline's chief backer, National Grid, has "already impacted thousands of our constituents."

Kaminsky declined to comment beyond the senators' letter, which was also signed by Long Island State Sens. John Brooks, James Gaughran, Anna Kaplan, Monica Martinez and Kevin Thomas.

The request to DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos asks for “conditional” approval of the pipeline, which the DEC has twice rejected on environmental grounds.

The senators said the pipeline should be approved only after an independent body – “not National Grid” – finds that the additional gas supply is truly needed to meet the state’s energy safety and reliability needs. They also asked that the amount of gas allowed from the pipeline be “scaled back” to align with “the increased availability of cleaner, renewable alternatives over time,” and that proceeds from the pipeline’s use be used for renewable investments to more quickly meet the state’s green-energy goals.

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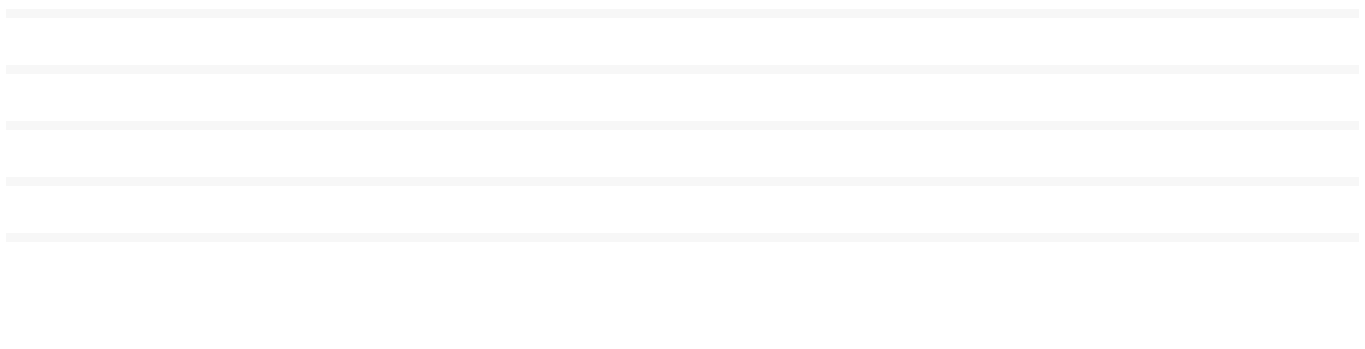
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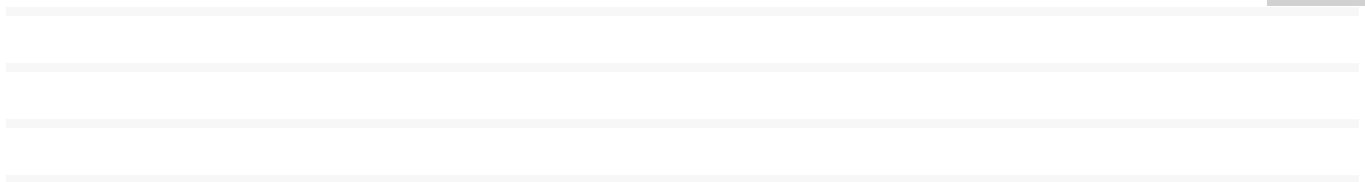
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