



Mark P. Mondanaro
Superintendent of Schools

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Budget Hearing Testimony

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony for today's Buffalo Budget Hearing. I have not been Superintendent of Schools very long in the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District, but it is clear that what has happened here is microcosmic of what has happened over the years in Western New York.

While we all know that the Buffalo area has seen dramatic reductions in manufacturing and generally good economic conditions, the extreme importance of the newly proposed NRG Huntley Clean Coal Burning Plant may not be known. There is no question this exciting proposal brings a measure of economic growth to our area, but I'm an educator. The current Huntley PILOT Agreement represents approximately seven million dollars of revenue to our school district. This is equal to nearly 10% of our real property and sales tax revenue, and 16% of this year's total State aid. This is the final year of our PILOT, especially if the new proposal does not go forward. Our struggles as a school district are, again, representative of the Buffalo region, since we are a first ring suburb. Our enrollment has dropped over the years, and many buildings have been closed. However, we still enroll over 8,400 students. We are working hard to afford them the necessary programs and coursework so needed for their success.

The NRG/Huntley project holds much promise for our region's economic landscape. Closer to home, it will help preserve the future of our students and their important educational programs. We believe we've heard enough doors close on our region and its people. We ask your help today to start opening some.

Thank You,

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