
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

Series 1: Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Political Ascension

File No. 462

1932 February 15

Albany, NY - Message to Legislature

Febr. 15, 1932

MESSAGE TO LEGISLATURE: MUNICIPAL DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRICITY

The intermediate report of the Power Authority points out the necessity of early adoption of legislation which will permit municipalities to buy the cheap electrical power to be developed from the St. Lawrence. In connection with this, one or more municipalities should also be enabled by law to combine into a utility district for this purpose. It is equally important that municipalities, acting either for themselves or in conjunction with other municipalities or parts thereof, should have the right, on the approval of a majority of the voters in the region affected, to manufacture, transmit and distribute electrical energy.

Last year there were introduced in the Legislature two bills to carry out this purpose. They were not passed. Nor indeed, were they given any adequate consideration. I am causing legislation to this end again to be introduced and trust that your Honorable Bodies will adopt it so as to permit municipalities to help reduce rates for electricity for their inhabitants. A number of municipalities in the state now have this right; and it is common knowledge that the rates for electrical energy are much cheaper in those localities than elsewhere.

There can be no valid objection to this legislation, except from those utility corporations which seek to maintain as exorbitant rates as possible. If there are details of the proposed legislation which do not meet with the views of your Honorable Bodies, I shall be glad to confer with you relative to amendments, providing only they do not change the general principle of the program. I believe that it is particularly important that this policy be written now into the statute law of our state in order more adequately and more quickly to obtain all of the benefits of the development of the St. Lawrence water power towards which the Power Authority has made marked progress.

(Signed) Franklin D. Roosevelt