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In a stunning announcement this morning, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) alerted Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) that it is throwing out its approval of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for Candlewood Lake, allowing citizens of the Lake area to have a say in the re-drafting of the plan.

Contact: Kristen Bossi

202) 225-4476

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a stunning announcement this morning, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) alerted Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) that it is throwing out its approval of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for Candlewood Lake, allowing citizens of the Lake area to have a say in the re-drafting of the plan. Murphy has been pushing FERC to take into consideration local concerns with the SMP, which were aired in a meeting attended by several hundred people that Murphy secured in New Fairfield in late September.

"This is fantastic news from FERC. In one fell swoop, FERC has rescinded its approval of the SMP and ordered the process to be opened back up. It's basically a do-over. The ruling proves that the residents of the Candlewood Lake area made a compelling case during the meeting I was able to secure in September in New Fairfield," said Murphy.

Since taking office in January, Murphy has been working to address the concerns of Candlewood Lake area residents who have been frustrated with the process by which the SMP was crafted. After residents of the Candlewood Lake area, local elected officials, former Congresswoman Nancy Johnson, and Murphy had all requested that FERC hold a public meeting on its SMP, and had all been denied, Murphy attempted to address this problem legislatively. He introduced legislation to ensure that FERC allow more public input in future land use decisions, and he also introduced it as an amendment to a comprehensive energy package.

When House leaders scheduled a vote on the Murphy amendment, FERC reversed its decision and agreed to give Candlewood Lake a meeting. On September 24, J. Mark Robinson, Director of Energy Projects at FERC, came to New Fairfield for a four hour hearing, listening to testimony from members of the public regarding the detrimental effects of the SMP.

"That meeting proved to be the deciding factor for FERC to rule that it needed to revoke its decision to approve the Shoreline Management Plan. I want to thank those that attended and spoke because FERC needed to hear directly from you to see the error in their ways," said Murphy.

Last week, Murphy sent a letter to FERC to ask them to act on what they heard from the hundreds of people who attended the hearing on the lake's SMP. Specifically, Murphy requested that the agency grant pending requests for rehearing, order changes to the SMP, and provide opportunity for comment for Squantz Pond residents.

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