

NYPA Renewables Strategic Plan

Public Hearing Transcripts

January 28, 2025



**NY Power
Authority**



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NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

5777 Lewiston Road

Lewiston, NY 14092

November 7, 2024

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

(Morning session.)

On behalf of NYPA:

Joe Kessler

Vennela Yadhati

Lindsay Kryzak

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

Public Speakers

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1 JOE KESSLER: Okay. Thank you. Again,
2 thank you, everybody, for joining us today.

3 My name is Joe Kessler, and I'm the
4 Executive Vice President and Chief Operating
5 Officer of New York Power Authority. And I
6 oversee the Authority's power generation
7 transmission assets and commercial operations, and
8 the New York State Canal System operations.

9 We're happy to have with us today a couple
10 of our leaders, our trustees. We have our
11 trustee, Lori Wheelock. And our chairman, John
12 Koelmel. So, thank you for joining us. And
13 there's a number of NYPA staff here as well, as
14 you're going around.

15 We're here today because NYPA issued a
16 draft Renewable Strategic Plan on October 8, and
17 has scheduled public hearings across the state to
18 solicit input from interested parties regarding
19 this draft plan.

20 If someone you know is unable to attend
21 today in person, please let them know that NYPA is
22 also hosting a virtual hearing on November 21st.
23 More information is on our website at NYPA.gov.

24 We'll begin today with a brief video about
25 the New York Power Authority, followed by an

1 overview of the draft Strategic Plan.

2 But primarily, my colleagues and I are here
3 today to hear from you. So, after these
4 presentations, we will invite those who have
5 signed up to come up to the mic and give a public
6 comment.

7 We'll begin a short video to -- we'll begin
8 with a short video to provide the overview of New
9 York Power Authority.

10 Joe.

11 (Video played back as follows:

12 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
13 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
14 the solution for New York State and its residents,
15 providing clean, renewable energy, and economic
16 opportunities.

17 Through customer partnerships, energy
18 solutions, and the responsible supply of
19 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
20 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
21 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

22 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
23 serving customers in local and state governments,
24 industry, large and small businesses, and
25 nonprofit organizations.

1 The power for these customers is equal to
2 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
3 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
4 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
5 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
6 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
7 hydropower.

8 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
9 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
10 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
11 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
12 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

13 As we bring power to customers, we also
14 actively ensure people from our host communities
15 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
16 from our clean energy economy.

17 We work on projects across the state to
18 increase energy efficiency, improve
19 infrastructure, and support economic development.

20 Our hydropower projects support more than
21 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
22 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
23 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
24 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
25 the communities we serve.

1 Our economic and community focus extends to
2 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
3 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
4 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
5 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
6 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
7 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
8 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
9 from around the world.

10 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
11 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
12 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
13 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
14 years to come.

15 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
16 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
17 energy deployment and support other state
18 priorities. This expanded authority will
19 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
20 New York State, support expanded workforce
21 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
22 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
23 Energy Access and Community Health Program to
24 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
25 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned

1 utilities.

2 Additionally, we will lead the state's
3 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
4 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
5 production at our small natural gas power plants
6 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
7 certain reliability and environmental conditions
8 are met.

9 We are also developing action plans to
10 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
11 carbon-emitting facilities.

12 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
13 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
14 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
15 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
16 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
17 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
18 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
19 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

20 (End of video.)

21 JOE KESSLER: Great. Thank you, Joe.

22 So, as you saw, NYPA is the largest state
23 public power organization in the nation. We
24 operate 17 generating facilities and over 1500
25 circuit miles of transmission.

1 More than 80 percent of the electricity
2 NYPA generates is clean renewable hydropower, such
3 as we generate right here in Niagara. And we
4 believe we are in a unique position to do even
5 more to advance the state's full energy goals.

6 As NYPA builds, owns, and operates new
7 renewable projects, we need to have an electric
8 grid they can connect to. Not one that's clogged
9 with bottlenecks that prevent clean energy from
10 getting to where it needs to go.

11 That's why NYPA, led by members of my team,
12 is pursuing the most ambitious transformation of
13 New York's grid in more than 40 years. And the
14 state is implementing new procedures to ensure
15 transmission can be sited, connected, and built.

16 As you heard, NYPA owns one-third of the
17 State's high voltage transmission, and we continue
18 to make major improvements to build a far more
19 flexible 21st century electric grid with
20 significantly greater access to a mix of
21 carbon-free resources.

22 And we also know that a modernized grid
23 will be much more resilient. That's all part of
24 the work we're doing today to support the projects
25 of tomorrow.

1 Over the past two years, NYPA has launched
2 a variety of public engagement pathways to inform
3 the foundation for building new renewable
4 resources as authorized by last year's Enacted
5 State Budget.

6 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
7 build renewables subject to a Strategic Plan which
8 must be approved by its trustees, following public
9 comment period with at least three public
10 hearings.

11 We felt it was important to do more than
12 that and hear more from you. Like we did in our
13 2023 and 2024 conferral process, we welcome public
14 engagement and feedback as we shape our Strategic
15 Plan, and build more renewables in New York State.

16 I know many of you came to speak about the
17 plan, and I will now turn the mic over to Vennela
18 Yadhati to give a brief overview of this draft
19 Strategic Plan and NYPA's work to expand renewable
20 development, connect community members with job
21 opportunities and clean energy sector, and advance
22 Governor Hochul's climate action agenda.

23 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Joe.

24 I'm probably going to stand up and get my
25 steps (inaudible).

1 Hello, everyone. I'm Vennela Yadhati and
2 the Vice President for NYPA's Renewable Project
3 Development, leading the efforts to bring online
4 new renewable generating facilities and energy
5 storage products across the states. We're in the
6 middle of what could be called the most
7 significant eras in NYPA's 93-year history.

8 Last May, as part of the 2023-'24 Enacted
9 State Budget, NYPA received new expanded
10 authority, or new capabilities and the
11 responsibilities, actually more opportunities for
12 us to continue to further serve New Yorkers in the
13 clean energy space.

14 So, I want to walk you all through a little
15 bit of our journey, and that's why I have my notes
16 here because I don't want to miss anyone
17 (inaudible).

18 First, the expanding authority gave NYPA
19 the ability to build and operate renewable energy
20 resources like solar, wind, and battery energy
21 solar systems. And this is to achieve the state's
22 very bold climate goals outlined in the Climate
23 Act.

24 My team has identified a first tranche of
25 40 such projects spanning across every region in

1 the state and representing a total capacity
2 exceeding 3.5 gigawatts.

3 These projects are just the beginning of
4 our commitment to expand our portfolio of
5 delivering clean, reliable energy to all New
6 Yorkers.

7 Right now, we're in the process of doing
8 full due diligence on each project to determine
9 whether or not they are the best fit for New
10 Yorkers.

11 We want to ensure these projects truly
12 benefit our communities and, therefore, belong in
13 NYPA's renewable energy portfolio.

14 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's
15 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment
16 in New York. We also want to explore meaningful
17 partnerships to support the state's equitable and
18 efficient transition to a clean energy future.

19 This first tranche of 40 projects includes
20 a mix of NYPA's own greenfield projects and
21 co-developed initiatives which is where we will be
22 partnering with private developers to combine our
23 complementary skills and strengths so we can
24 jointly develop, construct, own, and operate
25 renewable energy projects across the state.

1 And this mix of 40 projects includes a
2 variety of sites, predominantly large-scale
3 projects or utility-scale projects, some small
4 distributed scale projects, and also in the
5 community, where in the community can actually
6 see, feel, and touch the projects in their
7 backyards.

8 It includes a variety of technologies,
9 solar PV, wind and battery energy storage systems.
10 It includes a variety of locations and sites as
11 well. In fact, about 50 percent of the NYPA's
12 greenfield portfolio actually incited (inaudible)
13 landfills, brownfields, or closed correctional
14 facilities, repurposing them to advance new
15 renewable generation in the state.

16 Think about it. Turning the brown into
17 green, right? What better than that? And that's
18 exactly what we're doing.

19 To that effect, we are collaborating with
20 our sister agencies and our customers as well,
21 including local governments, to identify more such
22 opportunities.

23 So far we have pre-qualified a stable of
24 more than 85 developers and investors that can
25 collaborate with us to build this initial tranche

1 and future ones.

2 NYPA's role and goal is not to crowd out
3 the private sector but to work together,
4 leveraging our strengths to build more renewables
5 and help the state achieve its clean energy goals.

6 By maintaining majority ownership and
7 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch our
8 finances further and accelerate the transition to
9 clean energy.

10 As we described in the Strategic Plan, NYPA
11 has not received any state funding to build new
12 renewable generation projects. Instead, we're
13 self-funding these efforts, along with other
14 critical commitments to the CLCPA, such as new
15 transmission development and growing the clean
16 energy workforce, all entirely through NYPA's own
17 revenues.

18 Given these constraints, a balanced
19 approach is essential to bring more renewable
20 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
21 offer the best financial returns. With the
22 ultimate goal to help ensure we can reduce the
23 cost to the ratepayers, and maximize the impact of
24 every dollar spent.

25 And there is more to come. This is only

1 the first tranche and -- in the first strategic
2 plan we have published.

3 Think about it; the plan itself is
4 renewable. That is a plan we will regularly
5 update as we add more projects for consideration
6 by the public and our trustees.

7 Part of preparing to release this draft
8 plan was making sure that NYPA had the right tools
9 and staff right to be able to support it. This
10 includes having the expertise to make sure the
11 proposed projects meet technical, economic,
12 environmental, and environmental justice needs in
13 the state.

14 In the past 18 months, we have established
15 a new business line, and new business structures,
16 and key personnel roles. Like my team, several of
17 whom are here actually today, we have obtained
18 approval from our Board of Trustees -- thank you
19 very much -- to form a renewables subsidiary and
20 an initial capital allocation of \$100 million for
21 developing and garnering other necessary resources
22 to advance the first tranche of projects.

23 We continue to source and solicit
24 additional project opportunities to append to our
25 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue

1 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
2 as it expands and grows its pipeline of future
3 tranches of projects.

4 And these projects aren't being built in a
5 silo. They're part of a holistic approach to
6 renewable development that supports environmental
7 justice equally, workforce development, and
8 affordability.

9 You see, the 2023 and '24 Enacted Budget
10 also gave NYPA the ability to establish the
11 Renewable Energy Access and Community Help
12 Program -- the REACH program, in short -- and use
13 a portion of the revenues that are generated from
14 the renewable energy projects we're going to own
15 and operate to benefit low- or moderate-income
16 communities within disadvantaged communities as
17 bill grants.

18 Since releasing our draft Strategic Plan,
19 the Public Service Commission has formally
20 accepted our application to form the REACH
21 program. Once NYPA's renewable power projects are
22 online and generating revenue, and NYPA gathers
23 funds from available sources, money will be
24 available to flow to low-income New Yorkers
25 through the process set forth by the PSC order.

1 While still under development, REACH will
2 appear as automatic bill credits alongside the
3 Energy Affordability Program and the Statewide
4 Solar for All credits.

5 The next thing that we got to expand
6 authority. NYPA will also invest up to \$25
7 million annually in collaboration with the New
8 York State Department of Labor to create jobs and
9 provide workforce training for people who want to
10 work in the clean energy industry.

11 Through this partnership, we've already
12 awarded \$12.5 million just this fiscal year in
13 funding for opportunities for New Yorkers,
14 including young people from Buffalo to New York
15 City, through programs like the Say Yes Buffalo
16 Youth Apprenticeship Program, and the Renaissance
17 Technical Institute in New York City, and others
18 from disadvantaged communities across the state to
19 pursue good-paying clean renewable energy jobs.

20 And with regard to the workforce on the
21 proposed projects that I just mentioned to you,
22 NYPA will be entering into project labor
23 agreements for each and every renewable energy
24 generating project and will require all our
25 contractors and subcontractors associated with the

1 projects to utilize apprenticeship agreements so
2 those learning on this first tranche of projects
3 can be seasoned veterans for NYPA's future
4 projects and projects that we're going to bring
5 on.

6 The next element that we achieved in
7 expanded authority, the new law also requires NYPA
8 to develop a plan to end fossil fuel-based
9 generation at its small natural gas power plants
10 in New York City and Long Island by 2030, as long
11 as reliability and environmental conditions are
12 met. Of course, because those are critical.

13 To this end, we're actively exploring
14 strategies to meet this commitment while
15 considering grid reliability and air quality
16 impacts, including the potential for deploying
17 battery storage at some of these sites.

18 We're in discussions with several
19 developers about energy storage and other
20 electrical infrastructure solutions to transform
21 these sites while also preserving grid
22 reliability.

23 I know I just shared a long list of actions
24 that NYPA has taken and continues to take as part
25 of the new authority.

1 As a reminder, the draft of these plans are
2 on our website, NYPA.gov/renewables. And I
3 encourage you to read it. Not just because I
4 helped write it but it is a very interesting read.

5 The first draft plan spells out our
6 approach to renewables and our approach to
7 identifying the first projects and partnerships
8 NYPA aims to pursue.

9 This legislation represents a significant
10 increase in NYPA's role in the energy sector,
11 bringing us back to our roots and revolutionizing
12 the state's grid to benefit all New Yorkers.

13 Thank you for taking the time to come today
14 to learn more and to give your comments about this
15 plan.

16 Joe, back to you.

17 JOE KESSLER: So, with that -- thank you,
18 Vennela -- I'll remind everyone that the law
19 requires NYPA to solicit public comment and hold a
20 minimum of three hearings in regionally diverse
21 parts of the state on the draft Strategic Plan
22 that Vennela just laid out.

23 Our timekeeper, Lindsay, will call on
24 everyone who signed up to speak today, and our
25 speakers will be given three minutes. If anyone

1 needs a translator, please alert the staff at the
2 sign-in table.

3 We recognize some of you may have longer
4 comments than others. If you run out of time, you
5 can submit your full comments on our website or
6 email directly to strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.
7 QR codes are on the sign-in table as well to make
8 that even easier.

9 The feedback you give tonight -- today --
10 will be -- I'm going to do this again tonight, so
11 it will be transcribed and compiled with the
12 written comments, which must be considered and
13 incorporated in the final Strategic Plan and be
14 published at NYPA's website and submitted to the
15 Governor, and the legislature by January 31, 2025.

16 So, again, thank you for joining us. I
17 will now turn it over to Lindsay, our timekeeper.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thanks, Joe.

19 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
20 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
21 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or
22 required by applicable law, regulation, or order,
23 and it may be made available in whole or in part
24 in the public record in accordance with the
25 agency's rules.

1 Each member of the public will be given
2 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.
3 Remember, additional comments can be shared via
4 our website at nypa.gov or via email at
5 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

6 Our first speaker is Josh Veronica. Josh?

7 JOSH VERONICA: Well, good morning. And
8 thank you for the opportunity to comment.

9 My name is Josh Veronica, and I'm the
10 Director of Government Affairs at the Buffalo
11 Niagara Partnership. We're the region's Chamber
12 of Commerce. We represent employers of all sizes
13 who collectively employ over a quarter million
14 people in the region.

15 I want to first start by saying the BNP has
16 strong concerns with the underlying legislation
17 that created this program. I think there are a
18 lot of reasons between supply chain challenges,
19 local opposition, financing costs that private
20 developers are not developing renewable energy at
21 the pace that we would like them to see, and we
22 thought the state's energy would be better focused
23 on helping private developers address those
24 concerns.

25 That being said, we're here. The plan is

1 in the books. This is the direction the state's
2 going forward, and we want to thank NYPA for the
3 thoughtfulness in which you developed this plan.

4 A couple of issues or concerns that we had:
5 First, I want to talk about the decommissioning of
6 natural gas power plants. The plan calls for
7 shuttering NYPA's 11 natural gas power plants by
8 2030.

9 The BNP appreciates that the plan includes
10 an off-ramp in the case that decommissioning would
11 create reliability concerns. We would encourage
12 NYPA to go a step further and forego
13 decommissioning until New York brings onto the
14 grid enough renewable or emission free energy to
15 replace the load served by those gas plants.

16 NYPA should continue to work with NYISO to
17 ensure the state's grid remains adequate
18 reliability margins.

19 We appreciate the focus on transmission
20 investment because renewable energy generation
21 tends to be located in rural areas far from
22 population centers. We know this is a huge need
23 in terms of investment. This remained a focal
24 point for NYPA. And the state should also
25 consider additional grid investments to connect

1 private renewable developers to the grid.

2 Revenue use: One of the main supportive
3 benefits of building public renewables is being
4 able to reinvest surplus revenues into other
5 strategic community initiatives.

6 We appreciate NYPA's focus on workforce
7 development initiatives, and on bill relief for
8 low-income ratepayers. I think those are both
9 helpful to the community. We would encourage you
10 to consider some other effective ways of spending
11 this money.

12 Employers largely will bear the bulk of
13 costs related to decarbonization and climate
14 action. Between heightened energy costs,
15 efficiency mandates, carbon-free building codes,
16 employers are really going to feel these costs in
17 a way more so maybe than any other consumer.

18 Cap and invest will force employers to bid
19 on the right to emit carbon, and will eventually
20 force employers to pretty gradually change their
21 business practices to be less carbon-intensive.

22 And so if New York wants to preserve a
23 robust economy while transitioning toward
24 emission-free power, state leaders must
25 acknowledge those intense costs and we would

1 encourage NYPA to consider using some of the
2 surplus revenue to help employers make that
3 transition and provide cost relief for them.

4 Collaboration with the private sector:
5 Many renewable energy developers are cautiously
6 observing NYPA's movement into this space. I
7 think it's important that NYPA plays by the same
8 set of rules as private developers so that
9 renewable energy developers who are leading this
10 climate transition don't suddenly face a
11 competitive disadvantage.

12 We encourage you to continue negotiating
13 any needed interconnections in good faith with the
14 private sector. I would say anecdotally that none
15 of our members have raised this as an issue yet.
16 They've been very pleased with their collaboration
17 with you thus far, and we're very excited to
18 continue.

19 I'll submit the rest in writing --

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

21 JOSH VERONICA: Thank you. I'll submit the
22 rest in writing.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

24 JOE KESSLER: Thank you.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Collin

1 Bishop. Collin?

2 COLLIN BISHOP: Good morning. I'm Collin
3 Bishop. I'm the Chief Communications Officer for
4 FeedMore Western New York. We are the Western New
5 York region's largest hunger relief agency,
6 representing Erie County, Niagara County,
7 Chautauqua, and Cattaraugus counties as well. We
8 are the food bank for Western New York, as well as
9 Meals on Wheels for Western New York.

10 As far as the draft Strategic Plan goes, we
11 would like to thank you guys for the opportunity
12 to speak here today. And as the hunger relief
13 organization dedicated to supporting our
14 vulnerable community members, we're appreciative
15 of the components of the plan that promote job
16 creation and benefit economically disadvantaged
17 New Yorkers.

18 Through the establishment of the Renewable
19 Energy Access and Community Help Program, also
20 known as REACH, NYPA will use a portion of the
21 revenues generated by the new renewable energy
22 project to support low- or moderate-income
23 households in disadvantaged communities through
24 electric utility bill credits.

25 The individuals and families assisted by

1 FeedMore often face difficult and impossible
2 decisions, including choosing between purchasing
3 groceries and paying for utility bills.

4 We're grateful that NYPA's draft Strategic
5 Plan includes these provisions to help ease the
6 burdens of our neighbors in need.

7 NYPA is also a steadfast supporter of
8 workforce development, and the Board of Trustees
9 has approved more than \$12.6 million in funding to
10 date in order to support workforce development
11 training initiatives throughout the state.

12 The draft Strategic Plan, NYPA will invest
13 25 million annually in workforce training and
14 collaborate with the State Department of Labor.

15 NYPA will also require a project labor
16 agreement for every renewable energy project that
17 will mandate all associated contractors and
18 subcontractors to employ apprenticeship agreements
19 so trainees on initial projects can become
20 established veterans for NYPA's future renewable
21 plans.

22 Unemployment and underemployment are the
23 leading root causes of poverty and food
24 insecurity, which is why FeedMore Western New York
25 established our own workforce development program

1 known as RISE, which stands for Ready
2 Individuals for Success and Employment. We
3 continue to witness the life-changing impacts that
4 workforce development training has on the
5 individuals, as well as their families who
6 graduate from our program.

7 And we know that NYPA's investment in
8 workforce training will provide brighter futures
9 to countless community members as well.

10 Finally, NYPA's support for the community
11 is also demonstrated through their continued
12 partnership with our organization through a
13 research collaboration funded by NYPA's
14 Environmental Justice Program, and led by the
15 National Electric Power Research Institute;
16 FeedMore received an indoor hydroponic container
17 farm in 2020 that has since transformed our
18 ability to provide produce for our neighbors in
19 need, enabling us to grow fresh produce year-round
20 and benefit the community.

21 And as NYPA is committed to improving the
22 future through clean renewable energy products
23 projects, they are also dedicated to improving the
24 lives of Western New Yorkers through the support
25 of FeedMore's project to create a new unified

1 headquarters. FeedMore Western New York was
2 grateful to receive \$5 million -- a contribution
3 from NYPA through the Western New Yorkers Power
4 Proceeds Allocation Board for our capital campaign
5 which will assist food-insecure Western New
6 Yorkers today and for generations to come. Thank
7 you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Collin.

9 Our next speaker is Michelle Urbancyk.
10 Michelle.

11 MICHELLE URBANCYK: Good morning, everyone.
12 My name is Michelle Urbancyk. I'm the President
13 and CEO of Explore & More, Ralph C. Wilson Jr.
14 Children's Museum. We're located at Canal Side,
15 in Buffalo, New York.

16 We're a 43,000-square-foot museum that
17 opened in 2019 with the purpose to bring the
18 community together through education through early
19 education, primarily one-year-olds all the way up
20 to about 12.

21 Explore & More is unique, and we're unique
22 in that we tell the story and celebrate the fabric
23 of the Western New York community through
24 interactive and hands-on experiences.

25 The New York State Power Authority, through

1 its funding, recognized the importance of
2 education and reinvested into children. And
3 that's one of the reasons why when I'm looking at
4 renewable energy and looking at this plan, it's
5 how do we stay and how do we keep educating our
6 community with what the next steps in innovation?

7 We're grateful. We received funding from
8 NYPA to support one of our play zones called
9 Moving Water. Moving Water pays tribute to our
10 waterways, so when you're there, you can see from
11 -- historically and into the future what the
12 waterways and what energy brings.

13 Children explore the impact of our
14 waterways from experiencing life on the Erie Canal
15 in a replica (inaudible) boat, so we bring it back
16 to (inaudible). And they hear stories of lights
17 on the Erie Canal. They put their hands in the
18 water tables to understand what it is to do locks.
19 So you learn about locks in third grade, but
20 really never understood what a lock is so you
21 could actually move your boat from the Erie Canal
22 to the Hudson River.

23 They get to harness the power of Niagara
24 Falls through energy. So we teach a little bit
25 about energy and how we get power. And we advance

1 the principles of the New York State Power
2 Authority, which is paying tribute to our
3 preservation, our enhancement, and the
4 development.

5 NYPA believes in providing our children the
6 opportunities to play, learn, and discover in a
7 creative space, and use its proceeds to invest in
8 the future of our children. Education is key and
9 education is very powerful. And quite frankly, we
10 need more of it. There's a lot of misinformation,
11 there's a lot of what-ifs.

12 And I applaud NYPA for reinvesting in our
13 future through workforce development. That is a
14 huge component of educating our future, and it's
15 needed now more than ever. I want to thank NYPA
16 for continuing to reinvest, and for holding public
17 hearings to at least hear, talk, and learn, you
18 know, from your plan. So, thank you so much.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Michelle. Our
20 next speaker is Asantewa Holley. Asantewa.

21 ASANTEWA HOLLEY: Good Morning. My name is
22 Asantewa Holley. I am the Vice President of
23 Operations of the Northland Workforce Training
24 Center, located in Buffalo, New York. And greet
25 you on behalf of our President and CEO, Stephen

1 Tucker. As New York State Signature Workforce
2 Initiative, Northland Workforce Training Center is
3 an industry-driven public-private partnership
4 between employers, educational institutions,
5 community and faith-based organizations, and state
6 and local government focused on closing the skills
7 gap of the local labor pool and creating economic
8 onramps to training, co-ops, internships,
9 apprenticeships, and permanent employment for
10 Western New Yorkers seeking high-paying advanced
11 manufacturing and energy careers.

12 Our vision is to be the premier model of
13 public-private partnerships, providing education,
14 training, and workforce development services that
15 are industry-driven and employment-focused. Our
16 mission is to advance the economic well-being of
17 Western New York by developing and maintaining a
18 skilled and diverse workforce to meet the needs of
19 the advanced manufacturing and energy sectors
20 while providing opportunities to job seekers as
21 well as pathways to gain full employment, career
22 advancement, and economic sustainability for
23 Western New Yorkers.

24 Since 2018, Northland has provided 1,302
25 individuals the opportunity to overcome personal

1 and societal obstacles by facilitating training
2 for in-demand professions in advanced
3 manufacturing and clean energy that provide
4 pathways out of generational poverty.

5 As the region's signature workforce
6 initiative, designed to prepare local residents
7 for careers in advanced manufacturing and clean
8 energy, Northland has evolved from an aspirational
9 theoretical model based on best practices into a
10 thriving, highly respected organization offering a
11 student-first culture with core values of
12 collaboration, organizational commitment,
13 results-driven and equity.

14 New York Power Authority has been an
15 important partner from the inception of Northland.
16 NYPA has provided \$15 million to support the
17 revitalization of the campus, and more recently
18 provided \$1.2 million through the NYPA Power
19 Proceeds funds in support of a new auto technology
20 training program.

21 NYPA routinely provides worksite tours of
22 the Power Vista for participants of our Summer
23 Youth Academy. The Summer Youth Academy raises
24 awareness of clean energy careers for students in
25 grades 9 through 12 attending Buffalo Public

1 Schools.

2 This academy is designed to inspire the
3 next generation of young people seeking clean
4 energy careers. As such, the support of the New
5 York Power Authority has helped Northland advance
6 our mission to provide a growing pool of skilled
7 workers available to the region's manufacturing
8 sector and energy sectors.

9 This support has contributed to over 450
10 graduates from Northland Workforce Training Center
11 adding more than \$42 million in wages back into
12 the regional economy and having a total economic
13 impact of \$84 million.

14 We support this plan. Thank you.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
16 speaker is Mark Laurrie. Mark.

17 MARK LAURRIE: Good morning. I am Mark
18 Laurrie. I'm the Superintendent of Schools in the
19 City School District of Niagara Falls, and I'm
20 here today to represent 7,000 students, 1500 staff
21 members, and a nine-member board of education.

22 I begin by thanking you for the plan and
23 thanking you for the staff here in this facility.
24 The outreach and external communications that this
25 organization has already done for our school

1 district, I want you to know you're a partner with
2 the school district, and we would consider you
3 another one of our campuses because of your
4 external relationship team.

5 I would like to talk to you about the
6 workforce development plan that was a part of the
7 presentation earlier, and how very, very important
8 it is. But it has already started. This isn't
9 something new. It's already started because NYPA
10 and your team have already been in our schools.
11 And we appreciate that, so our thanks is the first
12 thing we want to say.

13 Two projects that we've worked on very much
14 in our school district. One is a program called
15 PTECH. We are one of the -- we are the only
16 school district in New York State that has two
17 PTECH plans.

18 Our first PTECH plan is in industrial
19 manufacturing, and people from this organization
20 sit on our advisory board and sit and help guide
21 the way the curriculum is being shaped at Niagara
22 Falls High School. I like to think that we are
23 Northlands North in this community because our
24 premise has been that every student isn't meant to
25 go to college, but every student needs to come out

1 of that high school with a certificate or a
2 saleable skill to have a soft handoff into a
3 career. Not a job, a career.

4 And with their current involvement, NYPA
5 has already started that as being a leading
6 advisor. They've taken internships. They've
7 taken interns. And our next phase of this is to
8 bring it down to third and fourth graders, where
9 this kind of conversation really needs to start.

10 On top of that, I would like to tell you
11 and ask you to extend your plan, something that
12 was shared in the presentation. I'm pleased to
13 tell you that the Niagara Falls School District
14 will be the first expansion site for Say Yes
15 Buffalo.

16 Beginning in September, you'll hear about
17 Say Yes Niagara Falls. And the two major
18 hallmarks of the Say Yes we're bringing to Niagara
19 Falls, are (inaudible) scholarship funds, where we
20 can see a great partnership and financial support,
21 as well as apprenticeships, which we are going to
22 increase tenfold with our students.

23 So, I want to be here to express -- first
24 of all, our appreciation for what has already been
25 done for the school district and the 7,000

1 children and the potential for what can be done
2 through this plan, which I think really hits the
3 mark square on the head.

4 So, I'm asking that you continue moving
5 this forward and that you continue to partner with
6 our school district and others.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Mark.

8 MARK LAURRIE: A little biased toward
9 Niagara Falls. That's all. Thank you.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
11 speaker is Allen Blair. Allen?

12 ALLEN BLAIR: The good news is I thought I
13 only had two minutes, so I can talk slowly. I
14 want to start by acknowledging that there's good
15 in this plan. There's a fair amount of stuff here
16 for labor. Labor provisions. I like that.

17 There's also a fair amount of provisions
18 for disadvantaged communities. And I like that.
19 Nevertheless, I'm here. My name is Allen Blair.
20 I'm with New Yorker News. (Phonetic). And I'm
21 here to advocate for actually accelerating the
22 building of renewable public power. And there are
23 two reasons for that: First, to meet our climate
24 goals. The Build Public Renewables Act directs
25 the New York Power Authority to build enough

1 reliable renewable power generation to ensure we
2 meet the Climate Act target of 70 percent
3 renewable electricity by 2030.

4 The 3.5 gigawatts this draft plan proposes
5 on top of private renewable sources comes nowhere
6 close to what we need to meet that goal.

7 My understanding is that the -- NYPA, in
8 its own reports, acknowledges that current
9 projections get us only to 44 percent renewables
10 by 2030. Clearly, this draft proposal does not
11 satisfy state law. What we really need for
12 Climate Act compliance is more -- up to 15
13 gigawatts of renewable public power.

14 My second reason is health. As a primary
15 care physician, I'm way too used to seeing people
16 suffer needlessly from neighborhood pollution, and
17 I want to see it get better.

18 The good news is that removing our
19 polluting power plants is a great way to deal with
20 local health problems because the co-pollutant
21 damages are local. Downstate, peaker plants cause
22 documented health damage in surrounding
23 neighborhoods and would be low-hanging fruit for
24 removal with a robust public renewables build-out
25 as is also in the Build Public Renewables Act.

1 Take out a peaker plant, and neighborhood
2 health improves immediately, no matter what the
3 rest of the world does. Emergency visits for
4 asthma at \$2,500 a pop drop immediately. Work
5 days lost to respiratory illness drop immediately.
6 Within two years, deaths from heart disease drop.
7 Within 10 years, deaths from emphysema and cancer
8 drop.

9 As I see it, replacing polluted power
10 plants with renewables is a moral imperative. We
11 owe it to the health of our citizens.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Allen.

13 Our next speaker is Kory Schuler. Kory?

14 KORY SCHULER: Good morning. My name is
15 Kory Schuler. I'm the President and CEO of the
16 Niagara USA Chamber of Commerce.

17 On behalf of the Niagara USA Chamber, I'm
18 pleased to submit a letter of conditional support
19 to the New York Power Authority's Renewable Draft
20 Strategic Plan.

21 We commend NYPA for its focus on leveraging
22 Western New York's natural energy advantages to
23 drive economic growth through renewable energy
24 projects while maintaining reliable and affordable
25 energy options.

1 Since their re-licensing, they've been good
2 stewards of the community, funding many projects
3 that have been transformative for the region.

4 The Chamber fully supports advancing
5 renewables in ways that align with our region's
6 development goals, sustaining support for local
7 businesses and residents.

8 A few of the highlights we would like to
9 point out that we support in the plan: Our
10 workforce development and community investment,
11 hydropower as a fundamental resource, and focusing
12 on community engagement and transparency.

13 With that said, we do have reservations on
14 other parts of the plan, including specific
15 reservations, including highlighting mandated
16 compliance with CLCPA goals, and reliability
17 concerns with natural gas phase-out.

18 The Niagara USA Chamber and the New York
19 Power Authority have been good partners for many
20 years, and we continue to do so. The Niagara USA
21 Chamber remains committed to collaborating with
22 NYPA to achieve energy progress that benefits both
23 environmental and economic concerns.

24 We are honored to be the bridge between
25 NYPA, and the business community and the residents

1 to make sure that this plan is implemented and
2 implemented correctly.

3 To the New York Power Authority, we would
4 like to say thank you for your dedication to
5 fostering a sustainable energy future for New
6 York. Thank you.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Kory.

8 Our next speaker is ZhiTing Phau.

9 ZHITING PHAU: Good morning, everyone. Hi,
10 my name is ZhiTing Phau. I'm with the Buffalo
11 Olmsted Parks Conservancy and the Director of
12 Engagement and Inclusion. And the mission of the
13 Olmsted Parks Conservancy is to steward Buffalo's
14 historic park and parkway system to welcome and
15 benefit all.

16 We have a public-private partnership with
17 the City of Buffalo, and the (inaudible) Not for
18 Profit that stewards the Olmsted Park System in
19 the City. And we're incredibly grateful to the
20 Buffalo and Erie County Greenway Fund Standing
21 Committee to NYPA for all of the support that
22 we've received over the decade since 2012; over \$4
23 million have been invested in the Olmsted Park
24 systems since then.

25 Some of the projects that have benefited

1 from this funding include from north to south of
2 the Olmsted Park system and Riverside Park,
3 including the South Loop Trail, the Crowley Avenue
4 Project, Crowley Avenue Shelter Project in the
5 west side of the Olmsted Park system, Prospect
6 Park Pathways, the -- and in Front Park, the
7 shelter and the playground restoration. In
8 Delaware Park, Point of the Meadow Shelter which
9 is an ongoing project right now. Shoreline Show
10 Stabilization, as well as the Rumsey Pathway and
11 Rumsey Shelter House.

12 And in South Buffalo, the South Park
13 Clubhouse Design which is also an ongoing project
14 right now. This is just the tip of the iceberg.
15 And (inaudible) we're grateful and look forward to
16 a continuing partnership. Thank you.

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

18 This concludes our list of speakers thus
19 far. If anyone else would like to speak, please
20 see our staff at the front of the room near the
21 entrance. We will remain in the room in case
22 additional speakers arrive.

23 (Thereupon, the public hearing concluded.)

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: It is 12 o'clock. That
25 concludes our morning session. Thank you.

(End of the meeting.)

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

- - -

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
State of Florida at Large, certify that I was authorized
to and did stenographically report the foregoing
proceedings and that the transcript, page 1 through 42,
is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 12th day of November 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky,
Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

5777 Lewiston Road

Lewiston, NY 14092

November 7, 2024

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

(Evening session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Joseph Kessler, EVP and COO

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Chairman John Koelmel

Trustee Laurie Wheelock

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

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1 JOSEPH KESSLER: So, thank you, everybody,
2 for joining us today. We had a great session this
3 morning, and we're here for our second session
4 today here in Niagara.

5 My name is Joe Kessler, and I am the
6 Executive Vice President and Chief Operating
7 Officer of the New York Power Authority. So, I
8 oversee the Power Authority's power generation,
9 transmission, and commercial operations, along
10 with the New York State Canal system operations as
11 well.

12 So, we're here today because NYPA issued
13 its draft Strategic Plan on October 8, and has
14 scheduled public hearings across the state to
15 solicit input from interested parties regarding
16 this plan.

17 If someone you know is unable to be here
18 today in person, please let them know that NYPA
19 will also be hosting a virtual hearing on November
20 21st. More information is on our website, which
21 is NYPA.gov. NYPA.gov.

22 We will begin today with a brief video
23 about the New York Power Authority, followed by an
24 overview of the Strategic Plan.

25 But primarily, my colleagues and I are here

1 today to hear from you. So, after these
2 presentations, we will invite those who have
3 signed up to come to the mic and give a public
4 comment.

5 We'll begin the video -- we'll begin with a
6 video to provide an overview of New York Power
7 Authority.

8 Joe.

9 (Video played as follows:

10 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
11 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
12 the solution for New York State and its residents,
13 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
14 opportunities.

15 Through customer partnerships, energy
16 solutions, and the responsible supply of
17 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
18 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
19 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

20 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
21 serving customers in local and state governments,
22 industry, large and small businesses, and
23 nonprofit organizations.

24 The power for these customers is equal to
25 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity

1 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
2 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
3 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
4 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
5 hydropower.

6 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
7 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
8 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
9 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
10 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

11 As we bring power to customers, we also
12 actively ensure people from our host communities
13 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
14 from our clean energy economy.

15 We work on projects across the state to
16 increase energy efficiency, improve
17 infrastructure, and support economic development.

18 Our hydropower projects support more than
19 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
20 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
21 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
22 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
23 the communities we serve.

24 Our economic and community focus extends to
25 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became

1 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
2 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
3 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
4 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
5 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
6 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
7 from around the world.

8 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
9 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
10 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
11 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
12 years to come.

13 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
14 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
15 energy deployment and support other state
16 priorities. This expanded authority will
17 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
18 New York State, support expanded workforce
19 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
20 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
21 Energy Access and Community Health Program to
22 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
23 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned
24 utilities.

25 Additionally, we will lead the state's

1 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
2 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
3 production at our small natural gas power plants
4 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
5 certain reliability and environmental conditions
6 are met.

7 We are also developing action plans to
8 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
9 carbon-emitting facilities.

10 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
11 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
12 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
13 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
14 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
15 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
16 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
17 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

18 (End of video.)

19 JOSEPH KESSLER: Thanks, Joe.

20 So, as you saw, NYPA is the largest state
21 public power organization in the nation. We
22 operate 17 generating facilities and over 1500
23 circuit miles of transmission.

24 More than 80 percent of the electricity
25 NYPA produces is clean, renewable hydropower, like

1 we generate right here in Niagara. And we believe
2 we are in a unique position to do even more to
3 advance the state's full energy goals.

4 As NYPA builds, owns, and operates new
5 renewable projects, we need to have the electric
6 grid that you connect to. Not one that's clogged
7 with bottlenecks that prevent clean energy from
8 getting to where it needs to go.

9 That's why NYPA, led by members of my team,
10 is pursuing the most ambitious transformation of
11 New York's grid in more than 40 years. And the
12 state is implementing new procedures to ensure
13 transmission can be sited, connected, and built.

14 As you heard, NYPA owns one-third of the
15 State's high-voltage transmission, and we continue
16 to make major improvements to build a far more
17 flexible 21st century electric grid with
18 significantly greater access to a mix of
19 carbon-free resources.

20 And we also know that a modernized grid
21 will be much more resilient. That's all part of
22 the work we're doing today to support the projects
23 of tomorrow.

24 So, over the past couple of years, NYPA has
25 launched a variety of public engagement pathways

1 to inform the foundation for building new
2 renewable resources as authorized by last year's
3 Enacted State Budget.

4 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
5 build renewables subject to a Strategic Plan which
6 must be approved by its trustees -- and we have
7 two of our trustees here, by the way. We have
8 Laurie Wheelock and our chairman, John Koelmel.

9 Followed by the public comment period, and
10 at least three public hearings, we felt it was
11 important to have more than that to hear more from
12 you.

13 Like we did in the 2023 and 2024 conferral
14 processes, we welcome public engagement and
15 feedback as we shape the Strategic Plan to build
16 more renewables in New York State.

17 I know many of you came to speak about the
18 plan and I will now turn the mic over to Vennela
19 Yadhati to give a brief overview of this Strategic
20 Plan, and NYPA's work to expand renewable
21 development, connect community members, and with
22 job opportunities in the clean energy sector, and
23 advance Governor Hochul's climate action agenda.
24 So, I'll turn it over to Vennela.

25 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Joe. And I'm

1 going to come into the light as well. (Inaudible)
2 we are all trying to do here, right? (Inaudible).

3 Good evening, everyone. I'm Vennela
4 Yadhati and I'm the Vice President for NYPA's
5 Renewable Project Development, and I'm leading the
6 efforts to develop renewable generation projects
7 and energy storage products across the state.

8 We're in the middle of what could be called
9 the most significant era with a 93-year history of
10 the New York Power Authority.

11 Last May, as part of the 2023 and '24
12 Enacted State Budget, NYPA received a new expanded
13 authority of new capabilities and
14 responsibilities, and more opportunities for us to
15 continue to further serve New Yorkers in the clean
16 energy space.

17 What does that mean? Let me explain.
18 First, the expanding authority gave NYPA the
19 ability to build and operate renewable generation
20 projects, such as solar, wind, and battery energy
21 storage systems, to help the state achieve its
22 bold goals that it has set for itself in the
23 Climate Act.

24 My team at NYPA, who are a few of them are
25 here today, has identified a first tranche of 40

1 projects as part of this planning and that's
2 across every region in the state, and representing
3 a total capacity exceeding 3.5 gigawatts.

4 These projects are just the beginning of
5 our commitment to expand our portfolio of
6 delivering clean, reliable energy to every corner
7 of New York.

8 Right now, NYPA is doing full due diligence
9 on each project to determine whether or not they
10 are the best fit for New Yorkers.

11 We want to ensure these projects truly
12 benefit our communities and, therefore, belong in
13 NYPA's renewable energy portfolio.

14 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's
15 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment
16 in New York. We also want to explore meaningful
17 partnerships to support the state's equitable, and
18 efficient, and effective transition to a clean
19 energy future.

20 This first tranche includes a mix of NYPA's
21 own self-developed projects (inaudible) and
22 initiatives where we will be partnering with
23 private companies to combine our complementary
24 skills and strengths to jointly develop,
25 construct, own, and operate these renewable energy

1 projects.

2 Included in this first bunch -- also
3 includes a variety of sites, (inaudible)
4 large-scale which is the predominant portion of
5 the projects that you see here on the map. And
6 small distributed scale projects. And more
7 importantly, we'll be calling in-community
8 projects that we're actually working with
9 communities that are tangible, creative, and touch
10 and feel these products.

11 It includes a variety of technologies as
12 well, like the solar PV, wind, battery energy
13 storage systems. And it involves a variety of
14 locations and site conditions.

15 Half of our greenfield portfolio includes
16 causes (inaudible) to repurpose former landfills,
17 brownfields, and closed correctional facilities
18 for advancing renewable generation. Browning and
19 green is what we call it here.

20 We are collaborating with our sister
21 agencies and NYPA's (inaudible) customers that,
22 including local governments, to identify more such
23 exciting opportunities.

24 So far, we've pre-qualified a stable of
25 more than 85 developers and investors for the

1 private sector, that we can collaborate to build
2 this initial tranche and future ones. NYPA's role
3 and goal is not to crowd out the private sector
4 but to work together, leveraging our strengths to
5 build more renewables and help the state achieve
6 its clean energy goals.

7 By maintaining majority ownership and
8 cooperating strategically, NYPA can stretch our
9 finances further and accelerate this transition to
10 clean energy.

11 As described in this Strategic Plan, NYPA
12 has not received any state funding to build
13 new-generation products. Instead, we are
14 self-funding these efforts, along with other
15 critical commitments to the CLCPA, such as
16 transmission development, and doing the clean
17 energy workforce, such as through NYPA's own
18 revenues.

19 Given these constraints, a balanced
20 approach is essential to bring more renewable
21 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
22 offer the highest returns.

23 Simply put, this would help ensure we can
24 reduce costs for ratepayers and maximize the
25 impact of every dollar we spend. And there is

1 more to come. This is only the first tranche in
2 the first strategy plan we have published. This
3 plan itself is renewable. That is, a plan we
4 intend to regularly update as we add more causes
5 for consideration by the public and NYPA's Board
6 of Trustees.

7 Part of preparing to release this draft
8 plan -- as I dropped my notes, that was a part of
9 the preparation, actually -- part of preparing to
10 release this draft plan, we were making sure that
11 NYPA has the right tools and staff to (inaudible)
12 to support. This includes having the expertise to
13 make sure the proposed products meet technical,
14 economic, environmental, and, more importantly,
15 environmental justice needs across the state.

16 In the past 18 months, we have established
17 a new business line and new business structures
18 and (inaudible) key personnel, like my team, and
19 as (inaudible) as I mentioned, are here today.

20 We have obtained approval from our Board of
21 Trustees to form a renewables subsidiary. And we
22 have also gained approval for an initial capital
23 allocation of \$100 million for developing and
24 gathering other necessary resources to advance
25 these first-tranche projects.

1 We continue to source and solicit
2 additional product opportunities to open to our
3 pipeline, and I'm confident that my work will
4 continue to identify the same level of meaningful
5 projects as it expands and grows its pipeline for
6 future tranches of products.

7 And these products aren't being built in a
8 silo. They're part of a holistic approach to
9 renewable development that supports environmental
10 justice, workforce development, and affordability.

11 How are we doing it? You see, the '23 and
12 '24 Enacted State Budget also gave NYPA the
13 ability to establish the Renewable Energy Access
14 and Community Help Program, our REACH program, and
15 use a portion of the revenues that we generate
16 from these projects to support low- and
17 moderate-income households, the biggest advantage
18 communities in the form of electric utility bill
19 credits.

20 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
21 Service Commission has formally accepted our
22 application to establish the REACH program. Once
23 NYPA's renewable (inaudible) are online and
24 generating revenue, and NYPA gathers funds from
25 available sources, money will be available to flow

1 to (inaudible) customers, New Yorkers, through the
2 process set forth by the PSE order. While it's
3 still under development, REACH will appear as
4 automatic bill credits alongside the Energy
5 Affordability Program and the Statewide Solar for
6 All program.

7 And NYPA also will invest up to \$21 million
8 annually in collaboration with the New York State
9 Department of Labor to create jobs and provide
10 workforce training for people who want to work in
11 the clean energy industry.

12 Through this partnership, we've already
13 awarded \$12.5 million just this fiscal year in
14 funding for opportunities for New Yorkers,
15 including young people from Buffalo to New York,
16 with programs like the Say Yes Buffalo Youth
17 Apprenticeship Program and the Renaissance
18 Technical Institute in New York City, and others
19 from disadvantaged communities across the state to
20 pursue good-paying clean energy jobs.

21 And when we go to workforce development on
22 the (inaudible) themselves, NYPA will require a
23 project labor agreement for each and every
24 renewable product, generating project, and it will
25 require all our contractors and subcontractors

1 associated with the project development work to
2 utilize apprenticeship programs and agreements.
3 So, most learning on this first project --
4 projects can be seasoned veterans for future
5 renewable energy projects that NYPA is going to
6 build.

7 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
8 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation of our
9 small natural gas power peaker -- small natural
10 gas power plants in New York City and Long Island
11 by 2030, as long as, of course, the reliability
12 and environmental conditions are met.

13 To this end, we're actively exploring
14 strategies to meet this commitment while
15 considering grid reliability and air quality
16 impacts, including the potential for deploying
17 (inaudible) energy storage systems at multi-sites.
18 We're in discussions with several developers about
19 energy storage and other infrastructure solutions
20 to transform these sites while also preserving the
21 grid reliability that's going to come from that.

22 In conclusion, I know I just shared a long
23 list of actions we have taken to date and continue
24 to work on as part of the new authority. As a
25 reminder, the draft of our plan is on our website,

1 nypa.gov/renewables. And I encourage all of you
2 to please read through it, and that's because I
3 helped write it.

4 The draft plan spells out our approach to
5 renewables and our efforts to identify the
6 products and partnerships NYPA aims to pursue.
7 This legislation represents a significant increase
8 in NYPA's role in the energy sector, bringing us
9 back to our roots revolutionizing the state's
10 threat to benefit all New Yorkers.

11 Thank you again for taking the time to come
12 today to learn more, and give your comments and
13 feedback about this plan. We are here to listen
14 from you.

15 Joe, back to you.

16 JOSEPH KESSLER: Thanks, Vennela. She made
17 me read it.

18 So, with that, I want to remind everybody
19 that the law requires NYPA to solicit public
20 comment and to hold a minimum of three public
21 hearings in regionally diverse areas of the state
22 on the draft plan that Vennela just described.

23 Lindsay Kryzak, our Vice President of the
24 Department of Communications, will act as our
25 timekeeper. And so, those who signed up to speak

1 tonight, she will call up, and the speakers will
2 be given three minutes today.

3 If anyone needs a translator, please alert
4 the NYPA staff at the sign-in table. We'll take
5 care of that the best we can.

6 We recognize some of you have longer
7 comments than others. If you run out of time, you
8 can submit your full comments on our website or
9 email it directly to
10 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. If you can't
11 remember that, we got QR codes at the sign-in
12 table. We'll make that even easier.

13 The feedback you have tonight will be
14 transcribed and compiled in written comments,
15 which must be considered and incorporated in the
16 final Strategic Plan and be published on NYPA's
17 website and submitted to the Governor and the
18 legislator by January 31st of 2025.

19 So, again, thank you, everybody, for
20 joining us this evening. I will now turn the mic
21 over to Lindsay to start facilitating. Thank you.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Joe.

23 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
24 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
25 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or

1 required by applicable law, regulation, or order
2 and may be made available in full or in part in
3 the public record in accordance with the agency's
4 rules.

5 As Joe noted, each member of the public
6 will be given three minutes to address NYPA
7 leadership today, and additional comments can be
8 shared on our website or via the email
9 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

10 Our first speaker is Assemblyman Marienllo.

11 Assemblyman Marienllo?

12 ANGELO MARIENLLO: Thank you. Good
13 evening. Chairman Koelmel, Trustee Wheelock, and
14 other leadership of the New York Power Authority.
15 My name is Angelo Morinello, and it has been my
16 privilege since 2016 to represent the 145th State
17 Assembly District, which includes the Niagara
18 Power Project. But more importantly, it includes
19 the City of Niagara Falls and the Town of
20 Lewiston.

21 I think we can agree that this power plant
22 is a crown jewel among the assets of NYPA. I will
23 always be a proponent of all the great benefits it
24 offers the state, and in particular, Western New
25 York.

1 And I think you know I will never be a shy
2 voice, and strongly advocating for those benefits
3 and opportunities for my district. We are here
4 today to specifically address the draft renewable
5 Strategic Plan as required in the 2023-2024 budget
6 legislation. It amended the Power Authority Act
7 and granted NYPA new ability to plan, develop, and
8 build new renewable energy-generating projects.
9 This supports the state's renewable energy goals.

10 The state has often called upon NYPA to
11 achieve big things, nothing bigger than the
12 construction of the Niagara Power Project, solving
13 an energy crisis in the late 1950s. And I was
14 there, and I heard it fall in.

15 Today, we again have a need for large
16 amounts of renewable energy in a relatively short
17 period of time. Again, we are counting on NYPA to
18 get done, this time in partnership with other
19 renewable energy developers.

20 Those partnerships make sense financially
21 and will allow NYPA to use its resources to build
22 as much renewable energy as possible.

23 I applaud the work you have done in the
24 last 18 months to ramp up your capacity to
25 establish a new department. It is my

1 understanding that you have pre-qualified at least
2 80 developers and investors. The plan so far has
3 set aside resources for 40 renewable projects that
4 touch every region of the state, representing a
5 total pipeline capacity of 3.5 gigawatts.

6 I am particularly appreciative of the
7 Renewable Energy Access and Community Health or
8 REACH program that authorizes NYPA to use a
9 portion of the revenues generated from new
10 renewable energy profits -- projects to benefit
11 low- or moderate-income households in
12 disadvantaged communities through entire --
13 through electric utility bill credits.

14 This area fits that model, and I would
15 trust that there will be a great focus on the
16 Niagara Falls region and its disadvantaged
17 community.

18 Following up on its support of the
19 successful Northland Workforce Training Center,
20 NYPA will invest another \$25 million annually in
21 workforce training through the New York State
22 Department of Labor. That's usually important to
23 ensure we have the workers to build and maintain
24 these new facilities.

25 We know that all of this is still just a

1 start and that we can expect continued evaluation
2 of solar, wind, and battery storage projects.
3 Carefully consider their economics, community
4 impacts, and real estate considerations. A lot of
5 the things are underway, and we need to move
6 expeditiously, but I ask that you move cautiously.

7 Many times, if you move too quickly, you
8 don't get it right. And the goals that have been
9 established may be a little too aggressive to
10 attain them completely. So, I ask that that be in
11 consideration, along with the cost to the
12 taxpayers of New York.

13 However, I caution NYPA to give
14 constituents a chance to learn about and voice
15 their opinions about any new projects. The
16 emergence of green and renewable energy sources is
17 imperative for the future of our state's
18 environment and economy. But each project comes
19 with impacts on taxpayers and local residents, and
20 must be considered at the local level.

21 I thank you for holding these public
22 hearings across the state on the draft plan and
23 trust that it won't be the only time that state
24 residents have the opportunity for their voices to
25 be heard. And I respectfully request, that when

1 necessary, I have the opportunity to have further
2 discussions.

3 Thank you very much for being here. Thank
4 you for your attention. And thank you for holding
5 this in the jewel of NYPA. Thank you again.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
7 speaker is Earl Wells. Earl.

8 EARL WELLS: Good evening. I'm Earl Wells
9 of e3communications, and I represent Power for
10 Economic Prosperity, or PEP, which is a coalition
11 of energy-intensive manufacturing companies that
12 receive low-cost hydropower from the Niagara Power
13 Project. PEP is a subset of over 125 businesses
14 within the 30-mile radius of the NYPA Power
15 Project, in which NYPA supplies low-cost
16 hydropower.

17 Positive impacts of that hydropower in the
18 Western New York economy cannot be overstated.
19 The companies that comprise PEP have a significant
20 economic impact in the communities where they are
21 located.

22 PEP-member companies that receive low-cost
23 hydropower have invested hundreds of millions of
24 dollars in their Buffalo and Niagara region
25 manufacturing facilities, including technologies

1 and equipment, to continue lowering emissions.
2 Combined, PEP-member companies employ
3 approximately 7500 people, the majority of which
4 are members of various labor unions.

5 The estimated annual payroll of PEP-member
6 companies is \$445 million annually. PEP-member
7 companies expect to continue to invest hundreds of
8 millions of dollars in these facilities over the
9 next five years based on traditional planning
10 horizons.

11 However, increasing cost burdens on Western
12 New York businesses will have material impacts on
13 future investment decisions. PEP members, many of
14 whom have been NYPA customers for decades, were
15 relying on NYPA for low-cost hydropower to keep
16 their plants operating in Western New York.

17 The current uncertainty due to the changing
18 regulatory landscape in New York is already
19 affecting decisions on future capital investments
20 at PEP members facilities. PEP members are not at
21 all opposed to NYPA playing an important role in
22 the state's pursuit of renewable energy goals as
23 long as the obligations imposed on NYPA are
24 reasonable as determined by the NYPA Board of
25 Trustees and do not interfere with NYPA's

1 essential role as a driver of economic development
2 and protector of jobs in New York.

3 In the draft Strategic Plan, NYPA correctly
4 recognizes that the cost for building renewable
5 energy projects cannot jeopardize NYPA's essential
6 role as an economic development engine in New
7 York. NYPA has an obligation to provide low-cost,
8 reliable power, in New York businesses, such as
9 PEP members, in exchange for commitments from
10 those businesses to maintain family-sustaining
11 jobs in New York.

12 Accordingly, PEP members support efforts to
13 shield NYPA from adverse financial consequences to
14 protect NYPA's ability to fulfill its existing
15 responsibilities.

16 Specifically, PEP appreciates NYPA's
17 efforts to create a wholly-owned subsidiary to
18 bring in more external capital and limit risks to
19 NYPA customers.

20 Upon information and belief, the direct
21 Strategic Plan seeks to optimize NYPA's proposed
22 investments and renewable energy projects to
23 minimize risk through careful project selection,
24 maximize returns for ratepayers, and seek other
25 sources of funding, including public-private

1 partnerships and federal programs.

2 Moving forward, we ask to take into
3 consideration the cost and feasibility of each
4 proposed project, preserve system reliability, and
5 maintain the competitive advantage of low-cost
6 hydropower that keeps the manufacturing sector in
7 Western New York viable.

8 In further developing and refining this
9 plan, we hope that NYPA continues to do everything
10 possible not to impact the cost of hydropower for
11 its economic customers. We applaud that NYPA has
12 come into a very public process as it puts
13 together a plan to fulfill its legislative
14 obligations under the Build Public Renewables Act.
15 PEP appreciates the opportunity to provide --

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Earl.

17 EARL WELLS: -- we would be willing to
18 engage in any follow-up discussion. Thank you.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
20 speaker is Jack Nestler. Jack.

21 JACK NESLER: Hi, my name is Jack Nesler.
22 I am a member of the ownership group at Tecmotiv
23 (USA), which is a business right here in Niagara
24 Falls, literally right down the street.

25 We recently partnered with NYPA to pursue

1 an award through the Western New York Development
2 Fund to help purchase our building, which we had
3 previously been renting and had a great
4 partnership and working relationship with NYPA to
5 make that happen, which will allow us -- which
6 allowed us to not only buy the building but will
7 allow us to do a number of improvements.

8 We -- what the current Strategic Plan does
9 not necessarily overlap with anything we're doing
10 as we continue to expand, and as a customer of
11 NYPA, we're certainly, you know, would be thrilled
12 to partner in the future with NYPA for any
13 public-private partnerships that NYPA is involved
14 with related to renewables.

15 So, I'm just here to thank NYPA for their
16 partnership with us and their help in accessing
17 some funds that will allow us to keep jobs in
18 Western New York and continue to grow. Thank you.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jack. Our next
20 speaker is Charley Bowman. Charley.

21 CHARLEY BOWMAN: Thanks. I -- I asked NYPA
22 to think outside the box when suggesting projects
23 for solar and wind. For example, you have this
24 wonderful pump storage facility out back here, and
25 it's open to the sun. And it's used by local

1 Indigenous people for fishing, which is great.
2 And I was thinking many years ago that it should
3 be covered with solar panels. And, you know,
4 they're able to take the changes of the height of
5 that water level as it goes up and down
6 periodically, I guess. I don't know. I've lost
7 track.

8 And there are roughly 1500 acres available,
9 maybe perhaps more. And You can get through 354
10 megawatts of solar out of that. It would add
11 wonderfully to this -- the output of this
12 wonderful power project.

13 And the other thing, I ask that you prompt
14 the (inaudible) throughway authority to put solar
15 canopies on all the parking areas along the
16 throughway between New York City and Buffalo. We
17 have all these asphalt and concrete parking areas
18 that are soaking up the heat during the day, and
19 releasing at night, creating a heat island.

20 And, you know, a solar canopy over that
21 would reduce that greatly and add to the renewable
22 energy output, perhaps powering the entire --
23 stopping area on the throughway, and perhaps with
24 batteries on that.

25 So, this -- thinking outside the box here.

1 And the third thing is the waste disposal areas
2 that are around Buffalo and the rest of the state,
3 and I think there's something like 100,000 acres,
4 something like that. And to look at each one for
5 solar capability. I'm thinking of one near the
6 airport in Buffalo. That's a vacant field, no
7 trees or anything, that's just sitting there not
8 doing anything. So, it would be wonderful to have
9 solar panels on that.

10 So, I ask you to encourage the local solar
11 contractors around the state to -- and for you to
12 fund that, to put solar on all these areas here.
13 And that was my main comment. So thank you.
14 Thank you very much.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you very much,
16 Charley.

17 Our next speaker is Mark Gallo. Mark.

18 MARK GALLO: Hello. Thank you. My name is
19 Mark Gallo. I'm a professor at Niagara
20 University. So, in a way, I guess I should say,
21 Hello, neighbor. How are you, neighbors?

22 I would like to start by saying, instead of
23 using the term NIMBY, I would almost like to use
24 IMBY, that it's in my backyard. And as such, I
25 think we could make some really great shared

1 campus initiatives that can happen. And I'm going
2 to explain the whole reason why I think that would
3 be really useful. And I think that we already do
4 a lot of collaborative efforts in this area. I
5 mean, I really do thank the Power Authority for
6 that, but I think that we can enhance and maybe
7 expand them. We start to think, oh, no, it's just
8 about power, but something else I was going to
9 mention in a minute; it's just brain power.

10 So, when I look at this, one of the things
11 that I would like to see happen is me being from
12 the education sector is to really think about it
13 from that perspective. Not really the same as
14 creative a grade, but rather more of cradle the
15 job. And so, we can start with science camps,
16 much more enhanced science camps for students that
17 are in middle school, and then start with the NYPA
18 (inaudible) BOCES to build career pathways for
19 these individuals.

20 And during these times, to really start
21 mentoring with individuals that work at NYPA or in
22 the other local industries. I've heard from
23 Tecmotiv here, but I'm sure there's many, many
24 other industries in this area that benefit from
25 NYPA.

1 From that, go on to me at Niagara
2 University, or at SUNY, Niagara, and start to
3 envision, I think, bigger and better sorts of
4 projects, like certificate programs, internships,
5 co-ops, fellowships, other things like that, in
6 your entire -- not just this region, but within
7 everything that NYPA does.

8 And I think that that would be really great
9 because you would be doing something for the
10 people that are here. And you did mention some
11 things. You said, (inaudible) Say Yes to Buffalo.
12 But Buffalo is a far reach from Niagara, and
13 that's something that I think sometimes gets
14 forgotten.

15 People won't go across that Grand Island
16 Bridge, and it's a big distance for some of us.,
17 not just in miles, but in ability to do these
18 things.

19 So, why should we do this? I think if we
20 do this, these people, that if they get more
21 education here, they're going to stay here. So, I
22 have some selfish reasons for that. I really want
23 to see this place develop, and I think that this
24 is one of the ways to do it.

25 I think if we partner through these

1 educational things, we're going to get one type of
2 power that I think is really important, just brain
3 power. I can't see without my glasses on, so I
4 hope I don't run out of time.

5 So, I think that one of the things that we
6 could think about is really looking at your
7 Section 2.2 a little more carefully as to how it
8 can be utilized for this region, the Niagara
9 region. And I do mean specifically, Niagara,
10 because we are impacted the most by this power
11 authority here in our region. And so, when I
12 think brain power -- I'll just give you a for
13 instance, in my own crazy mind, just like somebody
14 had said with solar on the -- on the water, how
15 about using the variability that comes in from the
16 solar to think about using hydrolytors (sic)
17 that'll keep (inaudible) from spinning up and down
18 the turbines all the time, so it's --

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you:

20 MARK GALLO: -- (inaudible). So, it's a
21 way to stabilize things in a way that would be of
22 benefit in the future. So, there's a science-like
23 -- things, I think, like could come from these
24 sorts of things, too.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next

1 speaker is Paris Roselli. Paris.

2 PARIS ROSELLI: Hello. Good evening. My
3 name is Paris Roselli. I'm representing the
4 Lipsey Architecture Center in Buffalo. In 2024,
5 the Richardson Architecture Center, which is under
6 the name of Lipsey Architecture Center Buffalo,
7 received from the New York Power Authority a
8 generous award of about \$1.7 million from the
9 Western New York Power Proceeds Funds.

10 The funds are going to be used to support a
11 \$21 million visitor center expansion project,
12 which will increase tourism and economic benefits
13 to the region. The Architecture Center, which is
14 located on the Richardson Olmsted Campus in
15 Buffalo, is developing a permanent gallery, and
16 event space, and visitor center by rehabilitating
17 one of the historic buildings on the campus. And
18 the Power Proceeds funds will support that
19 construction of an addition, as well as
20 rehabilitating a 150-year-old building.

21 The mission of the Architecture Center is
22 really to serve as a gathering place to tranche
23 ideas in architecture, landscape, design, and
24 urban planning. And it is also meant as a space
25 to drive regional visitor spending and augment its

1 interest in heritage tourism throughout Western
2 New York.

3 So, just for context, the Visit Buffalo
4 Niagara, identified visits to historic sites among
5 two of the top-five activities of the county's
6 overnight visitors. They drove about \$2.2 billion
7 in spending. We've identified Heritage Tours and
8 Driving as a secondary tourist goal, about \$658
9 million in revenues coming to the area because
10 people stay longer, they go to restaurants, they
11 buy tickets.

12 And our goal through the Architecture
13 Center and these funds that we've received will be
14 to drive about a 3-percent per annum increase, so
15 about \$15 million driving the revenue for the
16 community and sustaining jobs.

17 The reason I bring it up this evening is
18 with the monies that we received from the Western
19 New York Power Proceeds Fund, we're contributing
20 to the larger economic redevelopment of Western
21 New York. We're saving historic buildings. We're
22 not bulldozing them. And we're driving
23 small-family businesses and activities while
24 highlighting the heritage tourism.

25 So, this contribution is fantastic. We at

1 the LACB, the Lipsey Architecture Center, are
2 proponents of NYPA's continued commitment to
3 communities through its distribution of power
4 proceeds here, the Economic Development Awards,
5 and supporting organizations like ours, and by
6 extension, the Strategic Plan and the community
7 feedback, we're in full support. So, thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Paris.

9 Our next speaker is Richard Dread.

10 Richard.

11 RICHARD DREAD: Well, sorry for the delay.
12 As you said, my name is Richard Dread. I had an
13 opportunity before I got here, to look at this and
14 public power (inaudible) and I have some
15 questions.

16 My family is from Niagara Falls, around
17 10th and East Falls Street. I was born and raised
18 in Buffalo.

19 And in those areas, we've been having
20 problems as far as different sicknesses and things
21 like that. So, when I hear proposals to
22 brownfields, and things like that, it concerns me
23 because the history of brownfields, you're
24 building on them, whether it's solar or whatever,
25 it never cleans up anything. They just covered a

1 hot mess. So, the stuff leaks back up eventually,
2 and people get affected by it. So that's one of
3 the concerns of mine.

4 Secondly, I saw here about the schools.
5 They talk about the schools they want to do solar.
6 And my question is: You know, at this part of the
7 state, it's cold, so when it's not sun, what
8 alternative things they're going to have to supply
9 the school with heat and lights, and stuff like
10 that? So, that's another question I have.

11 Another concern I have is as far as they
12 talk about so many jobs, my history -- I'm 75
13 years old. They promised a lot of jobs and they
14 don't come through. Even the jobs they have,
15 we're talking about temporary agencies, permanent
16 jobs.

17 One more thing: They talk about a
18 timeline; and they mention it in this report,
19 there's no timeline.

20 However, the Governor, even in this report,
21 says that they're not going to be -- they can't
22 commit to it. Now, when she's gone, this is
23 trash.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Richard. Our
25 next speaker is Melissa Hubbard. Melissa.

1 MELISSA HUBBARD: Thank you. And thank you
2 for this presentation. I really appreciated it.
3 Melissa Hubbard, as she said. I am a volunteer
4 with Clean Air Coalition of Western New York and a
5 resident of the Town of Tonawanda, just up the
6 river.

7 So, I want to frame what I'm going to say
8 by naming what I think is maybe a bit of an
9 elephant in the room, which is that, you know,
10 we've heard talk about climate goals and clean
11 energy goals, and the reason we have these goals
12 is because there is a scientific consensus that
13 humans need to stop burning fossil fuels as
14 quickly as possible. Right?

15 Maybe that goes without saying in a room
16 like this, but I think it's worth saying in this
17 context because I'm not sure that I would describe
18 the goals here as bold in terms of what needs to
19 happen.

20 I do understand that they're bold in terms
21 because of the scope of work that is being
22 undertaken here, and I do appreciate that. But
23 Clean Air would like to advocate to expand the
24 goal here. Instead of having publicly-owned
25 renewable energy accounting for 3.5 gigawatts on

1 our system, we would like to see a goal of 15
2 gigawatts.

3 And as long as we're expanding the scope of
4 the project, I do have specific suggestions, as
5 some other speakers have. As I said, I come from
6 the Town of Tonawanda. Our waterfront is entirely
7 industrial, and we have many brownfields -- or
8 several brownfields in Tonawanda that are
9 currently in various stages of being cleaned up,
10 and hopefully at some point redeveloped, to where
11 they could support jobs again, clean jobs, unlike
12 the jobs that were previously there.

13 Specifically, I'm thinking about the
14 Tonawanda Cook site and the Huntley Power Plant
15 site, both of which, again, are currently in
16 stages of being cleaned up. We're very concerned
17 that because of the location of these sites,
18 because of their access to both power and water,
19 that they will be targeted for development for AI
20 or cryptocurrency server farms.

21 We already know that's been a problem here
22 in Niagara Falls. We don't want to see these
23 moving into Tonawanda. They drain power. They
24 burn the fossil fuels that we shouldn't be
25 burning. Right? They're an enormous problem that

1 way. And they do not create jobs. We don't want
2 to see our riverfront land used for computers that
3 are just burning power and doing nothing for the
4 Town of Tonawanda.

5 So, those sites would be great options to
6 build renewable energy. So, we wouldn't be
7 contributing to the climate problem. We would
8 actually be addressing it. And again, we would be
9 creating better, cleaner jobs in the Town of
10 Tonawanda on our riverfront.

11 So, I will now give you all 27 seconds
12 back. Thank you.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Melissa.

14 Our next speaker is Halima Noor. Halima.

15 HALIMA NOOR: Hello. My name is Halima
16 Noor. I'm a student at Hutch Tech. I'm a senior,
17 by the way. And I've been working with PUSH
18 Buffalo on a community advisory board to basically
19 like reduce energy bills, and provide
20 representation for underrepresented communities.

21 And we've done a lot of work with educating
22 people in the community, and we're a very diverse
23 group. So, we've been talking about different
24 values we have and how we can help different
25 communities using solar energy.

1 And I also wanted to talk about why I
2 joined the Community Advisory Board. I joined
3 because my family has a lot of problems with
4 electricity bills and energy bills. And I also
5 wanted to have a voice for people who are in
6 similar situations to us.

7 So, I wanted to let NYPA know that people
8 with low income and energy insecurities -- sorry.
9 They (inaudible) we need to be represented, and
10 also I wanted to say that -- I wanted to ask some
11 questions, actually: How are you wanting to
12 partner with communities to develop energy
13 resources? And what plans do you have in place to
14 implement them?

15 And then another question I had was -- let
16 me see. I wanted to ask also -- sorry. I'm just
17 wondering -- oh, yeah. I wanted to talk about the
18 statistics, too. It says that 130,000 people in
19 Western New York are in energy-burdened
20 households. So, that's like different places,
21 different zip codes in Western New York, like in
22 the West Side or the East Side. And I also wanted
23 to decrease that burden for them, and also just
24 find a way to implement their struggles and
25 implement new solutions for them.

1 And -- yeah, that's it.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Halima.

3 Our next speaker is Bridge Rouch. Bridge.

4 BRIDGE ROUCH: Good evening. My name is
5 Bridge Rouch. I'm one of the organizers at the
6 Clean Air Coalition in Western New York. Thank
7 you for your time tonight.

8 I organize with folks from the Tonawanda
9 area, like Liz is one of my friends there. It's a
10 community that's been on the frontline of the
11 energy transition, which has also historically
12 borne a disproportionate burden of the
13 environmental and public health costs of this
14 fossil fuel-based economy that we've been in for
15 generations now.

16 So, I'm here tonight on behalf of Clean
17 Air's members to ask for a much more bolder and
18 more visionary plan, you know, that better centers
19 equity and environmental justice.

20 I have like a whole page here that I'm
21 going to try and summarize in two minutes. So,
22 currently -- we feel the current plan -- you have
23 fallen short in a few areas, as Melissa noted.
24 It's only composing right now to develop 3.5
25 gigawatts of renewable energy. That's far short

1 of what's called for by organized labor, frontline
2 and (inaudible) work communities, and New York
3 State at large.

4 It doesn't seem to be targeting vacant and
5 underutilized industrial brownfields as strongly
6 as it should be. And it's, you know, greatly
7 undershooting goals and like utilizing vacant
8 public land that is like readily available.

9 I also note that there's a little bit too
10 -- there's too little information that's available
11 in the draft report that's available to the public
12 to really engage -- that engage with this plan in
13 an informed way.

14 Very specifically, page 36 of the PDF
15 that's on the website, is pretty low resolution,
16 the map there, so it's difficult to tell like
17 where the specific projects are going to be --
18 like, you know, this first tranche of projects are
19 located. And the list of projects, you know,
20 doesn't include any addresses, or even like the
21 municipalities where these projects are going to
22 be located.

23 I would also note that it's a two-hour
24 transit ride from Downtown Buffalo to the NYPA
25 Power Business Center here. It's a fantastic

1 center, but we really need additional hearings
2 like in Downtown Buffalo, the second largest city
3 in New York, the largest in Upstate New York, to
4 make this a little more equitable.

5 Just like the -- I can see my clock ticking
6 down here. So, it's -- the big pinpoints we want
7 to like really emphasize, we want to see a goal of
8 15 gigawatts of publicly-owned renewable energy
9 projects by 2030. This is going to create 25,000
10 green-union jobs. You know, and like it's called
11 for by AFL-CIO statewide. It's called for by the
12 Building Trades Council.

13 And it would be a way of like stabilizing
14 the job markets as we're entering some pretty
15 chaotic economic seas ahead.

16 We would love to see a thermal energy
17 network, like an industrial-scale thermal energy
18 network, somewhere in NYISO Zone A. You know,
19 there's a lot of opposition to renewable energy
20 projects, especially coming from like pipefitter
21 unions. And this is an excellent way of helping
22 bridge that gap and make that community -- and
23 then bring everybody together.

24 I'm going to be real quick here.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Bridge.

1 BRIDGE ROUCH: So, we also want to
2 prioritize industrial brownfields in project
3 siting. You know, like if we see a lot of
4 opposition that comes out because of like siting
5 (inaudible) in greenfield projects.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

7 BRIDGE ROUCH: Yeah. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is David
9 Caligiuri. David.

10 DAVID CALIGIURI: Hello. My name is David
11 Caligiuri. I'm from Buffalo. I'm also a member
12 of Clean Air.

13 I just read today that 2024 is going to be
14 the warmest ever in history. So, your goal of 3.5
15 gigawatts is much too little, much too late. And
16 we just need much more renewable energy. We have
17 to stop burning the fossil fuels. We need to
18 prioritize the use of the power we do have. Our
19 infrastructure isn't there yet. You're talking
20 about building it all out; that's great.

21 But then you have things like these
22 cryptocurrency firms, and now AI. They hide
23 behind the term "data centers," but there's not
24 really data they're doing. They're just cranking
25 out numbers to generate money for the wealthy, and

1 it generates nothing with very few jobs. It takes
2 a ton of water. It takes a ton of electricity.

3 If you allow those to continue, and if you
4 let them grandfather into these old coal-burning
5 plants, if they get to play games with the
6 regulations because they're not putting it on the
7 grid, they're using it directly, that hurts
8 everybody.

9 On one of your slides, you showed
10 greenfield sites, but you didn't list any
11 brownfield sites. Why is that? How come that's
12 not part of the first wave of installations?

13 We recently did a tour of the Love Canal
14 area. Huge, huge area that nobody can ever use
15 ever again because it's so polluted. That would
16 be a perfect place to put in a solar farm and wind
17 farm.

18 Those are the things you need to do. You
19 need to -- and it needs to be done now. Pushing
20 it down the road to 2030; that's great. Six more
21 years. But it's already too late. The planet has
22 already passed a tipping point. We've already
23 passed the goal set for the Paris Climate Accord.
24 They're claiming that this year is definitely
25 going to push us over the top.

1 So, the future is pretty grim if we don't
2 get this done quickly. And it just needs to be
3 done -- again, we can't rush through and push
4 things because it will screw everything up, but we
5 just need to expand how much and how quickly you
6 can get this done. Thank you.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, David.

8 Our next speaker is Reverend Jessica
9 Glazer. Reverend Glazer.

10 REVEREND JESSICA GLAZER: Good evening,
11 everyone. I am a resident of Niagara County, and
12 I also serve a church in Amherst, New York. And a
13 few years ago, I was part of a Niagara County
14 Citizens Group, which studied the question of
15 solar and renewable sitings within Niagara County.

16 I would like to echo the talking points of
17 my neighbors at the Clean Air Coalition regarding
18 the increase to 15 gigawatts in publicly-owned
19 renewable energy by 2030. I feel that is a very
20 important change that we should consider.

21 I also would like to echo the desire to
22 site these programs on brownfields. In Niagara
23 County, in particular, there's a lot of concern
24 that there are going to be siting of these --
25 excuse me -- sites upon farmland, and the loss of

1 that farmland indefinitely to industrial zoning.
2 So, that is a major concern.

3 So, as such, I want NYPA to also consider
4 partnering with NYSERDA to do outreach to local
5 municipalities, especially in rural areas.
6 There's a lot of concern, and negative attitudes
7 towards renewables. There's a lot of
8 misinformation.

9 And it's really important for you to get
10 the record straight and help them understand what
11 kinds of laws they need to put into place in order
12 to -- not only protect the farmland and protect
13 the local economy but also embrace renewable
14 energy. And likewise, consider talking more about
15 Afrologistics, and the possibilities there.

16 I understand this desire to be cautious
17 about this transition, but the longer we take, the
18 more we incur a debt to the future.

19 I have two small children. They are two
20 and six years old, and I am very concerned about
21 their futures, so I would like to see us move more
22 quickly and in a bigger way towards renewable
23 energy. Thank you.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

25 Our next speaker is Ba Zan Lin. Ba.

1 BA ZAN LIN: Thank you for giving me this
2 opportunity to testify at this public meeting. My
3 name is Ba Zan Lin, and I'm the Associate Vice
4 President of the Community Impact Team with the
5 Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo.

6 One of the provisions of the re-licensing
7 settlement agreement with the City of Buffalo and
8 the County of Erie is for the Power Authority to
9 support the establishment of Buffalo and Erie
10 County Greenway fund with an annual \$2 million
11 payment for the life of the license beginning in
12 October 2007.

13 Our foundation has the honor to provide
14 administrative support and project management
15 assistance to the Buffalo and Erie County Greenway
16 Fund standing committee.

17 Since the inception of the Buffalo and Erie
18 County Greenway Fund, the foundation staff has
19 assisted the fund committee in administering
20 various projects in the City of Buffalo and the
21 County of Erie.

22 Today, we have assisted the committee in
23 reviewing 145 grant proposals and rewarding 104
24 projects. In all, the Buffalo and Erie County
25 Greenway Fund standing committee has provided

1 approximately 34 million to high-impact projects
2 along the Niagara River Greenway.

3 As a project manager of the Buffalo and
4 Eric County Greenway Fund, the Community
5 Foundation could attest that the Greenway projects
6 would not be anywhere close to where they are
7 without this crucial funding support from the New
8 York Power Authority. We've been able to see the
9 impact of the transformation in the City of
10 Buffalo and Eric County first-hand through walking
11 very, very close with the grantees and monitoring
12 project impact and outcomes.

13 The foundation is very appreciative to
14 learn that the plan shows how the Power Authority
15 will continue to use revenue from the new
16 renewable projects to support the communities.

17 Thank you for the commitment and support.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

19 Our next speaker is Sarah Bargnesi. Sarah.

20 SARAH BARGNESI: Hi, everyone. My name is
21 Sarah Bargnesi. I'm a citizen of Buffalo, New
22 York. I don't have too much to say, just that
23 considering the results of this election, it just
24 matters more now than ever that we see change now.

25 You know, the 2030 goal, I feel like can be

1 brought down to 2025, you know, closer so that
2 we're not just letting things pass us by. We need
3 to take opportunities now, utilize our
4 brownfields, make sure that we have cleaner energy
5 now.

6 I think the urgency needs to be stressed.
7 We need to do things now because the man that's
8 going to be in office, he does not care, and your
9 state should care. We can at least have this
10 state, you know, be protected. Thank you.

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Sarah.

12 Our next speaker is Clarke Cocker. Clarke.

13 CLARKE COCKER: Good evening. My name is
14 Clarke Cocker. I'm a staff member at People
15 United for Sustainable Housing or PUSH Buffalo.
16 I'm happy to be here tonight. Thanks for holding
17 space for us to share some of our thoughts.

18 It's -- reiterate those last points, really
19 starting yesterday, climate action will run
20 through states in this country. And so, I say
21 that to say, like PUSH Buffalo fully endorses the
22 15-gigawatt by 2030 goal. I would like to see
23 that included in the final plan.

24 The final plan needs to reach deep to
25 achieve the CLCPA's equitable investment goals of

1 a minimum of 35 to 40 percent of direct
2 investment, as measured by monetary financial
3 investments in, or directly benefiting
4 disadvantaged communities in our region.

5 As an organization, we're an affordable
6 housing developer. We're in the process of
7 developing, hopefully, a 500-kilowatt community
8 solar array in the City of Buffalo. I brought
9 some members of our community advisory board team
10 here tonight. You heard from Halima already, and
11 Richard as well.

12 You know, we're concerned with the draft
13 plan, that it lacks plans and goals around
14 community-distributed generation. And to be
15 frank, I think it wholly ignores
16 community-distributed generation. I think we're,
17 you know, encouraged that NYPA seems to be
18 interested in working with communities like ours
19 to find creative ways to deploy
20 community-distributed resources while also
21 creating union-wage jobs.

22 So, that's exciting. And I look forward to
23 -- our organization looks forward to working with
24 NYPA to think that through, but I think there
25 needs to be, you know, more thought included in

1 the final plan that speaks to a strategy that NYPA
2 could rely on to develop those resources in our
3 communities.

4 And as part of that, I think, you know, we
5 would like to see more explanation and description
6 of various co-ownership models for community-led
7 project developers. We potentially would like to
8 co-own projects with NYPA in the future, but we
9 would like to see what that looks like and to have
10 that, you know, again, written out in the plan
11 itself.

12 A few last things: The pre-qualification
13 process that NYPA used to identify developers and
14 investors; you know, What were the standards?
15 What were the criteria? What was the process that
16 was used?

17 We did a similar process on -- obviously, a
18 much smaller scale over the past year. It was
19 very values-based/values-driven. And then got to
20 some of the technical requirements that we would
21 like to see from solar installers. And we're
22 happy to share kind of, you know, our methodology
23 for doing that as a community.

24 And then lastly, I think just seeing, you
25 know, some of NYPA's economic development

1 resources kind of routed back into renewable
2 energy development. Thank you.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

4 This concludes our list of speakers thus
5 far. If anyone else would like to speak, please
6 go see our staff at the sign-in table, and we will
7 remain in this room in case additional speakers
8 come up. Thank you.

9 (Brief recess.)

10 JOSEPH KESSLER: Thanks, everyone. We have
11 a few other speakers we would like to call up.
12 Haley McCarter?

13 HALEY MCCARTER: Yes. Hi, my name is Haley
14 McCarter. I live in Buffalo, New York. And I am
15 18, and a sophomore at Buffalo State University.

16 Over the past year, I worked with PUSH
17 Buffalo on a community advisory board.

18 And my question for you guys today is about
19 the workforce: How can we ensure that the
20 workforce hired for these projects will be diverse
21 and have long-lasting job opportunities? And if
22 me and, say, like my classmates were interested in
23 jobs like these, would there still be
24 opportunities for us? Thank you.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Haley.

1 Our next speaker is Noor Euridah.

2 NOOR EURIDAH: Hello, my name is Noor
3 Euridah, and I'm a freshman at the University of
4 Buffalo. Buffalo has been a home for me for
5 nearly a decade. And over the years, I've come to
6 appreciate its human character and community
7 spirit.

8 Alongside my academic journey, I've gained
9 hands-on experience through various roles,
10 including a position with PUSH Buffalo, where I
11 worked for a year on community solar power
12 initiatives.

13 This experience allowed me to support
14 sustainability energy efforts while engaging
15 directly with the community.

16 NYPA, how do you plan to keep me and my
17 community engaged and informed about upcoming
18 renewable energy projects, such as Community
19 Solar, and ensure our voices are heard in the
20 decision-making process? Thank you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Noor.

22 That is our list of speakers thus far;
23 again, we will remain in the room in case other
24 speakers arrive.

25 (Brief recess.)

LINDSAY KRYZAK: Okay. It's 8:00 p.m.

Thank you for coming out, and have safe travels
home.

(Thereupon, at 8:00 p.m., the public
hearing was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

- - -

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
State of Florida at Large, certify that I was authorized
to and did stenographically report the foregoing
proceedings and that the transcript, page 1 through 57,
is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 12th day of November 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky,
Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

2-8 Hawley Street

Binghamton, NY 13901

November 14, 2024

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

(Morning session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Brian Saez, SVP Power & Waterways

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Laurie Wheelock

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

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Joe Batchelder (Director SUNY Cobleskill.)	19
Travis Dubois (Village of Sherburne.)	22
Adam Flint (Network for Sustainable Tomorrow.)	24
Matt Parker (Resident.)	27
Kasey Eiklor (Business manager Laborers Local 785.)	29
Pam Mischen (CSO Binghamton University.)	30
Greg Sacco (Resident.)	31
Elijah Conlin (Binghamton University Graduate.)	32
John Bay (Acadia Energy.)	34
Christopher Wentlent (MUA utilities.)	35

1 BRIAN SAEZ: Okay. Good morning,
2 everybody. Thank you for joining us this morning.
3 My name is Brian Saez. I am the SVP of Power
4 Generation and Waterways for the New York Power
5 Authority. I oversee the Power Authority's
6 generation and also the New York State Canals
7 Corporation operation for NYPA.

8 So, we are here today because NYPA issued
9 its draft Strategic Plan on October 8 and has
10 scheduled public hearings across the state to
11 solicit input from interested parties regarding
12 the draft plan.

13 If someone you know is unable to attend
14 today in person, please let them know that NYPA is
15 also hosting a virtual hearing November 21st.
16 More information on that virtual hearing is
17 available on NYPA.gov.

18 We'll begin today with a brief video about
19 the New York Power Authority, followed by an
20 overview of the draft Strategic Plan. But
21 primarily, my colleagues and I are here today to
22 hear from you. So, after those quick
23 presentations, we will invite those who signed up
24 to come to the mic to give a public comment.

25 So, we'll begin with a short video to

1 provide an overview of the New York Power
2 Authority.

3 (Video played as follows:

4 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
5 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
6 the solution for New York State and its residents,
7 providing clean, renewable energy, and economic
8 opportunities.

9 Through customer partnerships, energy
10 solutions, and the responsible supply of
11 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
12 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
13 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

14 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
15 serving customers in local and state governments,
16 industry, large and small businesses, and
17 nonprofit organizations.

18 The power for these customers is equal to
19 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
20 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
21 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
22 17 generating facilities and more than 80 percent
23 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
24 hydropower.

25 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.

1 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
2 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
3 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
4 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

5 As we bring power to customers, we also
6 actively ensure people from our host communities
7 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
8 from our clean energy economy.

9 We work on projects across the state to
10 increase energy efficiency, improve
11 infrastructure, and support economic development.

12 Our hydropower projects support more than
13 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
14 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
15 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
16 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
17 the communities we serve.

18 Our economic and community focus extends to
19 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
20 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
21 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
22 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
23 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
24 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
25 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors

1 from around the world.

2 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
3 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
4 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
5 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
6 years to come.

7 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
8 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
9 energy deployment and support other state
10 priorities. This expanded authority will
11 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
12 New York State, support expanded workforce
13 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
14 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
15 Energy Access and Community Health Program to
16 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
17 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned
18 utilities.

19 Additionally, we will lead the state's
20 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
21 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
22 production at our small natural gas power plants
23 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
24 certain reliability and environmental conditions
25 are met.

1 We are also developing action plans to
2 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
3 carbon-emitting facilities.

4 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
5 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
6 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
7 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
8 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
9 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
10 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
11 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

12 (End of the video.)

13 BRIAN SAEZ: Okay. As you saw, NYPA is the
14 largest state public power organization in the
15 nation. We operate 17 generating facilities, and
16 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission.

17 More than 80 percent of the electricity
18 NYPA produces is clean, renewable hydropower. And
19 we believe we are in a unique position to do even
20 more to advance the state's bold, clean energy
21 goals.

22 As NYPA builds, owns, and operates new
23 renewable projects, we need to have an electric
24 grid that they can connect to, not one that is
25 clogged with bottlenecks that prevent clean energy

1 from getting to where it needs to go. That's why
2 NYPA is pursuing the most ambitious transformation
3 of New York's grid in more than 40 years. And the
4 state is implementing new procedures to ensure
5 transmission can be sited, connected, and built.

6 As you heard, NYPA owns one-third of the
7 state's high voltage transmission, and we continue
8 to make major improvements to build a far more
9 flexible 21st-century electric grid with
10 significantly greater access to a mix of
11 carbon-free energy sources.

12 And we also know that a modernized grid
13 will be much more resilient. That's all part of
14 the work we are doing today to support the
15 projects of tomorrow.

16 Over the past two years, NYPA has engaged
17 in a variety of public engagement pathways to
18 inform the foundation for building new renewable
19 resources as authorized by last year's Enacted
20 State Budget.

21 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
22 build renewables subject to a Strategic Plan,
23 which must be approved by its trustees following a
24 public comment period and at least three public
25 hearings.

1 We felt it was important to have more than
2 that to hear from more of you. Like we did with
3 our 2023 and 2024 Conferral Processes, we welcome
4 public engagement and feedback as we shape our
5 Strategic Plan to build more renewables in New
6 York State.

7 I know many of you came to speak about that
8 plan, and I will now turn the mic over to Vennela
9 Yadhati to give a brief overview of the draft
10 Strategic Plan, and NYPA's work to expand
11 renewable development, connect community members
12 with job opportunities in the clean energy sector,
13 and advance Governor Hochul's clean energy agenda.
14 Vennela.

15 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Brian. And
16 hello, everyone. Good morning. My name is
17 Vennela Yadhati, and I'm the Vice President for
18 NYPA Renewables leading this effort to develop new
19 renewable energy projects across -- and energy
20 storage projects across the state.

21 We're in the middle of what could be one of
22 the most significant eras in NYPA's 93-year
23 history. Last May, as part of the 2023-'24
24 enacted state budget, lawmakers entrusted us with
25 new expanded authorities, or new capabilities,

1 responsibilities, and more importantly, new
2 opportunities to further serve New Yorkers.

3 Let me explain: First, the expanded
4 authority gave NYPA the ability to build, own,
5 develop, and operate renewable generation projects
6 such as solar, wind, battery energy storage
7 systems to help the state achieve the bold
8 renewable energy goals that are outlined in the
9 Climate Act.

10 My team at NYPA has identified a first
11 tranche of 40 such projects, which span across
12 every region in the state and representing a total
13 capacity exceeding 3.5 gigawatts.

14 These products are just the beginning of
15 our commitment to expand our portfolio of
16 delivering clean and reliable energy to every
17 corner of New York.

18 Right now, NYPA is doing full due diligence
19 on each project to determine whether or not they
20 are the best fit for New Yorkers. We want to
21 ensure these projects truly benefit our
22 communities and, therefore, belong in NYPA's
23 renewables portfolio.

24 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's
25 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment

1 in New York. We also want to explore meaningful
2 partnerships to support the state's equitable and
3 efficient transition to a clean energy future.

4 This first tranche includes a mix of NYPA's
5 own greenfield projects and co-developed
6 initiatives, where we will partner with private
7 developers to combine our complementary skills and
8 strengths to jointly develop, construct, own, and
9 operate these projects together.

10 It also includes a variety of sizes of
11 projects both large, which is the predominant
12 portfolio if you have gone through our draft
13 strategic plan, and small distributed scale
14 projects, community solar projects.

15 It includes a variety of technologies,
16 solar PV, wind and battery energy storage system
17 projects. And a variety of locations and site
18 conditions. Half of our own greenfield portfolio
19 includes projects that repurpose former landfills,
20 brownfields, and closed correctional facilities
21 for advancing renewable energy. Brown is the new
22 green, right?

23 We are also collaborating with our sister
24 agencies and customers, especially the local
25 governments, to identify more such renewable

1 energy project siting opportunities.

2 So far we've pre-qualified a stable of more
3 than 85 private developers and investors that can
4 collaborate with us to build this initial tranche
5 and future tranches of projects. NYPA's role and
6 goal is not to crowd out the private sector but to
7 work together, leveraging our strengths to build
8 more renewables and help the state achieve its
9 clean energy goals.

10 By maintaining majority ownership and
11 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch our
12 finances further and accelerate the transition to
13 clean energy.

14 As we described in the Strategic Plan, NYPA
15 has not received any state funding to build new
16 renewable generation projects. Instead, we're
17 self-funding these efforts, along with other
18 critical commitments to the CLCPA, such as new
19 transmission development and growing the clean
20 energy workforce, all entirely through NYPA's own
21 revenues.

22 Given these constraints, a balanced
23 approach is essential to bring more renewable
24 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
25 offer the highest returns. This helps ensure we

1 can reduce costs for ratepayers and maximize the
2 impact of every dollar we spend.

3 And there is more to come. This is only
4 the first tranche of projects in the first
5 strategic plan we've published. In a sense, this
6 plan itself is renewable, that is a plan we will
7 regularly update as we add more projects for
8 consideration by the public and NYPA's board
9 members.

10 Part of preparing to release this draft
11 plan was making sure that NYPA had the right tools
12 and staff right to implement on this plan. This
13 includes having the expertise to make sure the
14 proposed projects meet technical, economic,
15 environmental, and, more importantly environmental
16 justice needs in the state.

17 And in the past 18 months, NYPA has
18 established a new business line and new business
19 structures, and filled key personnel roles. Like
20 my team, many of whom are here today among you.
21 We have obtained approval from our Board of
22 Trustees to form a renewable subsidiary and an
23 initial capital allocation of \$100 million for
24 developing and garnering other necessary resources
25 required to advance this first tranche of

1 products.

2 We continue to source and solicit
3 additional project opportunities to append to our
4 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue
5 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
6 as we expand and grow our pipeline for future
7 products. And these projects aren't being built
8 in a silo. They are part of a holistic approach
9 to renewable development that supports, again,
10 environmental justice, workforce development, and
11 affordability.

12 You see, the 2023-'24 Enacted Budget also
13 gave NYPA the ability to establish the Renewable
14 Energy Access and Community Hep Program or REACH.
15 We love acronyms, don't we?

16 And what REACH program is, we use a portion
17 of the revenues generated from new renewable
18 energy projects to benefit low- or moderate-income
19 households in disadvantaged communities through
20 electric utility bill credits.

21 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
22 Service Commission has formally accepted our
23 application to create a REACH program. Once
24 NYPA's new renewable power projects are online and
25 generating revenue, and NYPA gathers funds from

1 other available resources, money will be available
2 to flow to low-income New Yorkers through the
3 process set forth by the PSC order.

4 While still under development, REACH will
5 appear as automatic bill credits alongside the
6 Energy Affordability Program, and the Statewide
7 Solar for All Products.

8 NYPA will also invest up to \$25 million
9 annually in collaboration with the New York State
10 Department of Labor to create jobs and provide
11 workforce training for people who want to work in
12 the clean energy industry.

13 Through this partnership, we have already
14 awarded \$12.5 million this fiscal year in funding
15 for opportunities for New Yorkers, including young
16 people from Buffalo all the way to New York
17 through programs like the Say Yes Buffalo Youth
18 Apprenticeship Program, and the Renaissance
19 Technical Institute in New York City, and others
20 from disadvantaged communities across the state to
21 pursue good-paying, clean energy jobs, and not
22 just jobs, to pursue good-paying, clean energy
23 careers.

24 And with regard to the workforce on these
25 proposed projects, NYPA will be entering into

1 product labor agreements for each and every
2 renewable energy generating project, and we will
3 require all contractors and subcontractors
4 associated with the project work to utilize
5 apprenticeship programs so these learning -- also
6 those learning on this first tranche of projects
7 can be seasoned veterans for NYPA's future
8 tranches of projects.

9 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
10 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at its
11 small natural gas peaker plants in New York City
12 and Long Island by 2030, as long as, of course,
13 reliability and environmental conditions are met.

14 To this end, we're actively exploring
15 strategies to meet this commitment while
16 considering grid reliability and air quality
17 impacts, including the potential for deploying
18 battery storage at some of these sites. We're in
19 discussions with several developers about energy
20 storage and other electrical infrastructure
21 solutions, to transform these sites while also
22 preserving grid reliability.

23 I know I just shared a long list of tasks
24 that NYPA has taken and actions NYPA has taken
25 thus far. As a reminder, the draft Strategic Plan

1 is on our website NYPA.gov/renewables. And I
2 encourage all of you to read it if you haven't
3 already. It makes a good nighttime/bedtime
4 reading as well because we wrote it.

5 The draft plan spells out our approach for
6 renewables and our efforts to identify the first
7 project and partnership NYPA aims to pursue. This
8 legislation represents a significant increase in
9 NYPA's role in the energy sector, bringing us back
10 to our roots of revolutionizing the state's grid
11 to benefit all New Yorkers.

12 Again, thank you for taking the time today
13 to come here, to learn more, and to give us your
14 comments about this plan.

15 Brian, back to you.

16 BRIAN SAEZ: Thank you, Vennela.

17 With that, I will remind everyone that the
18 law requires NYPA that the law requires NYPA to
19 solicit public comment and hold a minimum of three
20 public hearings in regionally diverse parts of the
21 state on the draft Strategic Plan that Vennela
22 just described.

23 So, now our timekeeper will call on
24 everyone who signed up to speak tonight, and our
25 speakers will be given three minutes. If anyone

1 needs a translator, please alert the NYPA staff at
2 the sign-in table.

3 Now, we recognize that some of you may have
4 longer comments than others. If you run out of
5 time, you can submit your full comment on our
6 website or email it directly to
7 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. We have QR codes
8 on the sign-in table to make it even easier to do
9 that.

10 The feedback you give tonight will be
11 transcribed and compiled with the written
12 comments, which must be considered and
13 incorporated into the final Strategic Plan. It
14 must be published on NYPA's website and submitted
15 to the Governor and the legislature by January
16 31st of 2025.

17 So, thank you again for joining us. So,
18 I'll now turn the mic over to our timekeeper,
19 Lindsay.

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Brian.

21 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
22 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
23 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or
24 required by applicable law, regulation, or order.
25 And it may be made available in whole or in part

1 in the public record in accordance with the
2 Agency's rules.

3 Each member of the public will be given
4 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.
5 Additional comments can be shared via our website
6 at nypa.gov, or via email. Again, that email
7 address is strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

8 Our first speaker is Joe Batchelder. Joe.

9 JOSEPH BATCHELDER: I like the bling.
10 Fancy. Should I turn this way? Who am I talking
11 to? Everyone?

12 Hi, my name is Joe Batchelder. I'm the
13 Director of Facilities Management at the State
14 University College of Agriculture and Technology
15 at Cobleskill. And I also have had the pleasure
16 of serving on the Governor's Regional Economic
17 Development Council Committee on Environmental
18 Justice since its inception. And at home, I'm
19 also a farmer. My wife and I have a small
20 regenerative agriculture farm. Luckily, she's the
21 brains of the operation.

22 So, I was hoping to maybe just share some
23 perspective because of the way that my -- kind of
24 career has gone and paralleled NYPA a little bit.
25 But I started life -- I actually grew up about 5,

1 10 minutes east of here in West Windsor and made
2 my way up to Cobleskill through the years.

3 And I guess I'm a recovering Binghamtonian,
4 but it was a great place to grow up.

5 So, I started life at Binghamton
6 University. And recently, I was speaking with
7 someone on Monday, who then told me that he's
8 spent 26 years in the state, and I realized I had
9 hired this guy.

10 So, way back then, I worked with NYPA on a
11 really cool project for the time. It was the
12 '90s, and we were doing some energy conservation
13 stuff, and it was eye-opening to me. I worked
14 with a lot of really great professionals. And
15 then I went to -- you know, yadda, yadda, yadda --
16 end up at Cobleskill to fast forward the story for
17 three minutes' time.

18 We're working with NYPA now on something
19 called an agrivoltaics initiative. So, if you're
20 not familiar with that, it's cohabitating farming
21 practices and solar. And there are a lot of
22 perspectives, and philosophies and opinions around
23 that topic, but I can tell you one thing every
24 farmer will tell you to diversify. That's
25 universal. You have to.

1 They were the -- you know, the original
2 people who realized putting all the eggs in one
3 basket -- you know, that comes from farming.

4 I wanted to speak really quickly to NYPA's
5 legacy of delivering reliable and affordable power
6 to New Yorkers. It's something that had been --
7 it was palpable back then, and I'm not an industry
8 regulatory expert, but I kind of seen that angle
9 and gotten that out of the professionals I've
10 worked with.

11 Tapping into these new renewable energy
12 sources is a problem priority for them. And I can
13 see the foresight and the capability, especially
14 of this generation of people. I've been really
15 impressed by that, and -- you know, agrivoltaics
16 is an emerging concept; it really can take a range
17 of different kinds of forms.

18 So, by all means, please read up further on
19 that. It's a really interesting topic. And more
20 ideas need to come to the table, frankly, so the
21 more help, the better.

22 And from a personal point of view, I wanted
23 to share with everyone that I have seen a bit of a
24 change, and I've seen new energy in NYPA. And I'm
25 really optimistic about it, and that's kind of a

1 -- it's a personal sense, and it comes from
2 speaking with the incredible engineers and
3 professionals that I've been working with,
4 particularly recently.

5 And I feel really confident that under this
6 expanded authority, NYPA is going to be leading
7 some really incredible renewable projects. And
8 the level of expertise and responsibility that's
9 defined this operation, you know, for decades now
10 that I have seen, I think it's really coming to --

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Joe.

12 Our next speaker is Travis Dubois. Travis.

13 TRAVIS DUBOIS: Good morning. My name is
14 Travis Dubois, and I have a unique perspective as
15 I am the Superintendent for the Village of
16 Sherburne Electric Department, one of the 47
17 municipalities and four rural electric
18 cooperatives in New York State that own and
19 operate their own electric utility.

20 I'm also an Executive Committee Member for
21 NYAPP, the New York Association of Public Power,
22 which advocates for public power communities.
23 Sherburne has been a customer of NYPA since the
24 completion of the Niagara Hydro Project in 1961.
25 As a result, Sherburne and other NYAPP members

1 provided their customers with over 85 percent
2 renewable energy.

3 Recently, Sherburne and other NYAPP members
4 extended their hydropower contracts with NYPA at
5 cost-based rates through the year 2040. I want to
6 stress that New York -- I want to stress that in
7 New York, we need to focus on reducing energy
8 costs so that we can keep communities -- keep
9 customers -- sorry -- so we can keep consumers in
10 our communities while satisfying environmental
11 objectives.

12 In the last 15 years, Sherburne has worked
13 closely with NYPA on several projects and
14 initiatives, including NYPA's Municipal and Rural
15 Electric System Cooperative Solar PV Incentive
16 Program in 2009, participation in the Zero
17 Interest Loan Program, that Sherburne has used
18 twice for the purchases of hybrid electric cars,
19 and will soon use it a third time to purchase a
20 hybrid bucket truck.

21 In 2020, Sherburne began purchasing 100
22 percent of its power supply from NYPA with a
23 realized cost savings for Sherburne's customers.
24 The Connect All pilot program, whereby NYPA
25 partnered with Sherburne and other parties to

1 bring municipally operated high-speed fiber-optic
2 networks to unserved and underserved households
3 and businesses. The current Electrify Sherburne
4 Project between NYPA, Sherburne, and the Electric
5 Power Research Institute, EPRI, to study the
6 potential impacts of a fully electric society on
7 the Sherburne Electric Distribution System, and
8 Sherburne and all NYAPP members self-fund and
9 operate energy efficiency programs with customized
10 solutions tailored to the unique challenges of
11 their respective communities.

12 With these projects and initiatives,
13 Sherburne has demonstrated its commitment to
14 innovative approaches to providing reliable and
15 cost-effective electric service to our consumer
16 owners. NYPA has been a solid partner in all of
17 them. Sherburne and NYAPP support NYPA's active
18 role in promoting renewable energy at affordable
19 rates. Our partnership has been good for our
20 communities.

21 Thank you.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Adam
23 Flint. Adam.

24 ADAM FLINT: I'm Adam Flint. I direct
25 clean energy programs at Network for Sustainable

1 Tomorrow. We're a small nonprofit here in town.
2 And I want to start by thanking NYPA for coming
3 down here to Binghamton, and also for moving on
4 the Build Public Renewables Act, which is the law
5 that set this into motion. That law, for
6 everyone's information, was the brainchild of a
7 movement, the Public Power New York movement. You
8 can find us online.

9 I'm particularly excited about the REACH
10 program, which, once operational, will provide
11 low-cost power to those who are unable to afford
12 the high-cost power that they are having to pay
13 for it from the investor-owned utilities, such as
14 NYSEG.

15 I'm just going to quickly run through some
16 top-line improvements, and then I want to focus in
17 on what I'm really most excited about, which has
18 to do with workforce education in schools.

19 Obviously, I understand the limitations of
20 the grid. I do think, however, there could be
21 more in this plan that talks about how we're
22 moving from this too-small number of 3.5 gigawatts
23 to 15.

24 Obviously, if we can get more out of our
25 existing grid through grid enhancing technologies

1 and other techniques, that might help to extend
2 things. I'm well aware of the issues there.

3 We need a plan for peaker retirement. It's
4 called for in the law. Frankly, Lockheed Martin
5 and Citibank can afford to pay more for their
6 energy, and given the -- actually, I'll say
7 dastardly, if not evil things both are involved in
8 right now, I don't think they deserve NYPA's
9 low-cost power.

10 We need to have more projects here in the
11 Southern Tier. I think we have one currently.
12 And especially downstate in the Hudson Valley, as
13 I think everyone in this business knows, that's
14 the major bottleneck.

15 But what I'm really excited about is being
16 able to form partnerships with NYPA on the
17 community level. I was involved with a co-design
18 effort with NYSERDA, which unfortunately did not
19 turn out quite as planned, but I think it's a good
20 model for working together with an agency on the
21 development of projects from the ground up. And
22 would love to see more use of the schools, both in
23 terms of their roofs, their properties, and
24 municipal properties, and brownfields and
25 airports. I'm particularly interested in the

1 workforce development end of things.

2 Unfortunately, 40 years ago or so, our
3 leadership in Washington decided to offshore
4 manufacturing. It's coming back. We need to
5 rebuild our education and workforce system.

6 Oh, I do see your timer. And I have 28
7 seconds left. Amazing.

8 Yeah. So, I would particularly encourage
9 NYPA to continue on the track of reaching out to
10 community groups working together with us. I
11 think it's also a good idea to engage with some of
12 the other efforts that are already underway. The
13 Office of Just Energy Transition, you may be
14 already talking with them, I don't know; if not,
15 you should.

16 I know that you worked with NYSERDA. I'm
17 aware that there's some division of authority as
18 -- between the Department of Public Service and
19 the --

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

21 ADAM FLINT: -- other things that NYPA
22 does. Thank you very much.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

24 Our next speaker is Matt Parker. Matt.

25 MATT PARKER: Hello. I own a home in

1 Johnson City. I'm not here as part of any
2 lobbying group.

3 I became interested in this plan,
4 interested in this meeting, after I read on Reddit
5 that this renewable draft plan was weak. And so,
6 I read the plan and I have to say I agree with
7 that.

8 The plan is a good start, but it's not at
9 all ambitious. As you know, the 2019 Climate
10 Leadership Act had a goal of -- set a goal of 70
11 percent electricity from renewable sources by
12 2030.

13 But in this plan, I read on page 54, that
14 the current project will only allow New York to
15 have about 44 percent of its electricity from
16 renewable sources by 2030. And I didn't see
17 anything in the proposal as far as a concrete plan
18 about how to get to 70 percent. It's the
19 (inaudible) that's just being accepted by NYPA
20 leadership at this point.

21 So, anyway, I feel that the 70 percent goal
22 is pretty important. In this community, we've had
23 some terrible, terrible floods. Some of my
24 neighbors lost their homes in the flood of 2011.
25 And I feel like if New York leaders give up on the

1 2030 renewable energy goal, that climate risks are
2 just going to get worse in the future. Okay. We
3 need to do something about that.

4 From the language of this plan, it seems
5 like New York leaders may actually be giving up on
6 the goal of 70 percent renewables by 2030.

7 So, anyway, my question is: Who in New
8 York is really taking ownership of an actual plan
9 to achieve 70 percent renewable energy by 2030?
10 It seems like NYPA is sort of passing the buck in
11 this plan; is trying to do something in line with
12 the law, but it's not actually creating an
13 ambitious plan to achieve that goal.

14 So my ask here is just to please do more
15 and make it happen. Thank you.

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

17 Our next speaker is Kasey Eiklor. Kasey.

18 KASEY EIKLOR: Good morning. My name is
19 Kasey Eiklor. I'm the business manager for
20 Laborers Local 785. I represent 745 hardworking
21 men and women in Broome County and the surrounding
22 counties.

23 Our members are highly trained and skilled
24 in green energy construction and are proud to be
25 partnering with NYPA to ensure New York's green

1 energy goals are met. Not only does NYPA value
2 the importance of building green energy jobs, but
3 it values the importance of using local labor to
4 get the projects built, ensuring that local tax
5 dollars, state, and municipalities at which these
6 green energy projects are to be built. This shows
7 to me that NYPA not only values the communities
8 that they -- sorry -- this shows me that NYPA
9 values our communities and that they want to see
10 economic growth.

11 Laborers Local 785 commends NYPA and their
12 efforts to create good green union jobs so that
13 our members can go to work in the communities that
14 they live. We're proud to partner with them.
15 Thank you.

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Pam
17 Mischen. Pam.

18 PAM MISCHEN: Hi, my name is Pam Mischen.
19 I'm the Chief Sustainability Officer at Binghamton
20 University, and a professor of Environmental
21 studies.

22 We as a state university are required to
23 have 100 percent of our electricity supplied by
24 Clean Renewable Energy by 2030 as part of
25 Executive Order 22. We have been trying for years

1 now to pursue various avenues for solar
2 development, and none of these plans have come to
3 fruition yet. And so, we are really excited that
4 there are more options on the table. I think that
5 is what the state needs, more options, more
6 avenues and all of the above approach. Thank you.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
8 speaker is Greg Sacco. Greg.

9 GREG SACCO: Hello. It's nice to see some
10 of my friends; retired NYPA. I have -- come from
11 a little different perspective. I attended the
12 Governor's function in Syracuse. I think that we
13 need to start looking instead of taking our
14 upstate rural land and covering them with solar
15 panels and wind fields that are non-dispatchable
16 (inaudible) into generation.

17 You take the Ontario, look -- and look at
18 small modular reactors. And I know, I guess, IP3
19 is beyond reopening, but I see that's happening
20 throughout the country. So, I just want to -- I
21 hope we take a different look at it. Solar winds
22 are a non-dispatchable means of generation. I'm
23 not sure if we're going to -- we're going to be
24 able to meet our goals in that sense. I would
25 rather see us again -- instead of taking our

1 upstate lands and covering them with panels and
2 wind turbines, I think we need to look at some
3 different avenues. And I know there's a friend of
4 mine at the front desk. And we got one of the
5 best batteries in New York State in
6 Blenheim-Gilboa. Maybe we should use that as a --
7 what it can be used for. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Greg.

9 This concludes our list of speakers thus
10 far. If anyone else would like to speak, would
11 you please check in with our desk at the front so
12 we can record your name, and we will remain in the
13 room while these other speakers sign up. Thank
14 you. It looks like a few are.

15 (Brief recess.)

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, everyone, for
17 your patience. Also, thank you for signing in for
18 those of you who just did. I know it's a little
19 bit of a back-and-forth, but it really helps with
20 our transcription, and making sure we get your
21 names right; you took the time to come here.

22 Our next speaker is Elijah Conlin. Elijah.

23 ELIJAH CONLIN: Hi. Thank you for having
24 me today. My name is Elijah Conlin. I recently
25 graduated from Binghamton University with a

1 sustainable communities master's degree. I'm 23
2 years old, and I'm here because I care about my
3 future. I care about the future of the other New
4 Yorkers that are here.

5 And I think that the Niagara plan and
6 strategy to build out renewable energy is very
7 important. I think that -- you know, you
8 mentioned before that there -- the bold plan of 70
9 percent renewable energy by 2030. And I think
10 that this bold plan is, you know, just the
11 beginning, the need.

12 And so, having 3.5 gigawatts of capacity
13 being built out is a good start, but it's just
14 that, it's just a start. We need more. We need,
15 you know, 15 gigawatts. We need buildings done in
16 places that -- you know, rural areas that need to
17 be electrified. We have people across the state
18 that, you know, they need electricity. They need
19 access. They need to do their jobs.

20 But to do that, to combat the worsening
21 climate that we're experiencing, to combat the
22 drought, the floods, the hurricanes, the heat
23 waves, the things that are coming that, you know,
24 universities have taught us that are real, that
25 are happening, to combat all of that, we need to

1 be prepared. And to be prepared, we need to
2 listen to the people in this room and realize that
3 we can build a larger capacity. We can do that
4 together. You know, you guys are definitely
5 taking a good step forward, and you're definitely
6 making an effort, but listen to us. You know,
7 listen to the people that are here and ready to
8 teach and work together, because we need more. We
9 definitely need to prepare for as much as we can.

10 We need to pull the New Yorkers together,
11 you know, be there for each other. And to do
12 that, start listening to the people that, you
13 know, want the best for each other.

14 So to do that, let's build more energy and
15 let's make sure that it's, you know, as green as
16 we want the ground to be.

17 And so thank you for my comment, and thank
18 you for being here. Bye.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Elijah. Our
20 next speaker is John Bay. John.

21 JOHN BAY: Hi. Thank you. I'm John Bay
22 from Acadia Energy. I think I'm the only
23 developer in the room. It sounds like that.

24 But anyway, a couple of comments and
25 questions. NYPA has 40 projects listed in the

1 Strategic Plan, most of which they support the
2 CLCPA. The CLCPA is, I think, 405 pages long. Is
3 it possible to expand on that and let us know how
4 they're supporting the CLCPA? Not just community
5 solar, which really doesn't help the local
6 communities.

7 And so, our company deals strictly with the
8 local communities, local counties, and local
9 municipalities, so that's important for us to see.

10 Secondly, is it possible to add a project
11 to the current Strategic Plan? You know, 40
12 projects there, some of them may drop out, some of
13 them may stay in, etcetera. But it sounds like
14 this is a concrete path here. And if there's
15 other projects that we're doing with communities
16 that are exciting and fit all of the checkboxes in
17 the Strategic Plan, is it possible to get into the
18 first tranche?

19 So those are really my two questions.
20 Thank you very, very much. Have a nice day.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, John.

22 Our next speaker is Christopher Wentlent.
23 Christopher.

24 CHRISTOPHER WENTLENT: Good morning. My
25 name is Christopher Wentlent. I'm a consultant

1 for MUA Utilities, which is a group of 40
2 municipal electric utilities spread across Upstate
3 New York.

4 I'm speaking on behalf of Jim Stokes, our
5 executive director. MUA is a nonprofit
6 unincorporated association with 40 municipal
7 electric utilities. We spread from Richmondville
8 all the way up to Rouses Point to Westfield and
9 Wellsville and Southwestern New York State.

10 We have a longstanding relationship with
11 the New York Power Authority. The majority of our
12 electricity consumed by our members is low-cost
13 hydropower produced by NYPA's Niagara Power
14 Project in Lewiston.

15 We think it's critical for the economic
16 vitality of our member systems. We view the
17 Niagara Project as well as the St. Lawrence
18 Project as core missions of NYPA, and we fully
19 support NYPA's planned investment at those
20 facilities.

21 We regularly engage with NYPA on a variety
22 of programs, economic development, Evolve New
23 York, EV charging, as well as energy efficiency
24 programs. One thing that we would say as we move
25 forward that the development of new renewable

1 projects, it's important that these new
2 initiatives not adversely impact NYPA's core
3 mission and its ability to continue as a reliable
4 supplier of clean, low-cost power.

5 The significant increase in NYPA's
6 operating costs that will occur in the development
7 and operation of new power initiatives must be
8 borne by the projects themselves, and must not be
9 shifted in any way to the NYPA customers.

10 Moreover, the cost of new renewable
11 projects must be considered as they are selected
12 for development. One way or another, the costs
13 will be borne by all ratepayers in the state, and
14 that they must always be a top consideration in
15 selecting the projects for development.

16 Additionally, NYPA's history of success is
17 in large part to its effective administration of
18 assets and prudent plan; while we understand the
19 calls for more ambitious action, MUA urges NYPA to
20 stay with a measured and reasoned approach, and
21 those initiatives should not only be limited to
22 conventional wind and solar but should also
23 consider longer duration solutions, like
24 long-duration batteries, as well as nuclear
25 generation.

1 These types of long duration resources are
2 necessary for economic development, system
3 reliability, and protecting public safety during
4 extreme weather events which impact New York
5 State.

6 MUA acknowledges and applauds NYPA's
7 efforts in producing the draft Strategic Plan, and
8 we look forward to working with them in the
9 future. Thank you.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Christopher.

11 This concludes our list of speakers for
12 now. Again, we'll remain in the room in case
13 other speakers arrive. Thank you.

14 (Brief recess.)

15 BRIAN SAEZ: Thank you, everyone, for
16 coming out. Have a safe trip home. And again,
17 we'll be here tonight.

18 (Thereupon, the morning public meeting was
19 adjourned.)
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21
22
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24
25

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

- - -

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically
report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript,
page 1 through 39, is a true and complete record of my
stenographic notes.

Dated this 16th day of November 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY
PUBLIC MEETING
2-8 Hawley Street
Binghamton, NY 13901

November 14, 2024
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
(Evening session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Brian Saez, SVP Power & Waterways

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Laurie Wheelock

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

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Len Luka (New Yorkers for Clean Power.)	19
Elijah Conlin (Network for Sustainable Tomorrow.)	22
Nate Hotchkiss (Binghamton City Council.)	23

1 BRIAN SAEZ: Good evening, everybody.

2 Thank you for joining us this evening. My name is
3 Brian Saez. I'm the Senior Vice President of
4 Power Generation and Waterways for the New York
5 Power Authority. I oversee the Power Authority's
6 generation and the New York State Canal
7 Corporation's operations and maintenance.

8 We're here this evening because NYPA issued
9 its draft Strategic Plan on October 8, and has
10 scheduled public hearings across the state to
11 solicit input from interested parties regarding
12 this draft plan.

13 If someone you know is unable to attend
14 today in person, please let them know that NYPA is
15 also hosting a virtual hearing on November 21st.
16 More information is available on nypa.gov.

17 We'll begin this evening with a brief video
18 about the New York Power Authority, followed by an
19 overview of the draft strategic plan.

20 Primarily, my colleagues and I are here
21 today to hear from you. So, after these
22 presentations we will invite those who have signed
23 up to come to the mic to give a public comment.
24 So, we'll begin with a short video to provide an
25 overview of the New York Power Authority.

(Video played as follows:

SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New York Power Authority has been an essential part of the solution for New York State and its residents, providing clean, renewable energy and economic opportunities.

Through customer partnerships, energy solutions, and the responsible supply of affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically vibrant future for New Yorkers.

Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees serving customers in local and state governments, industry, large and small businesses, and nonprofit organizations.

The power for these customers is equal to approximately 15 percent of the total electricity needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent of that electricity comes from clean, renewable hydropower.

NYPA also helps bring that power to you. We deliver electricity where it's needed most over more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission

1 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
2 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

3 As we bring power to customers, we also
4 actively ensure people from our host communities
5 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
6 from our clean energy economy.

7 We work on projects across the state to
8 increase energy efficiency, improve
9 infrastructure, and support economic development.

10 Our hydropower projects support more than
11 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
12 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
13 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
14 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
15 the communities we serve.

16 Our economic and community focus extends to
17 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
18 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
19 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
20 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
21 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
22 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
23 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
24 from around the world.

25 Our efforts to create a clean energy future

1 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
2 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
3 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
4 years to come.

5 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
6 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
7 energy deployment and support other state
8 priorities. This expanded authority will
9 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
10 New York State, support expanded workforce
11 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
12 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
13 Energy Access and Community Health Program to
14 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
15 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned
16 utilities.

17 Additionally, we will lead the state's
18 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
19 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
20 production at our small natural gas power plants
21 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
22 certain reliability and environmental conditions
23 are met.

24 We are also developing action plans to
25 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest

1 carbon-emitting facilities.

2 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
3 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
4 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
5 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
6 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
7 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
8 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
9 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

10 (End of video.)

11 BRIAN SAEZ: All right. As you saw, NYPA
12 is the largest state public power organization in
13 the nation. We operate 17 generating facilities
14 and more than 1500-circuit miles of transmission.

15 More than 80 percent of the electricity
16 NYPA produces is clean, renewable hydropower. And
17 we believe we are in a unique position to do even
18 more to advance the state's bold, clean energy
19 goals.

20 As NYPA builds, owns, and operates new
21 renewable projects, we need to have an electric
22 grid that they can connect to, not one that is
23 clogged with bottlenecks to prevent clean energy
24 from getting to where it needs to go. That is why
25 NYPA is pursuing the most ambitious transformation

1 of New York's power grid in more than 40 years.
2 And the state is implementing new procedures to
3 ensure the transmission can be sited, connected,
4 and built.

5 As you heard, NYPA owns one-third of the
6 state's high-voltage transmission, and we continue
7 to make major improvements to build a far more
8 flexible 21st-century electric grid with
9 significantly greater access to a mix of
10 carbon-free energy sources. And we also know that
11 a modernized grid will be much more resilient.
12 That's all part of the work we are doing today to
13 support the projects of tomorrow.

14 Over the past two years, NYPA has engaged
15 in a variety of public engagement pathways to
16 inform the foundation for building new renewable
17 resources as authorized by last year's enacted
18 State Budget.

19 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
20 build renewables subject to a Strategic Plan,
21 which must be approved by its trustees following a
22 public comment period and at least three public
23 hearings. We felt that it was important to have
24 more than that to hear from more of you. Like we
25 did in our 2023 and 2024 conferral processes, we

1 welcome public engagement and feedback as we shape
2 our Strategic Plan to build more renewables in New
3 York State.

4 I know many of you came to speak about that
5 plan, and I will now turn the mic over to Vennela
6 Yadhati to give a brief overview of the draft
7 Strategic Plan and NYPA's work to expand
8 renewables development, connect community members
9 with job opportunities in the clean energy sector,
10 and advance Governor Hochul's clean energy agenda.
11 Vennela.

12 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Brian. I'm
13 going to stand up and walk and get my step count
14 as I present this to you.

15 Good evening, everyone. I'm Vennela
16 Yadhati. I'm the Vice President for NYPA's
17 Renewable Project Development. Leading this
18 effort, of course, to develop new renewable
19 generation and energy storage projects across the
20 state.

21 We're in the middle of what could be called
22 one of the most significant eras in NYPA's 93-year
23 history. Last May, as part of the 2023-2024
24 state-enacted budget, NYPA was entrusted with new
25 expanded authority or new capabilities, new

1 responsibilities, and more importantly, new
2 opportunities for us to further serve New Yorkers
3 in the clean energy space.

4 First, the expanded authority gave NYPA the
5 ability to build, develop, own, and operate
6 renewable generation projects like solar, wind,
7 and battery energy storage to help the state
8 achieve the bold renewable energy goals it has
9 outlined in the Climate Act.

10 My team at NYPA has identified a first
11 tranche of 40 such projects spanning across every
12 region in the state and representing a total
13 capacity of exceeding, actually, 3.5 gigawatts.

14 These products are just the beginning of
15 our commitment to expand our portfolio of
16 delivering clean, reliable energy to every corner
17 of New York. Right now, NYPA is doing full due
18 diligence on each project to determine whether or
19 not they are the best fit for New Yorkers.

20 We want to ensure these projects truly
21 benefit our communities and therefore, belong in
22 Nicole's renewable energy portfolio. Our main
23 goal is to leverage NYPA's resources to maximize
24 renewable energy deployment in New York. We also
25 want to explore meaningful partnerships to support

1 the state's equitable and efficient transition to
2 a clean energy future.

3 This first tranche includes a mix of NYPA's
4 own greenfield projects and co-developed
5 initiatives; that is where we partner with the
6 private developers to co-develop, co-build,
7 construct, and own and operate these projects
8 together.

9 It includes a variety of products as well.
10 That's from sizes. We have both large scale,
11 which is a predominant portfolio of the products
12 that you will see if you look at our draft
13 Strategic Plan, and small distributor scale
14 products. So, community solar projects. We also
15 have a mix of what we call in-community projects,
16 the touch-and-feel tangible projects that you can
17 build in the communities that they know. They are
18 in their backyard.

19 It includes a variety of technologies. It
20 has solar PV, wind, battery energy storage. And a
21 variety of locations and site conditions. In
22 fact, half of our greenfield portfolio includes
23 products that repurpose former landfills,
24 brownfields, and closed correctional facilities
25 for advancing renewable generations. You know,

1 brown is a new green, or turning the brown into
2 green.

3 We're collaborating with our sister
4 agencies and NYPA's customers, including local
5 governments, to identify more such siting
6 opportunities.

7 So far we're pre-qualified a stable of more
8 than 85 developers and investors that we can
9 collaborate with to build this initial tranche and
10 any future ones.

11 NYPA's role and goal is to not crowd out
12 the private sector, but to work together,
13 leveraging our strengths to build more renewables
14 and help the state achieve its clean energy goals.

15 By maintaining majority ownership and
16 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch our
17 finances further and accelerate the transition to
18 clean energy. As we described in our draft
19 Strategic Plan, NYPA had not received any state
20 funding to build these new renewable generation
21 projects. Instead, we're self-funding these
22 efforts, along with our other critical commitments
23 to the CLCPA, suggests new transmission
24 development and growing the clean energy
25 workforce, all entirely through NYPA's own

1 revenues.

2 Given these constraints, a balanced
3 approach is essential to bring more renewable
4 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
5 offer the highest returns. This helps ensure we
6 can reduce costs for ratepayers and maximize the
7 impact of every dollar we spend.

8 And there is more to come. This is only
9 the first tranche in the first tranche in the
10 first Strategic Plan we published. This plan
11 itself, you could call it renewable. That is a
12 plan we will regularly update as we add more
13 projects for consideration by the public and by
14 NYPA's Board of Trustees.

15 Part of preparing to release this draft
16 plan was making sure that NYPA has the right tools
17 and staffed right to support it. This includes
18 having the expertise to make sure the proposed
19 products meet technical, economic, environmental,
20 and environmental justice needs in the state.

21 In the past 18 months, we have established
22 a new business line and new business structures
23 and filled key personnel roles. Like my team,
24 many of whom are here tonight with me. We have
25 obtained approval from our Board of Trustees to

1 form a renewable subsidiary, and we also obtained
2 approval for an initial allocation of \$100 million
3 for developing and garnering other resources
4 necessary to advance this first tranche of
5 projects.

6 We continue to source and solicit
7 additional project opportunities to append to our
8 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue
9 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
10 as it expands and grows the pipeline of future
11 tranches of projects.

12 And these projects aren't being built in a
13 silo. They are part of a holistic approach to
14 renewable development that supports environmental
15 justice, workforce development, and affordability.
16 You see, in 2023 and 2024, Enacted State Budget
17 also gave NYPA the ability to establish the
18 Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program
19 outreach.

20 What it is, NYPA will now get to use a
21 portion of the revenues that are generated from
22 these new renewable energy projects to benefit
23 low- or moderate-income households in
24 disadvantaged communities through electric utility
25 bill credits.

1 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
2 Service Commission has formally accepted our
3 application to create this REACH program. Once
4 NYPA's renewable power products are online and
5 generating revenue and NYPA gathers funds from
6 available sources, money will be available to flow
7 to low-income New Yorkers through the process set
8 forth by the PSC.

9 While still under development, REACH will
10 appear as automatic bill credits alongside the
11 Energy Affordability Program and the statewide
12 Solar for All program.

13 Along with REACH, NYPA will also invest up
14 to \$25 million annually in collaboration with the
15 New York State Department of Labor to create jobs
16 and provide workforce training for people who want
17 to work in the clean energy industry. Through
18 this partnership, we've already awarded \$12.5
19 million this fiscal year and funding opportunities
20 for New Yorkers, including young people from
21 Buffalo to New York through programs like the Say
22 Yes Buffalo Youth Apprenticeship Program and the
23 Renaissance Technical Institute in New York City,
24 and others from disadvantaged communities across
25 the state to pursue good-paying clean energy

1 careers, not just jobs.

2 And with regard to the workforce on these
3 proposed projects, NYPA will be entering into
4 product labor agreements for each and every
5 renewable energy generating project and they will
6 require all contractors and subcontractors
7 associated with the project to utilize
8 apprenticeship agreements so those learning on the
9 first tranche of projects can be seasoned veterans
10 for NYPA's future renewable projects.

11 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
12 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at our
13 small natural gas power plants in New York City
14 and Long Island by 2030, of course, as long as
15 reliability and environmental conditions are met.

16 To this end, we're actively exploring
17 strategies to meet this commitment while
18 considering grid reliability and air quality
19 impacts, including the potential for deploying
20 battery storage systems at some of these sites.

21 We're in discussion with several developers
22 about energy storage and other electrical
23 infrastructure solutions to transform these sites
24 while also preserving the grid reliability we just
25 mentioned.

1 I know I just shared a long list of actions
2 that NYPA has taken to date, and we continue to.
3 But as a reminder, the draft plan is on our
4 website at NYPA.gov/renewables. And I encourage
5 all of you to read it. Those that actually helped
6 draft the plan and wrote the plan are here in this
7 room, so if you do not have any comments, continue
8 to please talk to us and tell us, but also find us
9 here as well.

10 The draft plan spells out our approach to
11 renewables and our efforts to identify the first
12 projects and partnerships NYPA aims to pursue.
13 This legislation represents a significant increase
14 in NYPA's role in the energy sector, bringing us
15 back to our roots of revolutionizing the state's
16 grid to benefit all New Yorkers.

17 Thank you again for taking the time today
18 to learn more, to give your comments, and more
19 importantly, about this plan. Thank you. Thank
20 you, Brian.

21 BRIAN SAEZ: Thank you, Vennela. So, with
22 that, I'll remind everyone that the law requires
23 NYPA to solicit public comment, hold a minimum of
24 three public hearings in regionally diverse parts
25 of the state on the draft Strategic Plan that

1 Vennela just described.

2 So, now our timekeeper will call on
3 everyone who signed up to speak tonight, and then
4 our speakers will be given three minutes. If
5 anyone needs a translator, please alert the NYPA
6 staff at the sign-in table.

7 We recognize that some of you may have
8 longer comments than others. If you run out of
9 time, you can submit your full comment on our
10 website or email it directly to
11 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. We have QR codes
12 at the sign-in table to make that a little bit
13 easier.

14 The feedback you give tonight will be
15 transcribed and compiled with the written
16 comments, which must be considered and
17 incorporated into the final Strategic Plan and be
18 published on NYPA's website and submitted to the
19 Governor and the legislature by January 31, 2025.

20 So, thank you again for joining us. I'll
21 now turn the mic over to Lindsay.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thanks, Brian.

23 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
24 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
25 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or

1 required by applicable law, regulation, or order
2 and may be made available in whole or in part in
3 the public record in accordance with the agency's
4 rules. Each member of the public will be given
5 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.

6 As Brian said, additional comments can be
7 shared via our website or via the email
8 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

9 Our first speaker is Len Luka. Len.

10 LEN LUKA: Hi. I'm Len Luka. I live in
11 Binghamton. I work for New Yorkers for Clean
12 Power.

13 I want to thank NYPA for choosing
14 Binghamton as the location for public hearings for
15 the Southern Tier. I work with college students
16 and young people. I see how anxious they are
17 about their future, and because I have a
18 background in science and data, I understand the
19 reasons for their concern. I'm concerned for
20 their safety and welfare as well.

21 As a taxpayer, I see the monumental cost to
22 address flooding, wildfire loss, infrastructure
23 damage, mounting health threats from extreme heat,
24 and the breakdown of the ecosystems due to extreme
25 weather and wildly fluctuating and unpredictable

1 weather patterns. And we face only increases in
2 these infrastructure costs in the coming years.
3 As each year passes, it will cost more to recover
4 from these inundating emergencies.

5 So, I think of how much money we can all
6 save by making the right changes to infrastructure
7 now. We can support our economy and create a
8 green jobs corridor in the Southern Tier if we
9 plan correctly now.

10 The current NYPA plan is not reaching high
11 enough and not moving fast enough. The 3.5
12 gigawatts of proposed capacity in the Strategic
13 Plan will not meet the CLCPA goals. Please
14 increase your scope of your Strategic Plan.
15 Increase the planned capacity to at least 15
16 gigawatts of new publicly-owned renewables by
17 2030.

18 You mentioned that new projects are located
19 throughout the state, but I didn't notice any
20 located in the Southern Tier. People in our
21 community deserve to benefit from green jobs and
22 reach energy discounts. Broome County, in
23 particular, has a very high proportion of
24 households that are considered energy-burdened.
25 There is no detailed plan for shutting down NYPA's

1 peaker power plants by 2030 as required by law.

2 If NYPA increases its plant capacity to 15
3 gigawatts, it would mean 25,000 new green union
4 jobs, and the possibility to end those peaker
5 plants and reduce pollution.

6 Fully decarbonize our public schools by
7 siting utility-scale and distributed generation on
8 SUNY and CUNY campuses and K12 schools statewide,
9 building enough capacity to meet their energy
10 demands, redirect economic development funds from
11 large corporations toward renewable energy
12 development, focus on clean energy education and
13 labor, and ensure equitable clean energy careers,
14 pathways.

15 In addition, NYPA should use its projects
16 to support improving interconnections for
17 community solar.

18 If I have -- if I'm not out of time, the
19 key points: Increase the total plant capacity to
20 at least 15 gigawatts. Plan additional projects
21 in conjunction -- in conjunction with public
22 institutions, such as the State University of New
23 York. Ensure clean jobs --

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

25 LEN LUKA: -- and redirect economic funds

1 from large corporations. Thank you.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

3 Our next speaker is Elijah Conlin. Elijah.

4 ELIJAH CONLIN: Hello. Thank you for
5 having me. I was here earlier today, but my name
6 is Elijah Conlin.

7 I find it important to come back here today
8 and talk with you guys again because I was able to
9 have a lovely conversation with Vennela earlier
10 talking about what can be done, or why we're at
11 3.5 right now, and the difficulties to make it to
12 15.

13 And I think that, you know, more of this
14 conversation is very necessary, especially since
15 that, you know, 80 percent of the power comes from
16 the hydro plants. And we're talking about ways to
17 diversify our energy sources, and where they come
18 from, and I think that looking at that Central New
19 York region, and trying to figure more wind farms
20 or more solar panels, or -- there's a gentleman
21 earlier today talking about agrivoltaics projects,
22 and I think that it's something that's worth
23 revisiting, or just looking -- talking with the
24 consultants, seeing what can be done, because we
25 know a lot of us are here tonight talking about

1 how 15 gigawatts is doable, it's -- the
2 externalities that come from it are far more --
3 sorry -- are far more beneficial than what they
4 are -- the cost to actually put them up. So, I
5 think that going from just 3.5 gigawatts is a
6 great start, but getting to that 15 gigawatts is a
7 necessity to reach our 70 percent reduction goals
8 by 2030.

9 So, thank you again for listening to me,
10 goodbye.

11 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Elijah.

12 Our next speaker is Nate Hotchkiss. Nate.

13 NATE HOTCHKISS: Hello. Thank you, guys,
14 for having me today. I have just been learning
15 about what the New York Power Authority is, but
16 I'm a Binghamton City Council member, and I'm sure
17 there's a lot of residents here that aren't
18 familiar with Binghamton Housing Authority or
19 weren't aware that this public hearing was
20 happening today, but I'm sure they would all be
21 very supportive of bringing more renewable energy
22 projects to New York, specifically around Southern
23 Tier, and throughout Broome County.

24 And like the last speakers have been
25 saying, it doesn't seem like we're really meeting

1 the mark with the 3.5 gigawatt target. I know
2 it's -- getting up to 15 gigawatts is going to be
3 a much more ambitious plan, but I know that you're
4 saying you wanted to be ambitious with some of
5 these projects, and we're going to have to push a
6 lot harder to meet our goals.

7 So, I would just really encourage you guys
8 to try to figure out how you can push for much --
9 a much larger scope of your practice, whatever it
10 takes to help you break through that. I'm happy
11 to advocate with you and give you more resources
12 in whatever way I'm able to. I'm sure everybody
13 throughout New York State would -- the majority
14 would support the advancement of these projects,
15 and specifically throughout the Southern Tier of
16 Broome County.

17 So, thank you so much. Please, please push
18 harder and try to get closer to that 15 gigawatt
19 mark so that we can hit our climate goals. Thank
20 you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Nate.

22 This concludes our list of speakers who've
23 signed up. If anyone else in the room would like
24 to speak, please make your way over to our sign-in
25 table so we can make sure we record your name and

1 get the spelling correct for the record.

2 And we will remain in the room in case
3 others arrive.

4 (Brief recess.)

5 BRIAN SAEZ: Thank you for coming out. And
6 have safe travels home. And again, we'll be here
7 in the room for several more minutes. Thank you,
8 everyone.

9 (Thereupon, at 8:00 p.m., this public
10 meeting was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

- - -

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically
report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript,
page 1 through 26, is a true and complete record of my
stenographic notes.

Dated this 16th day of November 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

55 Eagle Street

Albany, NY 14092

November 18, 2024

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

(Morning session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Charles Imohiosen, SVP Communications & External Affairs

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Laurie Wheelock

SPEAKERS	PAGE
Nathan Rizzo (Solar Liberty.)	21
Lucas Rogers (Coordinator Albany County.)	22
Joanne Cunningham (Albany County Legislature.)	25
Mark Dunlea (Green Education and Legal Fund.)	27
Daniel Hladik (Resident.)	30
Dennis Fitzgerald (Resident.)	31
Sheila Salvatore (Resident.)	33
Greg Sacco (Retired NYPA.)	35
Steve Helmin (Retired IT Director/Engineer.)	37
Keith Schue (NY Energy & Climate Advocates.)	41
Michael Hernandez (Rewiring America.)	44
Steven Collins (Retired Engineer.)	47
Travis Phillips (Laborers Local 190.)	50
Deborah Dewey (Resident.)	51
Jacob Reed (Local Climate Activist.)	52

1 CHARLES IMOHIOSEN: Okay. Thank you for
2 joining us today. My name is Charles Imohiosen.
3 I'm Senior Vice President for Communications and
4 External Affairs at NYPA.

5 This morning, we're gathering -- and this
6 evening, to share information and to collect
7 comments about NYPA's draft renewable Strategic
8 Plan. NYPA issued its draft Renewable Strategic
9 Plan on October 8th and has scheduled 12 public
10 hearings across the state to solicit input from
11 interested parties regarding the draft plan.

12 If someone you know wants to attend but is
13 unable to attend in person today, please let them
14 know NYPA is also hosting a virtual hearing on
15 November 21st and additional in-person hearing
16 sessions in New York City, November 20th on Long
17 Island, November 25th. More information is
18 available on NYPA.gov.

19 We'll begin the hearing this morning with a
20 brief video about the New York Power Authority,
21 that will be followed by an overview of NYPA's
22 expanded authority and the draft Strategic Plan.

23 But primarily, and most importantly, my
24 colleagues and I are here today to hear from you.
25 So, after those presentations, we will invite

1 those who signed up to come to the podium to make
2 a public comment, which will then be transcribed
3 and entered into the public record.

4 Well, with that said, let's begin with a
5 short video that will provide an overview of New
6 York Power Authority so you can get to know us
7 better.

8 (Video played back as follows:

9 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
10 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
11 the solution for New York State and its residents,
12 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
13 opportunities.

14 Through customer partnerships, energy
15 solutions, and the responsible supply of
16 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
17 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
18 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

19 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
20 serving customers in local and state governments,
21 industry, large and small businesses, and
22 nonprofit organizations.

23 The power for these customers is equal to
24 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
25 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation

1 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
2 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
3 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
4 hydropower.

5 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
6 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
7 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
8 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
9 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

10 As we bring power to customers, we also
11 actively ensure people from our host communities
12 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
13 from our clean energy economy.

14 We work on projects across the state to
15 increase energy efficiency, improve
16 infrastructure, and support economic development.

17 Our hydropower projects support more than
18 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
19 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
20 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
21 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
22 the communities we serve.

23 Our economic and community focus extends to
24 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
25 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark

1 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
2 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
3 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
4 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
5 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
6 from around the world.

7 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
8 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
9 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
10 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
11 years to come.

12 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
13 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
14 energy deployment and support other state
15 priorities. This expanded authority will
16 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
17 New York State, support expanded workforce
18 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
19 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
20 Energy Access and Community Health Program to
21 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
22 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned
23 utilities.

24 Additionally, we will lead the state's
25 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by

1 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
2 production at our small natural gas power plants
3 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
4 certain reliability and environmental conditions
5 are met.

6 We are also developing action plans to
7 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
8 carbon-emitting facilities.

9 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
10 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
11 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
12 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
13 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
14 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
15 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
16 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

17 (End of the video.)

18 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: Thank you. As noted in
19 the video, NYPA is the largest state public power
20 organization in the nation. We operate 17
21 generating facilities across the state and more
22 than 1500 circuit miles of transmission.

23 More than 80 percent of the electricity
24 NYPA produces is clean, renewable hydropower. And
25 we believe we are in a unique position to do even

1 more to advance the state's bold clean energy
2 goals.

3 As NYPA builds, owns, and operates new
4 renewable projects, we need to have an electric
5 grid that the projects can connect to, not one
6 that is clogged with bottlenecks that prevent
7 clean energy from getting where it needs to go.

8 That's why NYPA is pursuing the most
9 ambitious transformation of New York's electric
10 grid in more than 40 years, and the state is
11 implementing new procedures to ensure transmission
12 can be sited, connected, and built.

13 NYPA owns one-third of the state's high
14 voltage transmission, and we continue to make
15 major improvements to build a more flexible
16 21st-century electric grid with significantly
17 greater access to a mix of carbon-free energy
18 sources.

19 We also know that a modernized grid will be
20 much more resilient. That's all part of the work
21 we're doing today to support the projects of
22 tomorrow.

23 Over the past two years, NYPA has launched
24 various public engagement initiatives to inform
25 the foundation for building new renewable

1 resources, as also were authorized by the 2023 and
2 2024 enacted state budget.

3 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
4 build renewables subject to a Strategic Plan,
5 which must be approved by its trustees following a
6 public comment period, and at least three public
7 hearings.

8 This is our fifth public hearing in New
9 York State, and we'll have seven additional
10 hearings over the next two weeks. That's because
11 we felt it was very important to hear from all of
12 you, and to have more hearings in more places to
13 accomplish that goal.

14 Like we did with our 2023 and 2024
15 conferral processes, we welcome public engagement
16 and feedback as we shape our Strategic Plan to
17 build more renewables in New York State.

18 I know many of you came to hear and speak
19 about our plan, so I will now turn over the mic to
20 Vennela Yadhati to give a brief overview of the
21 draft Renewable Strategic Plan.

22 Vennela?

23 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Charles. And
24 hello, everyone. I'm Vennela Yadhati, Vice
25 President for NYPA Renewable Project Development,

1 leading the effort to develop new renewable
2 generation and energy storage projects across the
3 state.

4 We're in the middle of what could one of
5 the -- we could say is one of the most significant
6 eras of NYPA's 93-year history. Last May, as part
7 of the 2023-14 Enacted State Budget, lawmakers
8 entrusted NYPA with new expanded authority, new
9 capabilities, responsibilities, or new
10 opportunities for us to further serve New Yorkers
11 in the sector of clean energy.

12 Let me explain what that means: First, the
13 expanded authority gave NYPA the ability to build,
14 own, and operate renewable energy generation
15 sources like solar, wind, and battery storage to
16 help the state achieve its bold renewable energy
17 objectives outlined in the Climate Act.

18 My team at NYPA has identified a first
19 tranche of 40 such projects spread across every
20 region of the state, and while the state budget
21 did not require NYPA to meet any specific
22 threshold in its Strategic Plan, these 40
23 represent a total capacity exceeding 3.5
24 gigawatts.

25 Now, how much is 3.5 gigawatts? That's the

1 same as 10 percent of the electric load for all of
2 New York City. I know that sounds like -- small,
3 but it is what it takes to power whole cities like
4 Zurich, Helsinki, or Reykjavik; or here in the
5 United States, for an easier reference, Bolder,
6 Reno, or Santa Fe. That's what 3.5 gigawatt
7 means.

8 And these 40 projects are just the
9 beginning of our commitment to expand our
10 portfolio of delivering clean, reliable energy to
11 every corner of New York.

12 Right now, NYPA is doing full due diligence
13 on each project to determine whether or not they
14 are the best fit for New Yorkers. We want to
15 ensure these projects truly benefit our
16 communities and therefore, belong in NYPA's
17 renewable energy portfolio.

18 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's
19 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment
20 in New York. We also want to explore meaningful
21 partnerships to support the state's equitable and
22 efficient transition to a clean energy future.

23 This first tranche includes a mix of NYPA's
24 own greenfield projects and co-developed
25 initiatives, where we will partner with private

1 companies to combine our complementary skills and
2 strengths to jointly develop, construct, and own
3 and operate these projects together.

4 It includes a variety of sizes of projects
5 as well, both large, which is a predominant
6 portion of this first tranche of projects, and
7 small distributors scale projects as well.

8 It includes a variety of technologies,
9 solar PV, land-based wind, and battery energy
10 storage systems, and a variety of locations and
11 site conditions. Half of our own greenfield
12 portfolio includes projects that repurpose former
13 landfills, brownfields, and closed correctional
14 facilities for advancing renewable energy
15 projects.

16 You know, turning the brown into the green,
17 or green is the new brown, right?

18 My point is we are collaborating with our
19 sister agencies and our customers, such as local
20 governments, to identify more such siting
21 opportunities because we know NYPA cannot do this
22 alone.

23 We have some recent examples for this.
24 Right here in Albany, we have a project about two
25 -- a little over 2 megawatts project that we've

1 built at the SUNY Albany campus, which actually is
2 the largest rooftop solar PV project on any SUNY
3 campus.

4 Another example is as recent as about two
5 or three weeks ago that we brought online,
6 approximately the same size solar PV project on --
7 for Albany County on the county-owned property.
8 So, we continue to look for more such
9 opportunities, especially that are going to bring
10 more benefits to the local communities.

11 And let's talk about the financing aspects
12 of -- in general, what does it mean to build --
13 people talking about the gap that New York State
14 may be facing, you know, the 15 gigawatts.
15 Financing 15 gigawatts of energy would be the same
16 as paying for four new LaGuardia airports. But we
17 continue to look for new partners. As part of
18 that, we have pre-qualified a stable of more than
19 85 developers and investors that can collaborate
20 with us to build this initial tranche but also the
21 future ones.

22 NYPA's role and goal is not to crowd out
23 the private sector but to work together,
24 leveraging our strengths to build more renewables
25 and help the state achieve its clean energy goals.

1 By maintaining majority ownership and
2 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch out
3 finances further and accelerate the transition to
4 clean energy.

5 As we described in the draft Strategic
6 Plan, NYPA has not received any state funding to
7 build new renewable generation projects. Instead,
8 we're self-funding these efforts, along with --
9 given our critical commitments to the CLCPA, such
10 as new transmission development and, more
11 importantly, growing the clean energy workforce,
12 all entirely through NYPA's own revenues.

13 Given these constraints, a balanced
14 approach is essential to bring more renewable
15 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
16 offer the highest returns.

17 This ensures we can reduce the cost for
18 ratepayers and maximize the impact of every dollar
19 spent.

20 And there is more to come. This is only
21 the first tranche and the first Strategic Plan we
22 have published. In a way, the plan itself is
23 renewable; a plan we will regularly update as we
24 add more projects for consideration by the public,
25 and NYPA's Board of Trustees, some of whom we have

1 here in the room.

2 Part of preparing to release this draft
3 plan was making sure NYPA had the right tools and
4 staffed right to support it. This includes having
5 the expertise to make sure the proposed projects
6 meet technical, economic, environmental, and
7 environmental justice needs in the state.

8 In the past 18 months, we have established
9 a new business line and new business structures
10 and filled key personnel roles, like my team, many
11 of whom are here in this very room right now.

12 We have obtained approval from our Board of
13 Trustees to form a renewable subsidiary and an
14 initial capital allocation of \$100 million for
15 developing and garnering other necessary resources
16 to advance this first tranche of projects.

17 We continue to source and solicit
18 additional project opportunities to append to our
19 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue
20 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
21 as it expands and grows its pipeline of future
22 tranches of projects.

23 And these projects aren't being built in a
24 silo. They are part of a holistic approach to
25 renewable development that supports, again,

1 environmental justice, workforce development, and
2 affordability.

3 How are we doing it? You see, the '23-'24
4 State Enacted Budget also gave NYPA the ability to
5 establish the Renewable Energy Access and
6 Community Help, or REACH program, and use a
7 portion of the revenues generated from the new
8 renewable energy projects to benefit low- or
9 moderate-income households and disadvantaged
10 communities through electric utility bill credits.

11 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
12 Service Commission has formally accepted our
13 application to create the REACH program.

14 Once our projects are online and generating
15 revenue, and NYPA gathers funds from available
16 sources, money will be available to flow to
17 low-income New Yorkers through the process set
18 forth by the PSC order.

19 While REACH is still under development, the
20 program will appear as automatic bill credits
21 alongside the Energy Affordability Program and the
22 Statewide Solar for All programs.

23 NYPA will also invest up to \$25 million
24 annually in collaboration with the New York State
25 Department of Labor to create jobs and provide

1 workforce training for people who want to work in
2 the clean energy industry.

3 Through this partnership, we have already
4 awarded \$12.5 million this fiscal year in funding
5 for opportunities for New Yorkers, including
6 youth, young people, and youth from Buffalo to New
7 York, through programs like the Say Yes Buffalo
8 Youth Apprenticeship Program and the Renaissance
9 Technical Institute in New York City, as well as
10 others from disadvantaged communities across the
11 state to pursue good-paying clean energy careers.

12 And with regard to the workforce on these
13 proposed projects, NYPA will require each and
14 every renewable energy-generating project to be
15 built with union labor.

16 I'm going to say that again: Every single
17 project in our draft plan must have a project
18 labor agreement. And we will require all our
19 contractors and subcontractors associated with the
20 project work to utilize apprenticeship programs
21 and agreements so those learning on this first
22 tranche of projects can be seasoned veterans for
23 NYPA's future tranches of renewable energy
24 projects.

25 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a

1 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at its
2 small natural gas power plants in New York City
3 and Long Island by 2030, as long as, of course,
4 reliability and environmental conditions are met.

5 To this end, we are actively exploring
6 strategies to meet this commitment, along with our
7 fellow agencies, including the New York
8 Independent System Operator, while considering
9 grid reliability and air quality impacts,
10 including the potential for deploying battery
11 storage at some of these sites.

12 We're in discussions with several
13 developers about energy storage and other
14 electrical infrastructure solutions to transform
15 these sites while also preserving site grid
16 reliability.

17 In conclusion, I know I just shared a long
18 list of actions NYPA has take -- or NYPA has taken
19 to date and continues to as part of the new
20 authority.

21 It is hard work. As a reminder, the draft
22 of our plan is on our website,
23 nypa.gov/renewables, and I encourage all of you to
24 read it if you already haven't. Not just because
25 the people that wrote it are in the room, and I'm

1 watching for them, but in fact, it is a good read,
2 and we would love to hear from you all.

3 The draft plan spells out our approach to
4 renewables and our efforts to identify the first
5 projects and partnerships NYPA aims to pursue.

6 This legislation represents a significant
7 increase in NYPA's role in the energy sector,
8 bringing us back to our roots of revolutionizing
9 the state's grid to benefit all New Yorkers.

10 Thank you for taking the time today to
11 learn more and to give your valuable comments
12 about this plan.

13 Back to you, Charles.

14 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: Thanks so much,
15 Vennela.

16 Okay. With that, I will remind everyone
17 that the law requires NYPA to solicit public
18 comment and to hold a minimum of three public
19 hearings in regionally diverse parts of the state
20 on the draft Strategic Plan that Vennela just
21 described.

22 Our timekeeper, Lindsay Kryzak, will call
23 on everybody who signed up to speak today, this
24 morning, and our speakers will be given three
25 minutes to deliver public comment for the record.

1 If anyone needs a translator, please alert
2 the Power Authority staff at the sign-in table.

3 We recognize some of you may have longer
4 comments than others. If you run out of time, you
5 could submit your full comment on our website or
6 email it directly to
7 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. QR codes are on
8 the sign-in tables to make it even easier.

9 The feedback you give this morning will be
10 transcribed and compiled with the written
11 comments, which must be considered and
12 incorporated into the final Strategic Plan.

13 The final plan will be published on NYPA's
14 website and submitted to the Governor and the
15 legislature by January 31st, 2025.

16 Thank you again for joining us. I'll now
17 turn the mic back over to our timekeeper.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Charles.

19 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
20 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
21 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or
22 required by applicable law, regulation, or order,
23 and it may be made available in whole or in part
24 in the public record in accordance with the
25 agency's rules.

1 Each member of the public will be given
2 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.
3 Additional comments may be shared via our website
4 at NYPA.gov or email, again, that's at
5 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

6 Our speaker today is Nathan Rizzo. Nathan.

7 NATHAN RIZZO: Good morning. My name is
8 Nathan Rizzo. My company is Solar Liberty. We're
9 based out of Buffalo, New York.

10 I just wanted to -- to voice my opinion and
11 the benefit of public projects in our partnership
12 today with the New York Power Authority. We
13 started our journey with the New York Power
14 Authority approximately 15 years ago. We've
15 partnered on 44 projects throughout the state.
16 Those projects consist of solar energy projects,
17 both rooftop and ground mount, and two battery
18 storage projects.

19 Through the partnership that Solar Liberty
20 has had with New York Power Authority, I've
21 witnessed firsthand the benefit that they bring to
22 projects in both getting them across the finish
23 line, and have -- having them being developed
24 cost-effectively and efficiently.

25 To date, of those 44 solar projects, seven

1 have been on SUNY colleges and universities, 23
2 have been in public schools, and the remainder
3 have been for local governments, both fire halls,
4 local municipalities, all bringing clean energy to
5 the local communities.

6 At the same time, it has decreased their
7 costs, and provided a benefit, not only
8 financially, but also with a renewable energy
9 source, and it has created a tremendous amount of
10 job growth with our -- within our own company.

11 We have approximately 85 employees, and
12 through that 15-year history that we have had with
13 the New York Power Authority -- I couldn't say we
14 -- we would have grown as much as we -- we did.

15 So, we're very appreciative of everything
16 that NYPA has done, and we look forward to a
17 continued relationship and the possibility of
18 working with NYPA in the future. Thank you.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Nathan.

20 Our next speaker is Lucas Rogers. Lucas.

21 LUCAS ROGERS: Thank you. Good morning.

22 My name is Lucas Rogers. I am the Economic
23 Development and Sustainability Coordinator in the
24 Albany County Executive's office.

25 I'm here today representing County

1 Executive Dan McCoy, who has consistently made
2 sustainability a pillar of his administration.

3 One of my roles is determining ways to
4 reduce our operational emissions without
5 sacrificing the quality of the services that they
6 -- that we deliver. This means looking at ways we
7 can reduce the climate impact of things like our
8 fleet, our buildings, and our power supply. And
9 NYPA has been a tremendous partner in these
10 efforts.

11 We have worked with the Power Authority on
12 numerous projects, including conversion of our
13 streetlights to LEDs. And most recently, the
14 development of a 2.1-megawatt solar array in the
15 Town of Colonie on county property that will
16 provide clean power to the county.

17 Through these partnerships, I have
18 witnessed the important role that NYPA can play in
19 our state's clean energy transition. This, in my
20 opinion, is due both to their commitment to
21 sustainability but in particular, the
22 knowledgeable and dedicated staff that they bring.

23 We had a wonderful partnership, and
24 overcoming numerous hurdles in -- in, frankly,
25 both of projects and we were able to achieve that

1 through a partnership with NYPA and with their
2 staff.

3 The Strategic Plan being discussed today, I
4 think, is another positive step for NYPA in their
5 effort to move our state towards its climate
6 goals.

7 Meeting these goals will require the
8 government and the private sector to both do their
9 part and, in many cases, work together to
10 accelerate our clean energy transition.

11 The Strategic Plan lays the groundwork for
12 this type of cooperation, and I think positions
13 the Authority as a major player in this process
14 going forward.

15 I will say I view this plan, of course, as
16 the beginning, not the end. There is -- this will
17 be, I'm sure, an iterative process, and we'll
18 learn and be adapted and urge the Authority to
19 continue to be aggressive as they pursue these
20 goals.

21 But I do want to commend the Authority for
22 taking this step and say that I look forward to
23 continued partnership in the years to come. Thank
24 you.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Lucas.

1 Our next speaker, and we're glad to have
2 her with us, is the Chair of our Albany County
3 legislature, Joanne Cunningham. Joanne.

4 JOANNE CUNNINGHAM: Thank you. I'm Joanne
5 Cunningham. I am the Chair of the Albany County
6 Legislature, and I'm here today representing the
7 Albany County Legislature.

8 I do want to highlight the prior speaker
9 from Albany County Executive, Dan McCoy's office.
10 The legislature has been very happy to work in
11 collaboration with the county exec, not just on
12 renewables and -- and fleet management, and other
13 aspects that Lucas had highlighted, but really
14 across the board on climate resiliency.

15 I would like to first just thank NYPA for
16 going above and beyond in this public hearing
17 process. I know that the Authority is required, I
18 guess, to have three public hearings, and I know
19 that you are -- have made the decision to hold 12
20 statewide. And I think that speaks volumes to the
21 commitment you have to generating a community
22 conversation. I think that's really important.

23 I also want to just highlight the fact that
24 I think that what you're doing to showcase the
25 underpinning of this project to -- to facilitate

1 and create a cleaner, greener, more equitable
2 energy landscape for all New Yorkers, that's a
3 wonderful goal. I think we're thrilled,
4 especially now, to see the leadership in New York
5 State in -- in this type of initiative that will
6 dramatically transform New York State's energy
7 footprint.

8 I also just want to highlight a couple of
9 areas of -- of particular note to the legislature.
10 This draft plan demonstrates front and center a
11 very strong commitment to increasing the state's
12 renewable energy capacity. By focusing on solar
13 energy and also storage projects, the plan, as you
14 know, aims to generate clean energy within the
15 state, significantly reducing fossil fuel
16 emissions. And that is crucial in our fight
17 against climate change and improving the quality
18 of our air for all New Yorkers.

19 I also, again, just want to highlight what
20 I think is one of the most impressive aspects of
21 the draft plan, and that is your emphasis on
22 community engagement. And as I mentioned, going
23 above and beyond to generate that community
24 engagement through these public forums, as well as
25 other initiatives, outreach to the legislature, as

1 well as in other areas, really does foster a sense
2 of ownership and involvement among all residents,
3 among all stakeholders. And I think that is very
4 laudable, and -- and I complement you on that in
5 particular.

6 I also wanted to just highlight one last
7 thing.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

9 JOANNE CUNNINGHAM: And that is workforce
10 development. Excuse me. I know the plan is
11 investing millions -- \$25 million in workforce
12 investment. I do know there's lots of labor in
13 the room, and it looks like you're off to a great
14 start --

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Joanne.

16 JOANNE CUNNINGHAM: -- engaging labor, and
17 appreciate all the good work that's gone into
18 this. Thank you.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

20 Our next speaker is Mark Dunlea. Mark.

21 Sorry. Mark, are you in the room? Okay.
22 Thank you, Mark.

23 MARK DUNLEA: Hi, my name is Mark Dunlea,
24 on behalf of Green Education and Legal Fund. I've
25 submitted a written testimony. I'm also someone

1 -- of the climate groups.

2 Just quickly summarize on a few key points:
3 Climate change is accelerating. The 1.5-degree
4 target has been breached for almost an entire year
5 at this point.

6 The UN says that this whole action by
7 governments has opened up the gates of hell. We
8 support the Public Power Coalition's call for 15
9 gigawatts as a goal rather than 3.5.

10 I've been a public power advocate since
11 1980. I'm going to try to get Albany County to do
12 it. Besides increasing total plant capacity to at
13 least 15 gigawatts, the plan should include a
14 detailed plan to phaseout of NYPA's peaker plants,
15 should fully decarbonize our public schools, and
16 ensure that enough capacity is built to create and
17 sustain a pipeline of green union jobs for all New
18 Yorkers.

19 New York has repeatedly failed to meet the
20 goals it has set for renewable energy, starting
21 with Governor Pataki's 2002 goals of 30 percent
22 renewable by 2015. The state recently (inaudible)
23 one that's not going to meet what we view as
24 inadequate renewable energy goals of the CLCPA.
25 We need to speed that up.

1 One thing I really urge the state to do is
2 to increase NYPA's involvement with offshore wind.
3 I know people are going to be testifying about the
4 intermittent nature of recyclables, solar, and
5 wind. West Shore wind blows at night, so it's
6 really good to complement solar.

7 Mark Dickerson and Bob Howard's 2012 report
8 showed that we could probably get about 40 percent
9 of the state's electric needs from offshore wind.

10 Geothermal should be a bigger issue in
11 terms of what NYPA is doing. Texas is the world's
12 -- I'm sorry -- the nation's leader on that, and
13 that includes producing for electricity as well as
14 heating and cooling.

15 We support the Renewable Capitol Act. You
16 know, NYPA is talking about thinking 10 years just
17 for a 50 percent reduction. At the Plaza, we
18 support a three-year thing. This is a major,
19 major environmental issue. We would urge NYPA to
20 begin the geothermal rather than wait 10 years.

21 We are disappointed by NYPA's slow progress
22 in finding renewable electricity for the capital
23 complex. We suggest looking at expanding the
24 Green Island hydro facility, which has had a
25 decade-long permission increased from 6 megawatts

1 to 48 megawatts.

2 I remember five years ago meeting with
3 Richard Coughlin, to call him (inaudible) energies
4 are. He explained the reason why the state was
5 doing so poorly on renewable energy was problems
6 trying to coordinate both the different owners of
7 transmission lines.

8 We said, Richard, if that's the problem,
9 why doesn't the state take public ownership of the
10 transition plan? That would improve coordination,
11 save consumers money, and we urge NYPA to do so.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Mark.

13 Our next speaker is Daniel Hladik. Daniel.

14 DANIEL HLADIK: Good morning. I'm just
15 here to show support for the proposal that was
16 laid out by the Power Authority. I got an
17 opportunity to look at it, and I think it's a
18 great thing spread out across the -- the state.
19 It's the wave of the future.

20 And I've got an opportunity to work --
21 excuse me -- on some of those sites and see some
22 of my fellow coworkers, you know, putting it in,
23 putting -- working out there. And everybody likes
24 to work. It's good-paying jobs across the state.
25 And I think it's a great thing. Thank you.

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Daniel.

2 Our next speaker is Dennis Fitzgerald.

3 Dennis.

4 DENNIS FITZGERALD: Good morning. My name
5 is Dennis Fitzgerald. I just wanted to comment on
6 some of the comparisons. I did a comparison
7 between some wind, solar, and nuclear. I compared
8 the Vogtle Plant in -- in Georgia, the Alta Wind
9 Farm, the biggest in the country, out in
10 California, Shepherds Flat, a wind farm in Oregon,
11 the Solar Star, a solar farm in California.

12 I looked at the construction costs, the
13 power, the land usage, and the lifespan. Using
14 the nameplate capacity and capacity factors of
15 each, I scaled up the number of turbine sales,
16 solar panels, costs, and land usage so that each
17 would equal the energy produced by a volatile
18 plant. That would be the energy, watt-hours, not
19 watts.

20 So, to generate the -- the equivalent
21 energy supply by the 4.5-gigawatt nuclear plant,
22 wind and solar construction costs about two to
23 four -- and I also factored in the 20 -- the
24 lifespans of each, 20 years for wind, 25 for
25 solar, and 80 for nuclear.

1 Wind and solar construction is two times
2 more than nuclear. A quarter to half a million
3 acres as compared to 3,000 for nuclear. Wind and
4 solar will require massive amounts of energy
5 storage, which isn't included in any of this.

6 After all this, wind and solar still
7 require backup generation; when the weather
8 doesn't cooperate, it's still unreliable. By the
9 end of the 80-year period, we will have had to
10 dispose of 27,000 wind turbines, 28 million solar
11 panels, for one nuclear reactor.

12 This is -- wind and solar just doesn't seem
13 reasonable. The -- it presents a massive -- a
14 massive long-term recycling and disposal
15 challenge.

16 If New York is serious in achieving
17 efficient, reliable, carbon-free electricity, it
18 should stop promoting wind and solar. It should
19 start focusing on nuclear. It should develop a
20 realistic plan, including necessary requirements
21 and schedules to -- to transition fossil plants to
22 nuclear. Thank you.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

24 Our next speaker here is Sheila Salvatore.
25 Sheila.

1 SHEILA SALVATORE: Good morning. My name
2 is Sheila Salvatore, and I reside in Sequoia.
3 I've been fighting industrial wind turbines for
4 over 15 years. A foreign wind developer now wants
5 to blanket over 20,000 acres of my community with
6 wind turbines.

7 I'm here today to ask that the New York
8 Power Authority protect our rural and suburban
9 communities from the unwise and detrimental
10 impacts of the vast land required for industrial
11 wind and solar and reject the notion of using
12 eminent domain for such projects.

13 We must recognize that wind turbines and
14 solar panels aren't reliable or stable forms of
15 power generation due to the nature of these
16 resources. Both are intermittent and require
17 great amounts of land for what, in the end, is an
18 inadequate resource.

19 Our state's load demand is increasing, and
20 in the case of chip plants in particular, a power
21 intermittence of nanoseconds is a serious problem.
22 For example, Wolfspeed, a power transistor
23 manufacturer in Marcy, New York, chose that site
24 in part because of the transmission infrastructure
25 located there. That plant has six independent

1 power inputs and can run on any one of them.
2 Still, fearing a brief loss of power, it has
3 additional natural gas-powered onsite generation
4 plants.

5 This level of power supply security is
6 necessary to operate a chip plant. And if this is
7 a growth sector of the New York State's industrial
8 base, any -- which contributes to power
9 intermittency must be discouraged. That's wind
10 and solar. And that, which meaningfully
11 contributes to base-power liability, nuclear and
12 hydro, must be encouraged.

13 There was no surprise that when Indian
14 Point was closed, New York State went from 61
15 percent carbon-neutral power to 50 percent
16 overnight. We need nuclear power and are excited
17 for advanced nuclear power development to meet our
18 growing electric power needs and industrial
19 development power objectives, all while preserving
20 the health and character of our rural and suburban
21 communities from energy sprawl.

22 Please do your part to protect New York
23 State from this incredible waste of our tax
24 dollars and our land. Thank you.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Sheila.

1 Our next speaker is Greg Sacco. Greg.

2 GREG SACCO: Hello. I'm Greg Sacco. I'm
3 retired, NYPA, 35 years. I'm proud of what we did
4 for the citizens in New York State. NYPA led the
5 way with powerful hydro projects. Moses and FDR,
6 our one-time JAF nuclear plant, Blenheim-Gilboa,
7 and Lewiston pump storage -- true batteries. True
8 batteries of the system.

9 Dalton's project in Astoria. Our small
10 hydros and gas peakers led the way with our
11 synchronous condensers in Massena and our one of
12 five in the world convertible static compensators
13 at Clark Energy Center. All this equipment, along
14 with multiple voltage control and reactor devices,
15 through which the state created a stable,
16 well-engineered power grid.

17 I got involved in this because of a close
18 Canadian company that wants to cover 3,000 acres
19 of my town's land with an 11-percent capacity
20 solar farm. I don't know why they call it a farm.
21 A non-dispatchable means of energy that will cover
22 our farmlands for 25 years.

23 Our small town in Deerfield, like many
24 townships throughout the state, was tasked to
25 create a solar -- a town solar law. Along with

1 eight other people, we -- we committed 14 months
2 with NYSERDA representatives, county IDAs,
3 senators, assembly people, only to have the state
4 create 94-c ORES, our loss of home, Rule 575 --
5 pardon -- a loss of full value assessment for our
6 townships, the Build Public Renewables Act and the
7 RAPID Act.

8 And I guess, maybe next, NYPA will be going
9 after eminent domain for not only transmission,
10 but wind and solar.

11 We need to remember we can build all the
12 wind and solar imaginable -- imaginable to cover
13 the megawatt load, but it's not -- but if there is
14 a true load out there, solar and wind is not going
15 to be distributed generation. We're going to need
16 nuclear, gas, and hydro, or whatever to match that
17 same load.

18 And the talk to closing peaker plants, good
19 luck. Good luck. And I hope I'm around to see
20 that day. It's going to be a long, long way away.

21 We shutdown -- we made their wise decision
22 to shutdown IP -- Indian Point, and we replaced it
23 with Cricket Valley and CPV Valley, two gas
24 turbines; why is this decision -- Thomas DiNapoli
25 wrote the other day on November 14th, that despite

1 the economic growth between 2012 and 2022, the
2 state lost 14 percent of its farmlands. We lost
3 1728 acres. This is the '22. So, today, it's
4 much, much more for solar-generating facilities.

5 I close with this: Please come to a town
6 -- Please come to a town/village board meeting,
7 see what's happening to our upstate property, see
8 what's happening to our upstate people. NYPA can
9 lead the way, I understand that; I've been there
10 and I've done it, to build dispatchable true
11 generation. Let's -- let's not become the next
12 California, Germany, or Texas. Thank you.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Greg.

14 Our next speaker is Steve Helmin. Steve.

15 STEVE HELMIN: Good morning. I'm a retired
16 IT Director and Engineer. I see risk here.
17 Financial risk, project risk, plan risk, and grid
18 risk. This plan follows the state's path of a
19 (inaudible) grid-based primarily on wind and
20 solar, a pipe dream that NYSERDA has already told
21 us will fail to meet the CLCPA goals and if
22 implemented, will destabilize the grid and still
23 fail to eradicate gas and oil-generating plants.

24 NYPA has targeted failing and struggling
25 projects to partner with across the state. You

1 have decided to provide corporate welfare to
2 private projects that can't get to the finish line
3 despite enormous financial advantages.

4 Your vetting process for these partnerships
5 seems to lack the competitive bidding process that
6 protects us from insider deals and runaway costs.
7 You're putting NYPA's gold star financial standing
8 at risk, trying to save failing projects.

9 My town, and 2500 souls, Glen, New York, is
10 a disadvantaged community. You're partnering with
11 ConnectGen to build a large-scale industrial solar
12 plant there. And a tourist distract- -- tourist
13 attractions, such as the Erie Canal, and
14 Auriesville Shrine, and Bellinger's Orchards.

15 You say the project actively benefits DACs.
16 You haven't asked us. This public hearing isn't
17 Glen. We saw the map. In fact, your public
18 hearings skipped nearly every community targeted
19 by NYPA's large-scale planned building projects.
20 One has to wonder why.

21 There won't be any good long-term jobs with
22 the Glen project. The temporary construction jobs
23 won't be local. They'll bus them in from hours
24 away, they'll bring their own lunches, and they
25 won't stay in the one hotel.

1 Local governments won't benefit much
2 either. The state gives solar and wind facilities
3 a 75-percent off coupon on their local property
4 tax. Instead of benefits, we've seen division.
5 Division between those making deals with the
6 company, and those opposing the devastating
7 impacts to our community's character and its
8 economic, cultural, visual, environmental, and
9 spiritual health. Families divided, long-term
10 relationships ruined. 17-year-olds and
11 19-year-olds alike visibly upset, tears because
12 the land and vistas that they grew up with will be
13 paved with glass and steel. 26,000- -- 2665
14 acres.

15 The only comments on the ORES website in
16 favor are from folks whose families have leased or
17 sold or who are getting good-neighbor agreement
18 financial inducements.

19 ConnectGen isn't committed -- committed to
20 New York like -- like -- committed to New York,
21 like you, and me, and all the people in this room.
22 They're from Houston, the home of the oil
23 industry. The VC firm that created them is
24 heavily involved with gas and oil drilling.
25 They're here for the money. And now they've been

1 bought by a Spanish company, Repsol.

2 To my knowledge, ConnectGen has yet to
3 build a single operating plant. A different
4 listed developer is an ancient leftover from
5 Article 10.

6 Is this how NYPA builds a stable of
7 qualified developers? New York needs a diverse
8 set of solutions to reduce its carbon footprint.

9 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Steve.

10 STEVE HELMIN: Your wholesale giveaway of
11 our dollars and once-abundant lands to foreign
12 out-of-state wind and solar companies will bring
13 ruin, not only to my community but to all New
14 Yorkers. Thank you very much.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
16 speaker is Kenneth Schue. Kenneth.

17 KEITH SCHUE: I think you mean Keith Schue.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Oh, Keith.

19 KEITH SCHUE: It's all right.

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Sorry.

21 KEITH SCHUE: It's my handwriting. I
22 apologize.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: No, it wasn't you. It was
24 me.

25 This is Keith. That was my mistake. Thank

1 you.

2 KEITH SCHUE: Thank you. I'm Keith Schue
3 with New York Energy and Climate Advocates, an
4 organization that understands the reality of
5 climate change and the moral imperative for action
6 and clean solutions that work in the real world.

7 Honestly, we're not a fan of this plan, but
8 it's not because we don't appreciate NYPA.
9 Historically, NYPA has been a premier example of a
10 public power authority doing what a public
11 authority does best: Building important projects
12 that serve the public good. They are essential
13 for a functioning system, but they are tough for
14 the private sector to do on their own, either
15 because they're complex, have higher upfront
16 costs, or maybe longer return on investment.

17 So, that's why you built the giant
18 hydropower plants. You also helped make New York
19 a leader in nuclear power. Let's not forget that.
20 Fitzpatrick was even named after NYPA's former
21 chair. Those projects are why Upstate New York
22 has reliable, affordable electricity today.

23 NYPA is why the upstate grid is already 90
24 percent carbon-free. But now, instead of
25 strengthening the grid, you've been told to build

1 things that could break it, to discriminate
2 against firm sources, and focus almost entirely on
3 those that are fragile, intermittent, that are
4 incredibly wasteful of land and material
5 resources, and (inaudible) as nature.

6 It's an extreme agenda that will ultimately
7 fail to decarbonize our grid and will keep us tied
8 to fossil fuels while making electricity less
9 reliable and more expensive.

10 It also reflects a political snapshot from
11 the past. From two years ago, things have
12 changed. Engineers like me have said for quite a
13 while that this lopsided approach won't work.
14 You've also heard it from NYISO. And I think
15 you've heard it from your own staff.

16 But now you're also hearing it from the
17 industry, from the business community, from
18 Micron, from labor. Governor Hochul gets it, too,
19 as we saw in Syracuse. Micron alone will add more
20 24/7 demand than all of Vermont and New Hampshire
21 combined. It's time to get real.

22 Diversity is strengthened, and will take a
23 diversity of resources, including advanced
24 nuclear, to decarbonize while providing abundant
25 energy for a growing economy and workforce. So,

1 maybe your hands are not as tied as you think. A
2 deeply renewable grid will need support for
3 dispatchable emission-free resources. So,
4 providing that support is consistent with your
5 mission.

6 Batteries and hydrogen aren't enough. In
7 the real world, unless New York plans to retain
8 most of its fossil field capacity, it will need
9 (inaudible) that run more than 2 percent of the
10 time.

11 So, do what you're good at. Support the
12 Governor in bringing flexible advanced nuclear to
13 New York. There are communities who want it. You
14 can also get more from in-state hydro, at least a
15 little bit. The New York Power Authority should
16 be working with the Green Island Power Authority
17 to make their expansion project on the Hudson
18 happen.

19 And regardless of whether we plaster the
20 countryside with solar and wind that won't meet
21 our energy needs, or build a handful of compact
22 reactors that will, either way, we're going to
23 need -- need more transmission. So work on that,
24 too, but do it in a way that respects communities.

25 And that gets to my final point: Right

1 now, West Upstate communities are under assault
2 from (inaudible). Businesses questioning whether
3 they can survive in New York. Industry is
4 wondering if they will have energy to expand, and
5 skilled labor is wondering if the best job they
6 can hope for is unpacking solar panels from China.

7 If we want to succeed, there's going to
8 have to be compromise. A rational expansion of
9 solar wind plus a rational expansion of firm
10 nuclear power can solve this, but we need NYPA to
11 be the adults in the room to help make that
12 happen.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

14 Our next speaker is Michael Hernandez.
15 Michael.

16 MICHAEL HERNANDEZ: Hello, I'm Michael
17 Hernandez, Rewiring America. I'm -- Rewiring
18 America is a New York Policy Director. Rewiring
19 America is a leading nonprofit electrification
20 advocacy organization.

21 We're helping New Yorkers that want to
22 electrify their homes. New Yorkers come to our
23 website to find out about incentives to get
24 information about electrification. They use our
25 IRA calculator to find out about benefits that

1 they're eligible for, as well as our personal
2 electrification planning tools so that they can
3 find out what -- what different electrification
4 projects they can do in their homes.

5 The Climate Leadership and Community
6 Protection Act is an ambitious law passed in 2019
7 that created our clean energy goals as well as our
8 greenhouse gas reduction goals and focused on
9 disadvantaged communities. Built into the law is
10 equity. And where -- whenever we're doing any
11 project, an authority, New York State, agencies,
12 they must spend at least 35 percent of the
13 revenues on those disadvantaged communities,
14 according to the climate law.

15 The climate law also required the creation
16 of the Scoping Plan and the Barriers and
17 Opportunities Report, which NYPA was a -- an
18 author of. That -- that report basically found
19 all of these areas where disadvantaged communities
20 could be -- there were opportunities to
21 decarbonize disadvantaged communities. And that
22 certainly should be baked into this Strategic
23 Plan.

24 I'll mention that Section 7 of the Climate
25 Law also said that authorities cannot take

1 administrative actions if they in -- are going to
2 interfere with our greenhouse gas reduction goals
3 unless they do a statement of justification.

4 And so, we should see NYPA doing an
5 analysis of whether this Strategic Plan does
6 enough to get us to our greenhouse gas reduction
7 goals before. And if not, they should do a
8 statement of justification as required by the law.

9 I'll say that the Scoping Plan was created.
10 That should certainly be incorporated into the
11 plan. The federal government passed the Inflation
12 Reduction Act, which is providing rebates and tax
13 incentives to homeowners to electrify. New York
14 City passed Local Law 97, requiring the
15 decarbonization of larger buildings.

16 And we passed the All Electric Buildings
17 Act, which basically requires all new buildings to
18 be electrified. So, we're going to need this
19 electric grid. NYPA -- NYSERDA has already said
20 that they're not going to make it in time, and so
21 your actions are very important.

22 I think the Strategic Plan needs to include
23 data on pilot programs, benefits to the
24 ratepayers, and we need more projects. I think
25 the projects that have been --

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Michael.

2 MICHAEL HERNANDEZ: The projects that have
3 been identified do not provide information on --
4 certain information on the proposed project. We
5 need more megawatts. And we're also looking
6 forward to the decarbonization of state-owned
7 facilities report. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Michael.

9 Our next speaker is Steven Collins.
10 Steven.

11 STEVEN COLLINS: Good morning. My name is
12 Steven Collins. I'm a resident of the village of
13 Van Hornesville in Herkimer County. I'm a retired
14 professor of engineering and licensed professional
15 engineer in New York and Washington.

16 I speak to you today as a concerned
17 citizen. I'm opposed to the expansion of the New
18 York Power Authority's portfolio to include the
19 development of renewable energy projects for two
20 reasons: First, the principal renewable energy
21 sources under consideration, wind, and solar, are
22 notoriously intermittent. One can easily use the
23 real-time generation data from New York ISO to
24 reveal long stretches of time when our wind and
25 solar resources delivered power at only a small

1 fraction of their rated capacity. And while
2 storage may eventually enable the smoothing out of
3 the peaks and valleys, I don't believe the
4 technology is sufficiently developed, and the
5 required investments in interconnection will be
6 huge.

7 Furthermore, because of their low capacity
8 factors, a far greater number of point-source wind
9 and solar plants are required to deliver the same
10 energy output as a nuclear hydro or natural gas
11 combined cycle plant.

12 For example, a 5-megawatt land-based
13 turbine, the capacity factors we've seen in recent
14 years here, we would need about 720 such turbines
15 to deliver the same annual energy as a 1-gigawatt
16 nuclear plant.

17 The land requirements will be enormous --
18 and similarly for solar. We're talking about
19 covering a large swath of the state's farmland
20 land with wind turbines and solar panels, not to
21 mention the environmental effects, the potential
22 health impacts from living in close proximity to
23 mechanical devices that slice through the air at
24 speeds exceeding 100 miles per hour.

25 So, I would ask, would meeting our future

1 electricity growth with such intermittent sources
2 really be a responsible use of our precious land
3 and other resources? And can we interconnect it
4 all without breaking the state's finances and the
5 backs of electricity users?

6 Second, for all the smallest renewable
7 energy plants in this state now, the state can
8 override local opposition in siting turbines and
9 solar arrays. I would ask, is that democratic?
10 Is it just to force the residents of rural parts
11 of this state to bear the burden of renewable
12 energy that will mostly be consumed downstate?

13 In my own community, I've seen neighbors be
14 turned against neighbors and town meetings turned
15 into ugly shouting matches for reasons that some
16 of our previous speakers have noted. And for
17 whose benefit? Not the residents of our
18 communities.

19 And for these reasons, I urge the New York
20 Power Authority not to allow its mission to be
21 extended in the manner so described in the draft
22 Strategic Plan.

23 The Authority has done an outstanding job
24 delivering clean and reliable energy. Let's not
25 do anything to put that record in jeopardy. Thank

1 you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Steven.

3 Our next speaker is Travis Phillips.

4 Travis.

5 TRAVIS PHILLIPS: Good morning. My name is
6 Travis Phillips. I'm the Vice President of
7 Laborers Local 190. Laborers Local 190 has over
8 700 members, covering over 12 counties in New York
9 State.

10 We commend the New York State Power
11 Authority's continued effort to create these green
12 union jobs. Many of the largest proposed projects
13 in New York State fall within our jurisdiction.
14 Having prevailing wages, PLAs, and apprenticeship
15 language attached to these projects ensures good
16 wages and benefits are paid to real local
17 residents while building these projects, keeping
18 the money local and the benefits from the projects
19 local as well.

20 These projects give our members the
21 opportunity to work in their own backyards while
22 also building a better, healthier, more diverse,
23 sustainable energy future for our communities.
24 Whether it's wind or solar, the highly trained and
25 skilled men and women of laborers, alongside with

1 New York State Power Authority, will continue to
2 not only meet but exceed New York State's green
3 energy goals.

4 Thank you very much.

5 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Travis.

6 Our next speaker is Deborah Dewey.

7 Deborah?

8 DEBORAH DEWEY: Good morning. I'm Deborah
9 Dewey. New York State and NYPA are touted as
10 leaders in climate and energy policy and programs.
11 As a developer of green power, as emphasized on
12 your website, the proposal for a measly 3.5
13 gigawatt is inadequate in capacity and lacks the
14 necessary details to even properly critique.

15 My graduate training is in urban and
16 regional planning with a specialization in energy
17 systems. This proposal would not even receive a
18 passing grade in graduate school. There is a
19 failure of leadership.

20 Mr. Driscoll earns \$100,000 more than even
21 our governor. And it -- he is well paid, and your
22 staff are well paid, much more than agency staff
23 are paid, in some -- like housing or DEC.

24 This plan should be seen as an
25 embarrassment. It lacks so many details. It's

1 insufficient to address the requirements of the
2 CLCPA and the Build Public Renewables Act, which
3 targets and directs NYPA to meet the target of 70
4 percent renewables by 2030.

5 There is nothing in this plan that even
6 comes close. The plan does not adequately address
7 the needs of downstate where demand and pollution
8 from peaker plants is highest. Plans have time
9 frames, which this lacks.

10 There is an enormous opportunity here for
11 clean energy, green, well-paying jobs, and
12 partnerships with other state, county, and local
13 organizations, all of which seem to be lacking.

14 It is my hope that these hearings will
15 galvanize you and your staff to take rapid action
16 to address these deficiencies.

17 I will close with my limited comments so
18 others may have an opportunity to address you.
19 Thank you.

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Deborah.

21 Our next speaker is Jacob Reed. Jacob.

22 JACOB REED: Hi, my name is Jacob Reid.
23 I'm a local climate activist. I just wanted to
24 give my input to this plan with -- in regard to
25 the public support for renewables right now in New

1 York. I believe it's decreasing now, especially
2 -- I'm from Amsterdam, New York, Montgomery
3 County, not too far away from Glen, New York,
4 which is currently targeted for around
5 300-megawatts of solar. The public is not in
6 support of that. And I believe, you know, if we
7 truly want to have a renewable future, we need to
8 increase public support.

9 I think by doing that, we should look at
10 new ways of deploying solar. And one of those
11 ways, I believe, is with our parking lots. Solar
12 car canopies can provide an enormous amount --
13 enormous power across the state, given how many
14 parking lots we have. Public support for
15 renewables on already disturbed land is very high,
16 so I believe going forward, we need to focus on
17 land that's already been disturbed. Parking lots
18 is one of those that can really -- really provide
19 a lot of power.

20 A little tidbit is the country of France
21 enacted a law that parking lots with 80 spaces or
22 more have to have 50 percent of the parking lot
23 covered with solar, and that can provide upwards
24 of 11 gigawatts of solar for the country. So, I
25 feel like we need to look into that more as well.

1 Thank you.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jacob.

3 This concludes our list of speakers thus
4 far. If anyone else in the room would like to
5 speak, please check in with our sign-in desk at
6 the front so we can record your name and so I can
7 get the correct spelling and pronunciation.

8 We will remain in this room in case
9 additional speakers join us. Thank you.

10 (Brief recess.)

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: It is now 12 o'clock, and
12 our meeting is adjourned. Thank you for
13 attending.

14 (Thereupon, at 12:00 p.m., this meeting was
15 concluded.)
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25

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

- - -

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
State of Florida at Large, certify that I was authorized
to and did stenographically report the foregoing
proceedings and that the transcript, page 1 through 55,
is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 22nd day of November 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky,
Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

55 Eagle Street

Albany, NY 14092

November 18, 2024

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

(Evening session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Charles Imohiosen, SVP Communications & External Affairs

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Laurie Wheelock

Trustee Michael Cusick

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Assembly Member John McDonald	23
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1 CHARLES IMOHIOSEN: Good evening. Happy
2 Monday evening. Thanks for taking some time out
3 of your evening to join us tonight.

4 My name is Charles Imohiosen. I am the
5 Senior Vice President for Communications and
6 External Affairs for the New York Power Authority.

7 This evening we're going to share
8 information with you and collect information from
9 you about NYPA's draft Renewable Strategic Plan.
10 NYPA issued its draft Renewable Strategic Plan on
11 October 8 and has scheduled 12 public hearings
12 across the state to solicit input from interested
13 parties regarding this draft plan.

14 If someone you know wants to attend but is
15 unable to do so in person, please let them know
16 that NYPA will also be hosting a virtual hearing
17 on November 21st and additional in-person hearing
18 sessions in New York on November 20th and on Long
19 Island on November 25th. More information can be
20 found on nypa.gov.

21 We'll begin today's hearing -- this
22 evening's hearing with a brief video about the New
23 York Power Authority, and we'll follow that with
24 an overview of NYPA's expanded authority in the
25 draft Strategic Plan.

1 Primarily, however, and most importantly,
2 my colleagues and I are here today to hear from
3 you. So, after those presentations, we'll invite
4 those who signed up to come to the podium to make
5 a public comment, which will be transcribed and
6 entered into the public record.

7 As mentioned, we'll start here with a short
8 video that will provide an overview of the New
9 York Power Authority so you can get to know us a
10 little bit better.

11 (Vided played as follows:

12 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
13 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
14 the solution for New York State and its residents,
15 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
16 opportunities.

17 Through customer partnerships, energy
18 solutions, and the responsible supply of
19 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
20 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
21 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

22 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
23 serving customers in local and state governments,
24 industry, large and small businesses, and
25 nonprofit organizations.

1 The power for these customers is equal to
2 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
3 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
4 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
5 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
6 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
7 hydropower.

8 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
9 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
10 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
11 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
12 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

13 As we bring power to customers, we also
14 actively ensure people from our host communities
15 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
16 from our clean energy economy.

17 We work on projects across the state to
18 increase energy efficiency, improve
19 infrastructure, and support economic development.

20 Our hydropower projects support more than
21 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
22 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
23 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
24 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
25 the communities we serve.

1 Our economic and community focus extends to
2 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
3 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
4 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
5 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
6 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
7 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
8 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
9 from around the world.

10 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
11 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
12 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
13 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
14 years to come.

15 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
16 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
17 energy deployment and support other state
18 priorities. This expanded authority will
19 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
20 New York State, support expanded workforce
21 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
22 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
23 Energy Access and Community Health Program to
24 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
25 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned

1 utilities.

2 Additionally, we will lead the state's
3 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
4 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
5 production at our small natural gas power plants
6 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
7 certain reliability and environmental conditions
8 are met.

9 We are also developing action plans to
10 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
11 carbon-emitting facilities.

12 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
13 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
14 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
15 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
16 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
17 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
18 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
19 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

20 (End of the video.)

21 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: All right. Thank you.
22 As noted in the video, NYPA is the largest state
23 public power organization in the nation. We
24 operate 17 generating facilities across the state
25 and more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission.

1 More than 80 percent of the electricity that NYPA
2 produces is clean, renewable hydropower. And we
3 believe that we are in a unique position to do
4 even more to advance the state's bold clean energy
5 goals.

6 As NYPA builds, owns, and operates new
7 renewable projects, we need to have an electric
8 grid those projects can connect to, not one that
9 is clogged with bottlenecks that prevent clean
10 energy from going where it needs to go.

11 That's why NYPA is pursuing the most
12 ambitious transformation of New York's electric
13 grid in more than 40 years. And the state is
14 implementing new procedures to ensure transmission
15 can be sited, connected, and built.

16 NYPA owns one-third of the state's high
17 voltage transmission, and we continue to make
18 major improvements to build a more flexible
19 21st-century electric grid with significantly
20 greater access to a mix of carbon-free energy
21 sources. And we also know that a modernized grid
22 will be much more resilient. That's all part of
23 the work we're doing today to support the projects
24 of tomorrow.

25 In the past couple of years, NYPA has

1 launched various public engagement initiatives to
2 inform the foundation of building new renewable
3 resources as authorized in the 2023-2024 Enacted
4 State Budget.

5 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
6 build renewables subject to a Strategic Plan,
7 which must be approved by its trustees following a
8 public comment period and at least three public
9 hearings.

10 This is our sixth such hearing in New York
11 State, and we still have six more to go over the
12 next week-plus; that's because we felt it was
13 important to have more hearings in more places to
14 hear from more of you.

15 Like we did in our 2023 and 2024 conferral
16 process, we welcome public engagement and feedback
17 as we shape our Strategic Plan to build more
18 renewables in New York State.

19 I know many of you came here tonight to
20 hear and speak about the plan, so I will now turn
21 over the mic to my colleague Vennela Yadhati to
22 give a brief overview of this draft Strategic
23 Plan. Vennela.

24 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Charles. And
25 while I climb down -- and down the hills of Albany

1 downtown, I still haven't hit my steps, so I'm
2 going to walk around and talk to you all.

3 So, good evening, everybody. Thank you for
4 taking the time to come here today. I'm Vennela
5 Yadhati. I'm the Vice President for NYPA
6 Renewable Project Development, leading this effort
7 to build new renewable generation and energy
8 storage projects across the state.

9 I will say we're in the middle of what you
10 could call one of the most significant eras of
11 NYPA's 93-year history.

12 Last May, as part of the 2023-24 State
13 Enacted Budget, the legislators entrusted us with
14 expanded authority, new capabilities, and new
15 responsibilities. More importantly, new
16 opportunities for NYPA to continue to further
17 serve New Yorkers in the clean energy space.

18 How are we doing it? First, the expanded
19 authority gave NYPA the ability to build, develop,
20 own, and operate renewable generation projects
21 like solar, wind, and battery energy storage
22 systems, that is to help the state achieve the
23 bold renewable energy objectives outlined in the
24 Climate Act.

25 My team at NYPA has identified a first

1 tranche of 40 such projects spread across every
2 region of the state. And while the state budget
3 did not require us to meet any specific threshold
4 in our Strategic Plan, these 40 projects add up to
5 exceeding a capacity of 3.5 gigawatts.

6 Now, what is 3.5 kilowatts? That's the
7 same as 10 percent of the electric load for all of
8 New York City. I know it doesn't sound like much;
9 it, in fact, sounds like small. But if you take
10 it in the grand scheme of things, it is enough
11 power to power the whole of cities like Zurich,
12 Helsinki, or Reykjavik. Easier examples here in
13 the U.S.: Boulder, Colorado, Reno, Nevada, or
14 Madison, Wisconsin, and also Santa Fe.

15 So -- and these 40 projects are just the
16 beginning of our commitment to expand our
17 portfolio of delivering clean, renewable energy,
18 and reliable energy to every corner of New York.

19 Right now, NYPA is doing full due diligence
20 on each project to determine whether or not they
21 are the best fit for New Yorkers. We want to
22 ensure that these projects truly benefit our
23 communities and, therefore, belong in NYPA's
24 renewable energy portfolio.

25 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's

1 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment
2 in New York. We also want to explore meaningful
3 partnerships to support the state's future
4 equitable and efficient transition to a clean
5 energy future.

6 This first tranche includes a mix of
7 greenfield projects, NYPA's greenfield projects
8 and our co-developed initiatives where we will
9 partner with the private sector to combine our
10 strengths and skills and to jointly develop,
11 construct, own, and operate these projects
12 together.

13 This first tranche also includes a variety
14 of products, both large-scale and
15 distributed-scale products.

16 It includes a variety of technologies,
17 solar PV, wind, battery energy storage systems,
18 and a variety of locations and site conditions.
19 Half of our own greenfield portfolios that we're
20 developing are located on former landfills,
21 brownfields, or closed correctional facilities to
22 advance green renewable energy projects. What we
23 call turning the brown into green. Right? What
24 better purpose than that?

25 My point is we are collaborating with our

1 sister agencies and our customers, including local
2 governments.

3 I'll throw a couple of examples out there:
4 One is we have developed a project with SUNY
5 Albany right here in Albany, a 2-megawatt solar PV
6 project that is the largest rooftop solar project
7 on any SUNY campus.

8 Not less than, I think, two weeks ago, we
9 inaugurated a similar-sized ground-mount project
10 for the -- Albany County where the county actually
11 off-takes and receives clean energy for its
12 communities.

13 And talking about the gap that we all have
14 been aware of, financing (inaudible) renewable
15 energy would be the same as building four new
16 LaGuardia airports. So, we continue to look for
17 partners.

18 So far, we have pre-qualified a stable of
19 more than 85 developers and investors that can
20 collaborate with us to build this initial tranche
21 and also future ones. NYPA's role and goal is not
22 to crowd out the private sector but to work
23 together, leveraging our strengths to build more
24 renewables and help the state achieve its clean
25 energy goals.

1 By maintaining majority ownership and
2 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch our
3 finances and accelerate the transition to clean
4 energy.

5 As we described in the Strategic Plan, NYPA
6 has not received any state funding to build
7 renewable energy generation costs. Instead, we
8 are self-funding these efforts along with our
9 other critical commitments to CLCPA, such as new
10 transmission development and, more importantly,
11 growing the clean energy workforce, all entirely
12 through NYPA's own revenues.

13 Given these constraints, a balanced
14 approach is essential to bring more renewable
15 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
16 offer the most benefits and returns. This is
17 important because it helps ensure we can reduce
18 cost for ratepayers and maximize the impact of
19 every dollar we spend (inaudible).

20 And there is more to come. This is only
21 the first tranche in the first Strategic Plan
22 we've published. In a way, the plan itself is
23 renewable. That is a plan we will regularly
24 update as we add more projects for consideration
25 by the public and NYPA's Board of Trustees,

1 members who are here today. Thank you.

2 Part of preparing to release this draft
3 plan was making sure that NYPA had the right tools
4 and staffed right to support it. This includes
5 having the expertise to make sure the proposed
6 projects meet technical, economic, environmental
7 and, more importantly, environmental justice needs
8 of the state.

9 In the past 18 months, we have established
10 a new business line and new business structures
11 and filled many personnel -- key personnel roles,
12 like my team, many of whom are here tonight. We
13 have obtained approval from our Board of Trustees
14 to form a renewable subsidiary and an initial
15 capital allocation of \$100 million, and got --
16 towards the first tranche of projects, not only to
17 build them, but garnering other necessary
18 resources to make them a reality.

19 We continue to source and solicit
20 additional project opportunities to append to our
21 pipeline. I am confident that NYPA will continue
22 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
23 as we expand and grow our pipeline of future
24 tranches of projects.

25 And these projects aren't being built in a

1 silo. They are part of a holistic approach to
2 renewable development that supports environmental
3 justice, workforce development, and affordability.

4 Why are we doing it? You see, the 2023-'24
5 Enacted Budget also gave NYPA the ability to
6 establish the Renewable Energy Access and
7 Community Help, or REACH. We're the government.
8 We love acronyms.

9 So, the REACH program, which is -- which
10 allows us to use a portion of the revenues
11 generated from new renewable energy projects to
12 benefit low- or moderate-income households within
13 disadvantaged communities through electric utility
14 bill credits.

15 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
16 Service Commission has formally accepted our
17 application to create the REACH program. Once the
18 projects are online and are generating revenue,
19 and NYPA gathers funds from available sources,
20 money will be able to flow to low-income New
21 Yorkers through the process set forth by the PSE
22 order.

23 While REACH is still under development, the
24 program will appear as automatic bill credits
25 alongside the Energy Affordability Program and the

1 Statewide Solar for All credits.

2 NYPA will also invest up to \$25 million
3 annually in collaboration with the New York State
4 Department of Labor to create jobs and provide
5 workforce training for people who want to work in
6 the clean energy industry.

7 Through this partnership, we've already
8 awarded \$12.5 this fiscal year in funding
9 opportunities for New Yorkers, including young
10 people from Buffalo to New York through programs
11 like Say Yes Buffalo Youth Apprenticeship Program
12 and the Renaissance Technical Institute in New
13 York City, as well as several others from
14 disadvantaged communities across the state, and to
15 pursue good-paying clean energy careers.

16 And with regard to the workforce on these
17 proposed projects, NYPA will require each and
18 every renewable energy generating project to be
19 built with union labor.

20 I'm going to say that again: Every single
21 project in NYPA's draft plan must have a project
22 labor agreement. And we will work with all
23 contractors and subcontractors associated with the
24 projects -- project work to utilize the
25 partnership agreements so those learning on this

1 first tranche of projects can be the veterans that
2 we will continue to utilize on our future tranche
3 of projects.

4 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
5 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at its
6 small natural gas plants in New York City and Long
7 Island by 2030, as long as, of course, reliability
8 and environmental conditions are met.

9 To this end, we're actively exploring
10 strategies to meet this commitment while
11 considering grid reliability and air quality
12 impacts, including the potential for deploying
13 battery storage at some of these sites.

14 We're in discussions with several
15 developers about energy storage and other
16 electrical infrastructure solutions to transform
17 these sites while also preserving that greater
18 reliability I just mentioned.

19 In conclusion, I know I just mentioned a
20 long list of actions NYPA has been taking and
21 continues to take. It is hard work, but as we
22 said, this is only the beginning of our
23 commitment, and we continue to be hard at work.

24 As a reminder, our draft plan is on our
25 website nypa.gov/renewables. And I encourage all

1 of you to read it if you haven't already.

2 The people that wrote the plan are in this
3 very room, and it matters to us what you think and
4 we want to hear from you.

5 And the draft plan spells out our approach
6 to renewables and our efforts to identify the
7 first projects and partnerships we aim to pursue.

8 This legislation represents a significant
9 increase in NYPA's role in the energy sector,
10 bringing us back to our roots of revolutionizing
11 the state's grid to benefit all New Yorkers.

12 Again, thank you for taking the time today
13 to learn more and to give your comments about this
14 plan. Charles, back to you.

15 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: Thank you, Vennela.

16 With that, I will remind everyone that the
17 law requires NYPA to solicit public comment and
18 hold a minimum of three public hearings in
19 regionally diverse parts of the state on the draft
20 Strategic Plan that Vennela just shared.

21 Our timekeeper, Lindsay Kryzak, will call
22 on everyone who signed up to speak tonight, and
23 our speakers will be given three minutes to
24 deliver a public comment for the record.

25 If anyone needs a translator, please alert

1 the NYPA staff at the sign-in table. We recognize
2 some of you may have longer comments than others.
3 If you run out of time, please remember you can
4 submit your full comment on our website or email
5 it directly to strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. QR
6 codes can be found on the sign-in tables upfront
7 to make it easier.

8 The feedback you give us tonight will be
9 transcribed and compiled with the written comments
10 which we receive, which must be considered and
11 incorporated into the final Strategic Plan, and be
12 published on NYPA's website and submitted to the
13 Governor and the legislature by January 31, 2025.

14 Thank you again for joining us tonight, and
15 I'll now turn over the mic to our timekeeper.

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Charles.
17 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
18 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
19 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or
20 required by applicable law, regulation, or order,
21 and it may be made available in whole or in part
22 in the public record in accordance with the
23 Agency's rules.

24 Each member of the public will be given
25 three minutes to address NYPA leadership.

1 Additional comments can be shared via our website
2 at nypa.gov or via email at
3 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

4 Our first speaker is Mayor Sheehan. Mayor
5 Sheehan.

6 MAYOR KATHY SHEEHAN: Good evening.

7 I am Kathy Sheehan, Mayor of the City of
8 Albany. I want to start by thanking Governor
9 Kathy Hochul and President Justin Driscoll, and
10 the leadership of NYPA for their continued
11 commitment towards implementing our significant
12 statewide renewable energy goals.

13 NYPA has been a crucial -- has a crucial
14 role to play in the clean energy transition, as
15 evidenced by the dozens of renewable energy
16 projects identified in the latest Strategic Plan.
17 And I'm grateful that I live in a state that
18 recognizes that we must continue to focus on a
19 transition to renewable energy.

20 I'm also proud that one of those 40
21 projects identified is right here in the City of
22 Albany. A 1.5-megawatt solar farm is proposed for
23 the capped North Albany landfill. This project,
24 combined with others in every region of the state,
25 will contribute 3.5 gigawatts of clean energy to

1 the grid. And NYPA has identified a qualified
2 stable of a number of developers to help make the
3 investments that are necessary, not only for these
4 initial projects but for future clean energy
5 projects as well.

6 I have heard time and again that we in New
7 York need more people trained in clean energy
8 careers. We have to ensure that these transitions
9 result in new jobs and new opportunities, so I was
10 happy to learn that NYPA, in partnership with the
11 Department of Labor, will invest \$25 million
12 annually in workforce training for this critical
13 industry.

14 The City of Albany has partnered with
15 Capital Region BOCES, Hudson Valley Community
16 College, and a number of other workforce training
17 partners, and we currently have 50 residents from
18 the City and the region that are training in these
19 programs. This is a model of the investment that
20 I strongly believe should be continued.

21 NYPA plans to further invest in both our
22 current and future workforce by providing the
23 project labor agreements, as we heard. And again,
24 this is critically important as we transition to
25 these new opportunities in this new field. The

1 more and quickly we can train people, the faster
2 we can move with these projects.

3 The Strategic Plan also focuses on
4 affordability. We have to ensure that these
5 projects are affordable to those who live in the
6 City of Albany, and so we will continue to work
7 with NYPA to ensure that whether it is the \$1.5
8 million -- megawatt solar array, the Clean Energy
9 Master Plan that we developed with -- with NYPA,
10 and the \$30 million worth of energy saving
11 projects identified in that, are implemented in a
12 way that is affordable to residents who live in
13 some of the most challenged census tracts in our
14 region, and to ensure that access to renewable
15 energy is -- is available to them at an affordable
16 rate, and in a way that brings about economic
17 justice here in the City of Albany. Thank you.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Mayor.

19 Our next speaker is Assembly Member
20 McDonald.

21 JOHN MCDONALD: Well, I thank the Mayor for
22 setting the pace for this evening. And Charles
23 and Vennela, thank you for your comments, and
24 salutations to President Driscoll for his
25 leadership and, of course, the Governor for her

1 leadership as well.

2 And I want to thank everybody for being
3 here this evening. The need for renewable energy
4 could not be any greater at this time in our
5 nation's history, which is why we in the
6 legislature supported the expansion of the
7 Authority to NYPA to carry through on this work.

8 I'm excited. I've worked with NYPA for now
9 2.5 decades, believe it or not. And they are a
10 proven leader, and I am confident that we can
11 reach our fullest potential, making sure we have a
12 full-court press in regard to all renewable energy
13 options.

14 But let's be clear, and unfortunately, the
15 recent elections demonstrate that, there are
16 concerns amongst the public in regards to
17 affordability. It should not be lost in anybody.

18 That being said, this should incentivize
19 all of us to continue to push forward in a
20 collaborative effort. We need to continue to push
21 forward on all fronts when it comes to these
22 renewable energy opportunities, making sure we
23 focus on our goals and keeping in mind the
24 following items as end products: Number one,
25 obviously, clean energy, sustainable, reliable,

1 resilient, and affordable.

2 It sounds easy, but it's not. But I am
3 confident, and I want to thank those members of
4 the public who will be speaking to this tonight
5 because we need to literally energize our state to
6 get behind this great effort to make sure that our
7 generations to follow have a clean future. Thank
8 you.

9 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Assembly
10 Member.

11 Our next speaker is Assembly Member
12 Shrestha.

13 SARAHANA SHRESTHA: Thank you. Thanks for
14 having us. Thanks to everyone for being here.

15 You know, New York -- New York Power
16 Authority was created in 1931 because FDR believed
17 that the hydropower of the state was a public
18 good, and we are at a time once again where NYPA
19 is set to play a very key role in the energy
20 transition.

21 So, my name is Sarahana Shrestha. I'm the
22 Assembly Member for District 103. By the state's
23 own estimate, New York will reach only 44 percent
24 renewable generation by 2030 without NYPA's public
25 renewable projects falling short of the state's

1 legal mandate for 70 percent renewable generation
2 by 2030.

3 Instead of rolling back our climate goals,
4 which we cannot afford to do, which science
5 dictates, we must not do, it is imperative that
6 NYPA builds at least 15 gigawatts of renewable
7 energy by 2030. We don't need four LaGuardias,
8 but we need 15 gigawatts.

9 So, I represent an assembly district that
10 has a great interest in hosting new renewable
11 projects, especially energy storage projects. And
12 yet, there are only three Hudson Valley projects
13 that have been proposed in this draft plan.

14 Ulster County, that I represent, is doing
15 what it can to meet its 2040 goals. It has sought
16 NYPA's partnership in turning two brownfields into
17 renewable energy sites, and yet, the two sites
18 remain stranded because of high-energy inter- --
19 interconnection costs.

20 The New York State legislature voted to
21 give NYPA its new authority to build renewable
22 projects precisely because only a public entity
23 like NYPA can absorb risks and costs that would
24 help smaller projects go online. Projects that
25 may not make a profit but greatly help to meet

1 people's needs.

2 And yet NYPA -- these two brownfields from
3 Ulster County have not been included in the draft
4 plan, so I hope that NYPA proactively considers
5 how to create a viable path to make such projects
6 go online, not just for Ulster County, but for all
7 of New York.

8 A vast majority of the constituent cases in
9 my office have to do with utility bills. Ten of
10 the 19 municipalities I represent have voted to
11 opt into a community choice aggregation program or
12 a CCA to try and lock in affordable rates. But
13 the problem is those rates are no longer
14 affordable, and public developers who supply the
15 energy have become unreliable.

16 In the bill that we passed, not only do we
17 authorize NYPA to build renewable energy but also
18 directly supply to CCAs, and we want to see you
19 build enough so that happens. We want to see you
20 build at least 15 gigawatts by 2030 so that we can
21 create 25,000 green jobs. We can phase out those
22 toxic plants -- peaker plants, without any
23 caveats, and so that we can fund these automatic
24 bill discounts. Thank you so much.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

1 Our next speaker is Assembly Member Breen.

2 KAY BREEN: I'm not an assembly member.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: I'm so sorry. Kay, you
4 work for an assembly member. I'm so sorry.

5 KAY BREEN: That's okay.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: But you will someday be an
7 assembly member.

8 KAY BREEN: If my aspirations grow that
9 big.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Kay.

11 KAY BREEN: Thank you.

12 My name is Kay Breen. I was raised in
13 Kingston, New York, along the shore of the Hudson
14 River. For 20 of my 24 years of being alive, I
15 have watched the floodwaters rise until my family
16 was pushed to leave our home, but leaving isn't
17 the answer.

18 The answer isn't to give up on our climate
19 goals the state has set for itself. The answer
20 isn't to just stay at 3.5 gigawatts. The answer
21 is 15 gigawatts by 2030. New Yorkers deserve NYPA
22 to continue to lead by achieving our goals we set
23 for ourselves. New Yorkers deserve to live in
24 their homes powered by renewable energy and no
25 longer flee rising waters. Thank you.

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

2 Our next speaker is Assembly Member Fahy.

3 PAT FAHY: I'm hoping to steal maybe a
4 minute of John McDonald's leftover time. I'm not
5 sure what the rules are.

6 Again, Assembly Member Pat Fahy. Thank you
7 for hosting this. Thank you for hosting the 12
8 hearings. And it's a pleasure to join you,
9 including our former colleague, Mike Cusick, who
10 also had been the Chair of the Energy Committee in
11 the Assembly; so, again, I appreciate this, and
12 very much appreciate this opportunity.

13 I look forward to working with all of you.
14 We -- I was here in 2019 when we passed these very
15 ambitious goals. I still hope we are on track to
16 -- to meet those goals. And I'm very pleased that
17 we have empowered NYPA through the legislation a
18 couple of years ago, and we want to do all we can
19 to continue to work with you such that you keep
20 empowered.

21 I was also pleased just a few weeks ago to
22 be at the solar press event actually in my
23 district up in Altamont where we -- where NYSERDA
24 announced that we had met the 6 gigawatts of
25 distributive solar, and -- which was on time and

1 ahead of budget.

2 So, I do believe when we empower you, when
3 we stay on task when we -- when we set tough
4 goals -- we know we've been struggling on this
5 one, but we've just seen with distributive solar
6 that we can -- we can meet these goals.

7 So, I also am so pleased when you mentioned
8 the 15 highest-emitting facilities in New York
9 State that are being targeted for decarbonization;
10 I couldn't be more pleased to represent the first
11 one that's coming out of the gate, and that is the
12 state capital here as well as the Empire State
13 Plaza.

14 Thus far, already \$100 million has been
15 invested. We know it will be a
16 multibillion-dollar investment as we decarbonize
17 the capital and the Empire State Plaza. We know
18 it's an ambitious one. We know it's -- there's
19 been a lot of interest in trying to move that as
20 fast as possible. But again, we want to work with
21 you on all of this.

22 I will also repeat what you've already
23 heard tonight; we know siting has been an issue.
24 We want to continue to work with you on that. We
25 have made some inroads on it. At the same time, I

1 would be remiss if I didn't say we know we have to
2 be respectful of farms and the high-grade
3 agricultural lands that we have. I think we're
4 doing a better job at trying to strike that
5 balance, so I continue to urge that work, that we
6 push forward on siting as well as working with our
7 communities to make sure that we are maintaining
8 the farmland and valuable agricultural industry
9 that we -- we now have.

10 Also, so thrilled to see that we will
11 continue to keep a focus on jobs. Member
12 McDonald, who just left, and I have spent -- as
13 well as the mayor -- Mayor Sheehan, as well as
14 Senator Breslin have dropped everything over the
15 last few years to make sure we get those jobs at
16 the Port of Albany -- sorry, I see I'm out of
17 time.

18 We want to see the offshore wind jobs at
19 the Port of Albany. We know we've ran into a
20 couple of hiccups, but we do believe we will get
21 there in hopes for this next round. And by the
22 way, that, too, has had already had a PLA.

23 The last thing I want to note is
24 affordability does bear repeating, repeating, and
25 repeating. Yes, all of us saw what happened less

than two weeks ago with what -- for many of us was a -- a bit of a shock of an election and -- but that doesn't mean that we stop our efforts. We want to continue to keep the state as innovation labs. I think this is a part of it. I look forward to hearing more as this plan is finalized and we look forward to hearing -- hearing more from you.

Thank you for the extra few seconds. Thank
you.

LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next speaker is Timothy Daley. Timothy.

TIMOTHY DALEY: Thank you for having me tonight. IBEW Local 1249 is a labor organization for outside electrical construction, and jurisdiction includes all of New York State except for Long Island and New York City.

We represent approximately 3800 people across the state. Our members are currently performing work in areas of renewables such as the CL- -- CLCPA's that -- NYSERDA projects and the OGS projects to name a few. Our members live all over the state, and the projects they work on affect them directly.

For the most part our organization backs

1 these plans wholeheartedly. Our reservations
2 include PLAs; the outside branch of the IBEW is
3 not a participant of the building trades. So,
4 when a PLA comes up for a project, the outside
5 electrical portion needs to be carved out by a way
6 of an MOA.

7 Unfortunately, because of a lack of
8 awareness of the PLAs happening, we are always
9 trying to play catch up and get to the table for
10 our part, which leads to our work being stripped
11 away by trades who only perform this work when it
12 is under a PLA, not their everyday employment. So
13 we are not against PLAs; we just want a seat at
14 the table when everyone else sits down going
15 forward.

16 Two, we have a state-of-the-art training
17 facility that facilitates our contractors, our
18 apprentices, and is regarded as one of the best in
19 the state. The state should consider ways to
20 utilize labor training facilities like ours to do
21 workforce development. Why recreate the wheel
22 when this has been our job for nearly 85 years as
23 IBEW Local 1249?

24 Three, ceasing fossil fuel generation is
25 risky if the in- -- incoming system is not fully

1 adequate. Also, these workers are part of
2 good-paying union jobs. How will the state help
3 mitigate their employment with the new vision?
4 This seems to escape the layout of the plan.

5 Number four, the coming dates for climate
6 goals still seem to be unattainable in the
7 industry leader community. It is a majority
8 consensus for those of whom we speak with on this
9 subject that we are putting the cart before the
10 horse.

11 Number five, hydrogen and nuclear should
12 never be taken off the table, ever.

13 Six, electricity should be affordable and
14 the public has expressed this in the recent
15 presidential election. Energy was a big focus for
16 campaigns and the public doesn't care about
17 environmental factors such as how much they cost.
18 People perceive these enhancements will reduce the
19 cost of consumption. Without that, you will not
20 have the support of public opinion.

21 We are encouraged by this process and are
22 glad to have given you our opinion on this matter.
23 Thank you.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Timothy.

25 Our next speaker is Daniel Way. Daniel.

1 DANIEL WAY: The Town of Indian Lake has
2 been trying for 37 years to act against climate
3 change by trying to institute hydropower
4 generation on the Indian Lake Dam.

5 The most recent attempt begun in 2006, went
6 through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's
7 preliminary permit process. Even though it had
8 almost universal support, the project ultimately
9 stalled because of the opposition of Adirondack
10 conservation organizations, who believed that the
11 dam was part of the forest preserve so that
12 generating power would violate Article 14 of the
13 Constitution of -- of New York.

14 However, members of the ILA located state
15 government documents proving that the dam had
16 never been in the modern definition of the forest
17 preserve. Issues surrounding the dam were
18 adjudicated in 1997 by the New York State Supreme
19 Court, which issued a stipulation that the
20 property on which the dam and dam keeper's house
21 are located is not part of the forest preserve.

22 The regulating -- the regulating district
23 operates the dam for the purpose of regulating
24 flood risk down state. They also manage these
25 water resources to facilitate hydropower

1 generation and other industrial uses.

2 The regulating district does not itself
3 generate power on the dams, but works with
4 partners in doing so. The dam was built in 1898.
5 It holds the headwaters of the Indian River, a
6 major tributary of the Hudson River.

7 According to a feasibility study done as
8 part of the 2006 FERC application, the dam can
9 generate up to 5.7 million kilowatt hours per year
10 of carbon-free electricity.

11 Put it another way, since electricity came
12 to Indian Lake in 1922, the dam has wasted almost
13 600 million kilowatt hours of power by failing to
14 produce a single watt in all that time. That
15 would have been enough to power 380,000 homes per
16 year at today's rate of consumption.

17 For 100 years, local residents have shaken
18 their heads in dismay as they watched countless
19 trillions of gallons of water pour through the
20 Indian Lake Dam without ever being sensibly and
21 safely exploited.

22 The town's most recent hydropower plant and
23 its Federal Energy Regulating Commission
24 application also included the town-owned Lake
25 Abanakee Dam six miles downstream, which would add

1 another 20 percent of energy to the total output.

2 A project such as this would not only be a
3 source of great pride, but it would also prove a
4 boon to ailing local economies. In addition to
5 the immediate shared revenues that would accrue to
6 the town and the regulating district, it could
7 provide the Town of Indian Lake with a tremendous
8 opportunity to create an industrial development
9 zone nearby. Such a zone could conceivably
10 provide free power in addition to other incentives
11 to some kind of clean IT or other modern
12 enterprises.

13 Coupled with other seasonal assets, this
14 could be transformative to the entire region and
15 result in the year-round powerhouse economy. It
16 is our hope that the New York Power Authority
17 might take an interest in this highly worthwhile
18 slam-dunk project and help begin a dialog with
19 these organizations and DEC to get this moving
20 again. Its time has come. Thank you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Daniel.

22 Our next speaker is Sean Radigan. Sean.

23 SEAN RADIGAN: Yeah. Thanks for holding
24 this.

25 My name is Sean. I'm from Schenectady, New

1 York. And I just wanted to say that, you know,
2 3.5 gigawatts just isn't enough. 10 percent of
3 New York City isn't enough. This is already the
4 law and -- you know, the projections are the 44
5 percent of goals will only be met, as has already
6 been stated.

7 I think New York needs to be a leader in
8 renewables, and especially now after the election
9 cycle. Bringing new jobs are within reach, and
10 this is how we build resiliency and fight climate
11 change. Over 36,000 low to moderate-income
12 households in the Capital District are considered
13 energy-burdened, so I'm asking that we deliver
14 clean renewable energy, good union jobs, deliver
15 resiliency, and deliver more than 3.5 gigawatts.
16 Thanks.

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Sean.

18 Our next speaker is Bridget McMillan.
19 Bridget.

20 BRIDGET MCMILLAN: Hi, folks. My name is
21 Bridget McMillan. I am a resident of the City of
22 Newburgh and a member of Mid-Hudson Valley DSA.
23 And I'm not the climate despair type. I am too
24 busy working three jobs to survive in the present
25 to engage in dread about the future, but there are

1 those who are. In fact, some people are electing
2 not to have children specifically because of the
3 trajectory of the ongoing climate crisis. This is
4 much to the chagrin of their parents, as you may
5 have read in a recent incredibly tone-deaf article
6 in the New York Times.

7 Now, I am fortunate in that my parents
8 really do their best to conceal their
9 disappointment in my failure as a source of
10 grandchildren by purchasing a gift for my cats
11 every time they buy one for my niece. The
12 implication, though, is that they have accepted
13 that this is just how it is for me, and it feels
14 rather resigned.

15 So, as I consider what I actually want
16 beyond putting an end to the aforementioned
17 humiliation, even in my present perimenopausal
18 state where, as with improving our energy
19 solutions, it's quite truly now or never. I'm
20 still ambivalent about bringing a child into the
21 world, where we have to spend my Tuesday nights
22 begging lawmakers to follow through on their legal
23 obligations, their prior commitments, and where
24 those lawmakers continue to act with impunity and
25 total disregard for the people they purport to

1 represent. And that's just me. That's me and my
2 cats and my family, whose biggest problem is not
3 enough grandchildren.

4 What about the kids and the densely
5 populated communities that are disproportionately
6 affected by peaker plants in New York City? They
7 don't need the Fresh Air Fund to pull them out of
8 their neighborhoods to a place with clean air for
9 a few weeks a year. They need the pollution in
10 the places where they live to stop.

11 I recently chatted with a friend who
12 attended the Green Zone at the ongoing World
13 Climate Summit in Azerbaijan. She said, big
14 picture, with or without the US, the climate
15 movement is progressing full throttle.

16 If Governor Hochul's conscience isn't
17 enough, if she's not interested in my possibly
18 bringing another red diaper baby to New York
19 State, can we perhaps appeal to her ego? New York
20 is a global capital. Are we really going to fall
21 behind on this? It is embarrassing.

22 So, with that, I demand the following, and
23 I don't demand things lightly: Please increase
24 the -- the planned capacity to at least 15
25 gigawatts of a new publicly-owned renewables by

1 2030. Plan at least 5 gigawatts for the Hudson
2 Valley and Downstate New York, with more attention
3 to two distributed energy sources, fully
4 decarbonize our public schools, ensure green union
5 jobs for New Yorkers, and redirect economic
6 development funds from large corporations and
7 towards renewable energy development. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

9 Our next speaker is Michael Mastroietro.
10 Michael.

11 MICHAEL MASTROIETRO: Good evening. My
12 name is Michael Mastroietro. I'm the business
13 manager for the International Brotherhood of
14 Electrical Workers Local 236. I represent 1700
15 Unionized Electrical Workers in the capital region
16 and their families.

17 The IBEW has been at the forefront of
18 renewable -- renewable energies for a long time,
19 becoming the pioneers and the gold standard of
20 training for, installing, and maintaining their
21 systems.

22 We're sold on clean energy. We support it.
23 Keep building it. But I would like to speak to
24 you as a citizen. One of the -- my main concerns
25 every time I come to these is the use of transient

1 workforce and -- and creating temporary jobs.

2 I would like to thank you personally for
3 your commitment to project labor agreements and to
4 apprenticeship requirements that will provide
5 transformative, family-sustaining wage and benefit
6 jobs and uplift their families, their communities,
7 and ultimately society. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

9 Our next speaker is Daniel Atonna. Daniel.

10 DANIEL ATONNA: Hello, NYPA. My name is
11 Daniel Atonna. I'm from Poughkeepsie, and I'm the
12 political coordinator at For the Many. We're part
13 of the Public Power New York Statewide Coalition.

14 We're here to demand that NYPA build at
15 least 15 gigawatts of new publicly-owned
16 renewables by 2030, with at least 5 gigawatts for
17 the Hudson Valley and Downstate New York. Hudson
18 Valley residents need REACH program bill credits
19 and green union jobs, too.

20 Climate change is real. All of New York
21 State is under a drought watch right now. Fifteen
22 counties and New York City are under a drought
23 warning, which is only one category below a
24 devastating drought emergency.

25 New York City's upstate water reservoirs

1 are in real danger of drying up. There were
2 wildfires this month in Orange County and Ulster
3 County, causing smoke that made it impossible to
4 stay outside for more than a few minutes.

5 This is not a hypothetical. This is not a
6 problem for future generations. This is happening
7 right here and right now. We need Governor Hochul
8 and NYPA CEO Justin Driscoll to do everything they
9 can to build public renewables to combat climate
10 change.

11 New York is not on track to reach our legal
12 mandate of 70 percent renewable energy by 2030.
13 According to the latest projections, we will only
14 hit 44 percent of renewable electricity by 2030.

15 There are too few projects planned.
16 Private projects will not be enough. In the past
17 decade, 70 percent of all private renewable
18 projects have been canceled. 3.5 publicly-owned
19 gigawatts will not be enough. New York needs to
20 fully utilize the public sector.

21 We did our part by writing and passing the
22 New York Build Public Renewables Act. Now, we
23 need you to do your part by fully implementing it.
24 Please tell the highly paid lanyard-wearing
25 consultants at McKinsey that we don't want to roll

1 back the Climate Act. We want to hit the
2 mandates. We're not going to accept 3.5
3 gigawatts, 5 gigawatts, 10 gigawatts, 14.9
4 gigawatts. We demand 15 gigawatts to decarbonize
5 our public schools, create 25,000 green union
6 jobs, save New Yorkers money on their utility
7 bills, and avoid catastrophic 2 degrees of global
8 warming.

9 I know that NYPA is able to put people over
10 profit and deliver the future we deserve. I would
11 also like to echo the previous speaker on the
12 point of the project labor agreements and your
13 apprenticeship programs. Those are very
14 important.

15 So, please take action right now. Thank
16 you.

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Daniel.

18 Our next speaker is Brennan Howell.
19 Brennan.

20 BRENNAN HOWELL: Hello. Hi, my name is
21 Brennan Howell. I'm an organizer with Public
22 Power New York and Capital District DSA. I
23 currently live in Waterville, New York, right
24 across the Hudson from Troy.

25 I'm here today to tell NYPA that the

1 current draft Renewable Strategic Plan is
2 unfortunately insufficient. Just this year, New
3 York has been hit by unprecedented droughts,
4 flooding, and wildfires.

5 In the face of a worsening climate crisis,
6 New York cannot afford to fail its climate goals,
7 and this proposal, as is, would set us on track to
8 fail. 3.5 gigawatts of renewable energy is not
9 nearly enough for us to hit our CLCPA mandate of
10 having 70 percent renewables by 2030. Even if
11 this is just the first tranche of projects, the
12 expected attrition of some of these projects means
13 that we'll be playing catch up before we even
14 begin. We need a much more ambitious draft
15 proposal if we're going to build at least 15
16 gigawatts by 2030, which is what we need to hit
17 our legal mandates.

18 I'm calling for this draft proposal to
19 include offshore wind projects. Offshore wind
20 would be a reliable source of power, complementing
21 the build-out of solar farms with strong ocean
22 winds blowing at night. The Port of Albany
23 provides a prime location for development and
24 would bring good jobs to the workers in the
25 region.

1 All across the state, there are
2 opportunities for distributed energy generation.
3 NYPA's proposal indicates an intention to partner
4 with communities on distributed energy projects,
5 but there aren't any plans or timelines.

6 Even right here in the Capital Region, in
7 places like Latham and Colonie, there are miles
8 and miles of parking lots hugging residential
9 areas which would provide opportunities for solar
10 panel canopies.

11 There's also no plans for any geothermal
12 energy systems, which should not only be included
13 in this proposal but should be part of NYPA's
14 distributed energy as well.

15 In the Capital District, there are 36,000
16 homes considered energy-burdened, paying more than
17 6 percent of their income on energy costs. With
18 massive rate hikes on the horizon, New Yorkers
19 need relief from their high-energy utility costs.

20 Thanks to the REACH program, the more
21 revenue that NYPA earns with renewable projects,
22 the more economic relief they can provide to
23 ratepayers. Building 15 gigawatts, as opposed to
24 just 3, will do that much more to help the people
25 of New York. So, it's imperative that NYPA

1 increase the proposed capacity to at least 15
2 gigawatts of new publicly-owned renewables by
3 2030, creating tens of thousands of green union
4 jobs, and the end of the peaker plants polluting
5 our neighborhoods and the kind of climate
6 leadership that we need to make New Yorkers proud.
7 Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Brennan.

9 Our next speaker is Steve Goodman. Steve.

10 STEVE GOODMAN: Hi. Thanks. Thanks for
11 giving us this time to talk.

12 I'm Steve Goodman. I'm a resident of New
13 Paltz. And last weekend, like maybe many of us
14 here, I woke up to a climate emergency where I
15 couldn't really walk outside. There was like an
16 orange haze through the hillsides and over the --
17 the roads because of the fires and the smoke.

18 And I was just thinking about the climate
19 emergencies that we're facing here, and what we're
20 leaving the next generation, and thinking about
21 it's not just the wildfires and the droughts and
22 the floods, but that there is something that is
23 going to be happening in the near future to make
24 it even worse, and that is the Trump
25 Administration's plan to eliminate any kind of

1 environmental progress that we've been all working
2 for.

3 So, rather than feel despondent, I'm trying
4 to find hope in the work that you all are doing
5 here at NYPA and I think that you're on the right
6 track, but as many of the speakers have said, it's
7 not enough. 3.5 gigawatt gigawatts is not enough.
8 It really needs to be at least 15 gigawatts of
9 publicly-owned renewables, and make sure that
10 there's at least 5 gigawatts for the Hudson Valley
11 and Downstate New York. That must be part of your
12 Strategic Plan.

13 And I think that now is the time. New York
14 can be a leader. New York State can be a leader.
15 NYPA can be a leader. And we need this kind of
16 leader leadership as we look forward to a time
17 that may be quite dark politically, and for all of
18 us that are trying to work for a clean and more
19 healthy future.

20 So, I'm speaking not only for myself and my
21 family and my community but also for my children
22 and -- and the next generation. And I think we
23 can make a difference for generations to come. So
24 thank you very much.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Steve.

1 Our next speaker is Alex Gabel. Alex.

2 ALEX GABLE: Hello. I want to start off by
3 thanking trustees and everyone at NYPA for your
4 hard work in getting to this stage.

5 I'm not the type of person who ever goes to
6 these public comments, so I hope that speaks to
7 how important this sort of thing is.

8 So, as people have mentioned before, NYPA
9 has acknowledged that New York is currently on
10 track for only 44 percent renewals by 2030 when
11 the CLCPA requires New York to reach 70 percent.
12 There's currently only 7 gigawatts, I believe, of
13 renewables being developed by private companies,
14 yet a 2021 Berkeley lab study found that less than
15 24 percent of private renewable projects reach
16 commercial operation. That doesn't bode well.

17 I think we as a society have waited around
18 long enough hoping that someone else or some
19 silver-bullet technology will fix the climate for
20 us, and relying so heavily on private companies to
21 get us to our goals is kind of just more of that.

22 Even if people can't afford to, many people
23 are scared to bring up children in the world we
24 live in today, I myself included, knowing that we
25 face a climate crisis that is going to get worse

1 before it gets better. There can be no more
2 half-measures if we want our future generations to
3 see the beauty of the world live in today.

4 And to that end, I would ask the trustees
5 to be even bolder. I'm not sure of the logistics;
6 that's what you guys are there for, but I would
7 hope that the great State of New York can help to
8 provide funding to reach the needed 15 gigawatts
9 of public renewal power. And I trust that NYPA
10 can do the right thing by the people of New York.

11 And one last thing: Since you brought up
12 geothermal, you might want to look into what you
13 can do with old coal mines or old fracking
14 locations. We don't do that anymore. But that
15 was it for me. Thank you.

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

17 Our next speaker is Patrick Robbins.
18 Patrick.

19 PATRICK ROBBINS: Hello. Thank you very
20 much. My name is Patrick Robbins. I am the
21 coordinator of the Energy Democracy Alliance and
22 co-chair of the Public Power New York Coalition.
23 I live in Kinderhook, and I am testifying today to
24 urge the New York Power Authority to go further.

25 People all over New York are waking up this

1 month to the smell of wildfires in November. I
2 was born and raised here, and I don't remember
3 anything like this. And in a few months, we're
4 looking at a reactionary federal administration
5 that will put Lee Zeldin in charge of the EPA,
6 call for a halt to offshore wind development, and
7 move a disastrous pro-fossil fuel agenda for the
8 country.

9 New York has to set a positive example, and
10 it is in NYPA's hands whether or not we set such
11 an example. As written, this plan isn't enough.
12 The plan contains just over 3 gigawatts of
13 renewable energy capacity when we know that NYPA
14 would need to build five times this amount in
15 order for New York to meet our legally mandated
16 renewable electricity targets.

17 Furthermore, NYPA states many times in the
18 draft report that even this low number is
19 contingent, and many projects may be canceled as
20 they move through the queue. For those of you who
21 don't know, the majority of proposed projects do
22 not make it through the queue process. And in the
23 law, you are mandated to take this into account.
24 And the fact that this isn't taken into account is
25 a slap in the face to New Yorkers across the

1 state.

2 We need the New York Power Authority to
3 come up with a plan that meets this moment. A
4 study completed last year using modeling from the
5 Rocky Mountain Institute demonstrated that NYPA
6 could replace its fossil fuel assets entirely
7 without damaging its credit rating and keeping its
8 debt service coverage ratio and the range of 2 to
9 2.5, consistent with NYPA's own financial targets.

10 Many people have talked about
11 affordability. That's a huge reason why we wrote
12 the bill that brought us to this meeting. When
13 you look at why bills spiked in 2022, it's because
14 of gas, not renewables. And a robust and
15 ambitious build-out will support struggling
16 ratepayers as well.

17 It would also -- an ambitious plan would
18 help ensure a steady stream of union jobs and
19 provide workforce training opportunities for
20 workers across the state. We hope you will
21 continue to fund union-led training that includes
22 wraparound services and removes barriers for
23 people to enter the workforce.

24 And there are any number of opportunities
25 for NYPA to expand its portfolio here in the

1 Capital District, from district heating to
2 building on brownfields and parking lots. And we
3 want to work with you on this. We want to make
4 sure you have the support and capacity you need.

5 I don't know how many people are on
6 Vennela's team, but this is a really mammoth
7 undertaking and, you know, we hope you'll add
8 capacity to the team so each utility load zone
9 gets the support it needs to meet its goals.

10 Let's get this done, and let's come back at
11 the end of January with a plan that works for all
12 New Yorkers. Thanks again.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

14 Our next speaker is Nancy Goody. Nancy.

15 NANCY GOODY: Good evening. I'm Nancy
16 Goody. I live in Albany. I would like to thank
17 you all for holding so many public hearings. It's
18 a -- it's a real credit to the Power Authority to
19 have not just a few, but several around the state.

20 I wanted to talk for a moment about canals.
21 I know it is mentioned in this report -- or this
22 plan. I'm glad to see a significant investment in
23 maintaining the canal system. I strongly
24 recommend one specific canal term item that wasn't
25 mentioned, however, and that is the restoration of

1 a century -- century-old New York State-owned
2 tugboat called the Urger. For generations, the
3 Urger was a very popular educational ambassador
4 for New York State's canal system. After retiring
5 from its commercial shipping duties, it visited
6 across New York State, teaching schoolchildren
7 about the historical impact of how the canal
8 system was made and how it affected the Empire
9 State.

10 The boat has avoided death to the scrap
11 yard. However, it is currently -- currently
12 languishing in a York State facility in Syracuse.
13 It should be fully restored and returned to its
14 earlier educational mission.

15 I'm glad -- another topic: I'm glad to see
16 that the plan includes substantial upgrades of the
17 transmission grid statewide. This is very
18 critical for this plan to succeed. And I'm also
19 very glad to see the mention of environmental
20 justice. I support the list of projects that are
21 aimed at environmental justice, including the
22 education of minority children on energy and its
23 connection with the environment. Thank you.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Nancy.

25 Our next speaker is Greg Bell. Greg.

1 GREG BELL: Hello, my name is Greg Bell. I
2 live in Albany.

3 I would like to talk about what I see as an
4 absent item from the plan. I have read in the
5 plan that the qualifications for developers and
6 investors have been started, and 84 have already
7 been pre-qualified.

8 Now, I don't know if any of that outreach
9 for developers of environmentally appropriate
10 projects have reached Europe, but I recommend that
11 -- that outreach be done to Europe. And
12 specifically, I'm not here on behalf of a -- any
13 specific company; however, I do want to suggest a
14 specific company in Germany.

15 The company is called Krieg & Fischer. And
16 I have been on a tour given by the head of the
17 company of five different anaerobic digesters in
18 Germany. And the plan, as I've seen it so far,
19 does not mention anaerobic digestion, also known
20 as biogas.

21 The idea of biogas is not well known in the
22 United States. Some people think it's compost.
23 They think it's various things. It is not those
24 things. The process of biogas in Europe is
25 widespread. It's widely understood and widely

1 supported. It should be here as well.

2 Now, the -- the technology of anaerobic
3 digestion does various things that are beneficial.
4 Number one, it's -- it's able to produce
5 electricity via methane, it -- is a product of the
6 digestion. It's able to produce electricity with
7 zero carbon dioxide emissions. Zero. None. And
8 it does this while eliminating organic waste, you
9 know, food waste, that sort of stuff. And there
10 are some other benefits.

11 And it also generates zero radioactive
12 waste, which I think we all know requires
13 centuries of protection from society from
14 contaminating future generations.

15 Now, the -- the plan does talk about the --
16 the requirements of what qualifies for NYPA
17 funding projects. And the initial portfolio,
18 there's a list of -- the initial portfolio, and
19 there's 40 projects, none of which deal with
20 bioenergy of any sort, including biogas. And as I
21 read it, the definition does allow for biogas, and
22 I would recommend it. Thank you.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Greg.

24 Our next speaker is John Hutchins. John.

25 JOHN HUTCHINS: Good evening. Good

1 evening, everybody. I wanted to thank NYPA, first
2 of all, for having these hearings. And I also
3 want to thank everybody out there that spoke on
4 behalf of labor and organized labor.

5 I -- I am the director of organizing for
6 the New York State Laborers. The laborer unions
7 represent 45,000 workers throughout New York, many
8 of them upstate, and will be involved in a lot of
9 these projects that we're talking about tonight.
10 And a lot of the -- my union brothers and sisters
11 that came before me talked a little -- a lot about
12 what I was going to say, but I'm going to talk a
13 little bit about our situation.

14 We want to go back 10 years ago. The
15 laborers were heavily into gas and pipeline work.
16 Okay. So fast forward five years ago, you know,
17 we put in the restrictions on gas and pipelines
18 and everything.

19 So, we had thousands of members that worked
20 in -- in this industry. So, what we did is we
21 retrained all our members; we have various
22 training facilities throughout the state in solar,
23 wind, hydrogen, geothermal. So we're doing all
24 that training right now. And I just wanted to say
25 that these projects give our members another

1 avenue to work out there. And -- you know, and
2 our members work -- yes, they work seasonal, but
3 these are jobs that, you know, they -- they string
4 together over the years to create a career.

5 And, you know, I've heard people say at
6 these meetings that, well, these only create
7 temporary jobs. Well, our members work temporary
8 jobs year after year after year, and it's -- it
9 allows them to be a good citizen, raise their
10 kids; you know, own a home and all those types of
11 things that everybody aspires to do.

12 So, I just wanted to say thank you for
13 NYPA. I think a -- a public-private partnership
14 makes sense, and I look forward to working
15 together. Thanks for having me.

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, John.

17 Our next speaker is Reilly Curran. Reilly.

18 REILLY CURRAN: Hello. I hope everybody's
19 having a wonderful evening tonight. It -- so, I'm
20 here speaking for the -- from the Mid-Hudson
21 Valley BSA, but more impression to this -- this
22 conversation, also, BQ Energy LLC, which is a -- a
23 municipal solar company, that -- me personally, I
24 operate it. I am the operations manager in charge
25 of six sites, five of which are in the Hudson

1 Valley. In fact, one in Esopus is literally right
2 up the road from my own house. Oh, it's pretty
3 great. This stuff, you can literally just find a
4 dirt patch in the middle of nowhere, slap it down,
5 and it works. Battery technology makes it work
6 even better because now you can release that --
7 you can store up energy over time and then release
8 it in short bursts during peak demand hours.

9 Our system in Mount Kisco is built
10 specifically to do this, as we call them LSRV
11 days. And they are some of our most fun
12 afternoons in that I get to spend it staring at a
13 screen in -- for about four hours. But I get
14 homework done in the meantime, so it's fine.

15 Speaking of homework, though, we're --
16 earlier today, I heard somebody describing
17 achieving 44 percent of New York's renewable --
18 New York's power capacity as renewables as sort of
19 a bold step in the right direction. And I got to
20 say, when the legislation calls for 70 percent, a
21 little over half of the passing grade, trying to
22 suggest that's a good thing is what's bold here.

23 We are entering an age where bold means we
24 really need to step up our game. And I'm not just
25 saying that because it's -- as it helps pay my --

1 a mortgage, but we have -- we have the technology,
2 we have the stats in that say that this needs to
3 be done, and we have the goal already set for
4 ourselves to do 15 megawatts, so trying to say --
5 trying to walk that back, this is not the time or
6 the place to be walking it back.

7 We need to fulfill our promises. We need
8 to live up to the expectations we set for
9 ourselves. And especially now, we need to be the
10 Empire State. We need to be the model everybody
11 else aspires to be.

12 We're heading into a dark time, and New
13 York is uniquely positioned to be the city on the
14 hill that everybody keeps telling me we're
15 supposed to be. We just need to do better. I
16 guess that's the rest of my time.

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Reilly.

18 Our next speaker is Liz Wassell. Liz.

19 LIZ WASSELL: Good evening, everybody.
20 Thank you for having us. I just have seven bullet
21 points that I'm going to run through, the majority
22 of which you've already heard: I live in Ulster
23 County in the small town of Tillson, just part of
24 Rosendale.

25 So, I have a couple of revisions to

1 suggest: First of all, to increase the total
2 plant capacity to at least -- you guessed it, 15
3 gigawatts. To plan additional projects in
4 conjunction with public institutions such as the
5 State University of New York and the City Universe
6 -- City University of New York, to ensure that
7 enough capacity is built to create and sustain a
8 pipeline of green union jobs for New Yorkers, to
9 redirect economic development funds from large
10 corporations toward renewable energy development,
11 to add public hearings in Central New York, the
12 North Country, and the four other boroughs of New
13 York City.

14 To include a detailed plan for phase-out of
15 NYPA peaker plants and to plan at least 5
16 gigawatts for the Hudson Valley where I live and
17 Downstate New York, in general, with more
18 attention to distributed energy resources.

19 Thank you so much.

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Liz.

21 Our next speaker is Dennis Phayre. Dennis.

22 DENNIS PHAYRE: Hi. Good evening, folks.

23 So, my name is Dennis Phayre. I'm a resident of
24 Albany, and I'm also a developer of solar
25 projects. I've been employed in the industry for

1 18 years. My projects include community solar
2 here in the Port of Albany, 2 megawatts, 10 years
3 ago or more. I've done projects on SUNY NanoTech
4 Center.

5 I built for Stewards IBM. I've been a
6 party to the VDER proceedings. So I have a great
7 deal of experience and appreciation for what NYPA
8 represents to the State of New York.

9 My concern is with NYPA's entry into
10 distributed generation, DERs. And NYPA's clearly
11 got a role to play in large scale generation and
12 -- and batteries. It's -- the cost-effectiveness
13 of NYSERDA- -- of NYPA stepping into the DER space
14 is somewhat suspect in my opinion. And I'm also
15 concerned about what its impact will be upon the
16 industry -- now, the DER industry, which by most
17 measures has been very successful. We've got 6
18 gigawatts now, most of that is DERs.

19 If it all goes to bid through NYPA, that's
20 going to scald the market, in my opinion. I will
21 -- I will play into that market if that's what the
22 market is. But my -- but my concern is, is that
23 the best role? What problem does it solve?
24 There's clearly a problem with siting projects
25 with interconnecting projects, and that's more

1 true at the utilities scale than anywhere.

2 But I'm -- sorry, it's not a Q-and-A
3 session, but I would ask you to really evaluate if
4 that's the best role for NYPA in this. And I'll
5 give you back the rest of the time, and thank you
6 very much for the -- for the work that you do.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Dennis.

8 Our next speaker is Mark Schaefer. Mark.

9 MARK SCHAEFER: Thank you. I moved to
10 Albany in '85 and only stayed past the first
11 winter because I had studied energy policy in grad
12 school and knew the climate would warm.

13 I -- I fully support the recommendations of
14 the Public Power advocates to reach at least the
15 70 percent goal of 15-16 gigawatts by 2030 and not
16 backslide.

17 I'm an active member of PAUSE, the 350.org,
18 an affiliate of Albany Capital District DSA, and
19 I'm on the policy committee of the New York Renews
20 Coalition, which led the effort to pass the
21 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act in
22 2019.

23 I emphasize the word leadership because the
24 state must lead. This is an affluent, progressive
25 state in a wealthy country disproportionately

1 responsible for greenhouse gases. And the federal
2 government has now become part of the problem.

3 And we've just experienced a disaster.
4 Superstorm Sandy is a disaster -- it was a
5 disaster. We're faced with the prospect of a
6 catastrophe. The difference is a catastrophe is
7 not recoverable. They're escalating
8 exponentially. We're in a race against time.

9 New York is now spending tens of billions
10 of dollars on fossil energy from out of state
11 every year as we face -- in renewable energies,
12 that money becomes available to the state economy,
13 but the affordability issue is politically
14 critical. We cannot afford to fall short of our
15 goals.

16 The subways flooded out in Sandy. The
17 projections, multiple such events by mid-century,
18 worse later on. And we're facing globally
19 cascading tipping points, which could go from plus
20 2 degrees C to 5 degrees C, which translates into
21 more than 10 degrees F and more over the
22 continents.

23 JFK said -- set a goal to put a man on the
24 moon in 10 years. It was a major national
25 priority. We're now on a mission to -- to planet

1 Earth, a rescue mission, as they say in NASA,
2 failure is not an option. Thank you.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

4 Our next speaker is Katherine Carlton.
5 Katherine.

6 KATHERINE CARLTON: Hi, my name is
7 Katherine Carlton. I live in Delmar, New York.
8 Thank you for holding this hearing.

9 My children attend Albany Public Schools,
10 where we have over 8,000 students, almost half of
11 whom are economically disadvantaged and
12 underserved.

13 NYPA has an opportunity to use its new
14 authority to reach into our public schools and
15 create a pipeline for clean green jobs. Starting
16 with students in elementary school, NYPA can
17 provide educational opportunities that can help
18 shape students' futures.

19 I encourage NYPA to think locally by
20 working with our public schools and seeking local
21 places to build their renewables. Our school
22 buildings can not only produce clean energy but
23 provide hands-on experience with renewables for
24 our students.

25 Thank you for your time and consideration.

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

2 Our next speaker is Xenia Williams. Xenia.

3 XENIA WILLIAMS: Thank you. This is about
4 the principles of environmental justice and
5 transparency. Self-determination is a principle
6 spoken within the (inaudible) of nations, but here
7 in Upstate New York, it's being trampled upon.

8 Environmental justice recognizes that
9 people affected by climate change initiatives need
10 to be at the table throughout the process. This
11 should not happen in the town of Stark, New York.
12 Some residents were contacted -- or rather
13 targeted by companies who report to United Nations
14 companies such as New Leaf and Terra-Gen, both
15 which are interested energy capital partners,
16 recently was acquired by (inaudible) a private
17 London-based assets gross investor.

18 In this way, they created divisions so that
19 some people did not know what was going on in
20 their communities and targeted people who were not
21 able to challenge the company's policies and
22 leasing their lands and mineral rights.

23 The United Nations joined the United -- the
24 United -- the United States joined the United
25 Nations framework on climate change on the 7th of

1 October 1992. And this was recently codified into
2 U.S. law with the CHIPS Act, the Bipartisan
3 Infrastructure Deal, and the Inflation Reduction
4 Act.

5 Governor Hochul and her predecessor,
6 Governor Andrew Cuomo, enacted laws to change
7 regulations, making it easier for the U.N.
8 reporting company to encroach upon the target
9 lands while simultaneously gutting home rule and
10 local law.

11 While Hochul likes to praise New York for
12 its historical energy advancement, she stops short
13 of praising the fact that New York has the most
14 robust local and home rule laws in the nation.
15 She cannot because she and Cuomo did everything in
16 their power to gut them, making it easy for these
17 (inaudible) climate change companies to operate.

18 In fact, in Stark, people speak of being
19 coerced to sign contracts and being encouraged to
20 isolate those who do not sign the contracts. The
21 definition of environmental justice is the fair
22 treatment and inclusion of all people, regardless
23 of their race, color, national birth, and income.
24 In the development, implementation --
25 implementation, and enforcement of environmental

1 laws, regulations, and policies.

2 The U.N. acknowledges that vulnerable white
3 and black populations will be negatively impacted
4 by the transition. The first negative impact is
5 not being present nor participating in the
6 decision process. These are top-down policies,
7 not grassroots policies. It does not allow for
8 people to hear all sides of an issue or evaluate
9 the data.

10 I want to end with a comment by Judi
11 Greenwald, Executive Director of Nuclear
12 Innovation Alliance, made at the Future Energy
13 Economy summit held recently. And I'm
14 paraphrasing: Oftentimes companies come in with
15 an announced build-and-defend model handled by
16 experts who frame messaging to (inaudible) people
17 into compliance. What needs to happen is there's
18 a dialog process which respects people's points of
19 view, the time the processes take to facilitate
20 meaningful participation in dialog, and a respect
21 for community, family, and work obligations.

22 Thank you for listening to my comments.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

24 This concludes our list of speakers thus
25 far. If you would like to sign up and have not,

1 please see our sign-in table in the back.

2 We will remain in the room in case
3 additional speakers arrive.

4 (Brief recess.)

5 LINDSAY KRYZAK: It is now 8 o'clock. This
6 concludes our public hearing. Thank you, and get
7 home safe.

8 (Thereupon, at 8:00 p.m., this meeting was
9 concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

- - -

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
State of Florida at Large, certify that I was authorized
to and did stenographically report the foregoing
proceedings and that the transcript, page 1 through 70,
is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 22nd day of November 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky,
Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

524 West 59th Street

New York, NY 10019

November 20, 2024

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

(Morning session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Charles Imohiosen, SVP Communications & External Affairs

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Laurie Wheelock

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Wayne Lynch (SUNY Niagara.)	31
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1 CHARLES IMOHIOSEN: Good morning, everyone.
2 Thank you so much for joining us this morning.

3 Good morning. My name is Charles
4 Imohiosen. I am the Senior Vice President for
5 External Affairs and Communications for the New
6 York Power Authority.

7 This morning, and this evening, we're here
8 to share information and to collect information
9 from you about the NYPA draft Renewable Strategic
10 Plan.

11 NYPA issued its plan on October 8 and has
12 scheduled 12 public hearings across the state to
13 solicit input from interested parties like you
14 regarding the draft plan.

15 If someone you know wants to attend but is
16 not able to do so, please let them know that NYPA
17 will also be hosting a virtual hearing tomorrow,
18 and then our final session will be on Long Island
19 on Monday. You can find more information about
20 those proceedings on our nypa.gov website.

21 We'll start this hearing with a brief video
22 about the New York Power Authority and we'll
23 follow up with an overview of NYPA's expanded
24 authority and its draft Strategic Plan.
25 Primarily, however, we're here to hear from you.

1 My colleagues and I are excited to collect your
2 input which will go into our planning process on
3 the draft plan. And after these presentations,
4 we'll invite those who signed up to make public
5 comments, which will then be transcribed and
6 entered into the public record.

7 With that said, let's begin with a short
8 video that will provide an overview of New York
9 Power Authority so you can get to know us a little
10 bit better.

11 (Video played as follows:

12 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
13 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
14 the solution for New York State and its residents,
15 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
16 opportunities.

17 Through customer partnerships, energy
18 solutions, and the responsible supply of
19 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
20 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
21 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

22 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
23 serving customers in local and state governments,
24 industry, large and small businesses, and
25 nonprofit organizations.

1 The power for these customers is equal to
2 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
3 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
4 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
5 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
6 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
7 hydropower.

8 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
9 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
10 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
11 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
12 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

13 As we bring power to customers, we also
14 actively ensure people from our host communities
15 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
16 from our clean energy economy.

17 We work on projects across the state to
18 increase energy efficiency, improve
19 infrastructure, and support economic development.

20 Our hydropower projects support more than
21 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
22 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
23 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
24 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
25 the communities we serve.

1 Our economic and community focus extends to
2 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
3 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
4 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
5 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
6 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
7 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
8 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
9 from around the world.

10 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
11 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
12 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
13 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
14 years to come.

15 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
16 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
17 energy deployment and support other state
18 priorities. This expanded authority will
19 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
20 New York State, support expanded workforce
21 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
22 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
23 Energy Access and Community Help Program to
24 provide bill credits for low- and moderate-income
25 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned

1 utilities.

2 Additionally, we will lead the state's
3 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
4 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
5 production at our small natural gas power plants
6 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
7 certain reliability and environmental conditions
8 are met.

9 We are also developing action plans to
10 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
11 carbon-emitting facilities.

12 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
13 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
14 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
15 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
16 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
17 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
18 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
19 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

20 (End of video.)

21 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: All right. Thank you.
22 As noted in the video, NYPA is the largest
23 state-power public power organization in the
24 country. We operate 17 generating facilities
25 across the state and more than 1500 circuit miles

1 of transmission. More than 80 percent of our
2 electricity is clean, renewable hydropower. We
3 believe we're in a unique position to do even more
4 to advance the state's energy bills.

5 As NYPA builds, owns and operates new
6 renewable projects, we do need to have an electric
7 grid that those projects can connect to, not one
8 that's clogged with bottlenecks that prevent clean
9 energy from getting from where it's created to
10 where it needs to go. That's why we're pursuing
11 the most ambitious transformation of the state's
12 electric grid in more than 40 years.

13 The state is also implementing new
14 procedures to ensure transmission can be sited,
15 connected, and built. NYPA owns 1/3 of the
16 state's high-voltage transmission. We continue to
17 make major improvements to build a more flexible
18 21st-century grid with a significantly greater mix
19 of resources and carbon-free energy sources.

20 We also know that a modernized grid will be
21 much more resilient. That's part of the work
22 we're doing today to support the projects for
23 tomorrow.

24 Over the past two years, NYPA has launched
25 various public engagement strategies to inform the

1 foundation of building new renewable resources as
2 authorized by the 2023-2024 Enacted State Budget.

3 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
4 build renewable initiatives subject to the
5 Strategic Plan. The plan must be approved by our
6 Trustees following a public comment period and at
7 least three public hearings.

8 This is actually our ninth public hearing
9 in New York State, and we still have three more to
10 go over the next week. That's because we felt it
11 was really important to have more hearings and
12 more places to hear from more of you. Like we did
13 in our 2023 and 2024 conferral process, we welcome
14 public engagement and feedback as we shape our
15 Strategic Plan to build more renewables across New
16 York State.

17 That said, I know many of you came here
18 today to hear from us about the plan and to
19 provide input to us on the plan, so I'll now turn
20 the program over to Vennela Yadhati, who will give
21 a brief overview of the draft Strategic Plan.

22 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Charles.

23 And since I climbed up the stage, I've been
24 urging to (inaudible) so I'm going to get it out
25 of my system. It's over, (inaudible). I have the

1 high ground. They are Star Wars fans. Thank you.

2 Good morning, everyone. I'm Vennela
3 Yadhati. I'm the Vice President for NYPA
4 Renewables, leading this effort to build renewable
5 generation and energy storage projects across the
6 state.

7 We're in the middle of what we may say the
8 most significant eras in NYPA's 93-year history.
9 Last May, as part of the 2023 and '24 Enacted
10 State Budget, lawmakers entrusted us with new
11 expanded authority, new capabilities, and new
12 responsibilities, or more importantly, new
13 opportunities to continue to further serve New
14 Yorkers in the clean energy space.

15 How are we doing it? First, the expanded
16 authority gave NYPA the ability to build, own, and
17 operate renewable generation resources like solar,
18 wind, and battery energy storage systems to help
19 the state achieve its bold goals outlined in the
20 Climate Act.

21 My team at NYPA has identified a first
22 tranche of 40 such projects spread across every
23 region in the state. And while the state budget
24 did not require NYPA to meet any specific
25 threshold in its Strategic Plan, these 40 projects

1 sum up to a little over 3.5 gigawatts in capacity.

2 Now, how much is 3.5 gigawatts? The same
3 as 10 percent of the electric needs for New York
4 City. That does not sound like much, right? But
5 put it in perspective, it is enough power to power
6 whole cities like Zurich, Helsinki, Reykjavik, or
7 closer to home, Bolder, Colorado, Reno, Nevada, or
8 beautiful Austin, Texas.

9 And these 40 projects are just the
10 beginning of our commitment to expand our
11 portfolio of delivering clean, reliable energy to
12 every corner of New York. Right now, NYPA is
13 doing full due diligence on each project to
14 determine whether or not they're the best fit for
15 New Yorkers.

16 We want to ensure these projects truly
17 benefit our communities and, therefore, belong in
18 NYPA's renewables portfolio. Our main goal is to
19 leverage NYPA's resources to maximize renewable
20 energy deployment in New York. We also want to
21 explore meaningful partnerships to support the
22 state's equitable and efficient transition to a
23 clean energy future.

24 This first bunch of projects includes a mix
25 -- I got it right here -- includes a mix of NYPA's

1 own greenfield projects and co-developed
2 initiatives where we will be partnering with the
3 private sector to combine our complementary skills
4 and strengths to jointly develop, construct, own,
5 and operate these together.

6 And this first tranche includes a variety
7 of projects, both large, which seems to be the
8 predominant portfolio here, reflecting the current
9 market conditions in New York State, and small
10 distributed scale projects, especially the
11 community solar projects.

12 It includes a variety of technologies:
13 Solar PV, battery energy storage and land-based
14 wind as well. And more importantly it includes a
15 variety of locations and site conditions. Half of
16 our own greenfield portfolio, that you see here,
17 are projects that are -- that repurpose former
18 landfills, brownfields, or closed correctional
19 facilities, for advancing renewable generation.

20 Now, turning the brown to the green, or
21 green is the new brown now.

22 My point is we are collaborating with our
23 sister agencies and NYPA's customers to identify
24 more such siting opportunities because NYPA cannot
25 do this alone.

1 For example, in New York City, we're
2 developing a project along with the Port Authority
3 in New York and New Jersey -- kudos to them for
4 their efforts in leading this -- at the JFK
5 Airport. A 12.5-megawatt community solar project
6 that serves partially the JFK airport itself, the
7 AirTrain, which is all autonomous and unmanned.
8 You know, you don't want to be stuck on that when
9 the power is out, right?

10 So, this solar and battery energy storage
11 project will support the AirTrain system, and the
12 rest of the power, more than half of it, will go
13 to serve local disadvantaged communities living
14 around the airport.

15 That's just one example. NYPA has been
16 supporting the New York City Department of
17 Education to build projects in several public
18 schools, K through 12, to high schools as well.

19 And we have had -- I'm going to go a little
20 bit off script here and share a short story: One
21 of the reasons why we do what we do at NYPA is we
22 had what we call a P-TECH internship program. A
23 two-year high school internship program with NYPA,
24 and I happened to be a mentor. The opportunity to
25 be a mentor for one cohort. And all these

1 students went to the Energy Tech High School in
2 Queens, Astoria.

3 So, as we were chatting, I asked them what
4 prompted them to actually go to Energy Tech, and
5 their answer was that when they were in middle
6 school they got a tour of a solar project on the
7 school's roof, and that inspired them. It was so
8 fascinating to them, that made them actually
9 motivated them to pursue energy tech.

10 And this is a story very important to me
11 because that's the sort of project that NYPA had
12 done a few years ago ourselves. So, we supported
13 the Department of Education to build that school
14 (inaudible).

15 So the point is that in every project that
16 we try and find here, we try to find those
17 meaningful impactful products, those that have a
18 multigenerational impact on future generations
19 that are to come. Not just to inspire them to
20 make careers in this field but also to give them a
21 cleaner future.

22 So -- and we've been working with our
23 customers including -- I've mentioned
24 (inaudible) -- I've mentioned DCAs, but CUNY as
25 well, including the decarbonization leaders that

1 you mentioned earlier in this presentation program
2 to support them in their decarbonization pathway.

3 So, as I said, we can't be doing this
4 alone. So far, we've pre-qualified a stable of
5 more than 85 developers and investors that can
6 collaborate with us to build this initial tranche
7 and future ones.

8 NYPA's goal -- and goal is not to crowd out
9 the private sector but to work together,
10 leveraging our strengths to build more renewables
11 and help the state achieve its clean energy goals.
12 By maintaining majority ownership and partnering
13 strategically, NYPA can stretch our finances
14 further and accelerate the transition to clean
15 energy.

16 As we described in the Strategic Plan, NYPA
17 has not received any state funding to build new
18 renewable generation projects. Instead, we're
19 self-funding these efforts along with our other
20 critical commitments to the CLCPA, such as new
21 transmission development and growing the clean
22 energy workforce, all entirely through NYPA's own
23 revenues.

24 There have been a lot of questions about
25 the size of this first tranche of projects.

1 Financing 15 gigawatts of energy would be roughly
2 around \$30 billion in capital, the same as paying
3 for four new LaGuardia airports at once. That's a
4 lot of capital. So, we are working with industry
5 partners, we continue to talk with the state and
6 federal government, and we continue to look for
7 new partners to build even more energy future
8 tranches.

9 Given these constraints, a balanced
10 approach is essential to bring more renewable
11 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
12 offer the highest returns. This will help ensure
13 that it reduces the cost for ratepayers and
14 maximizes the impact of every dollar we spend.

15 And there is more to come. This is only
16 the first tranche and the first Strategic Plan
17 we've published. In a way, the plan itself is
18 renewable; that is a plan we will regularly update
19 as we add more projects for consideration by the
20 public and NYPA's Board of Trustees, several
21 members who are here today.

22 Part of preparing to release this draft
23 plan was making sure NYPA had the right tools and
24 staffed right to support it. This includes having
25 the expertise to make sure the proposed projects

1 meet technical, economic, environmental, and, more
2 importantly, environmental justice needs of the
3 state.

4 In the past 18 months we have established a
5 new business line and new business structures and
6 filled key personnel roles, like my team, again,
7 many of whom are here today with us. We've
8 obtained approval from our Board of Trustees to
9 form a new renewable subsidiary and an initial
10 capital allocation of \$100 million for developing
11 and garnering other necessary resources to advance
12 the first tranche of projects.

13 We continue to source and solicit
14 additional project opportunities to append to our
15 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue
16 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
17 as it expands and grows its pipeline of future
18 tranches of projects.

19 And these projects aren't being built in a
20 silo. They are part of a holistic approach to
21 renewable development that supports, again,
22 environmental justice, workforce development, and
23 affordability.

24 How are we doing it? You see, the 2023-24
25 Enacted Budget also gave NYPA the ability to

1 establish Renewable Energy Access and Community
2 Help, or the REACH program.

3 The REACH program allows NYPA to use a
4 portion of the revenues that are generated from
5 the new renewable energy projects we are
6 developing to benefit low- or moderate-income
7 households within disadvantaged communities
8 through electric utility bill grants.

9 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
10 Service Commission has accepted our application to
11 create the REACH program. Once our projects are
12 online and are generating revenue and NYPA gathers
13 funds from all available sources, money will be
14 available to flow to low-income New Yorkers
15 through the process set forth by the PSE order.

16 While REACH is still under development, the
17 program will appear as automatic bill credits
18 alongside the Energy Affordability Program and the
19 Statewide Solar for All credits.

20 NYPA will also invest up to \$25 million
21 annually in collaboration with the New York State
22 Department of Labor to create jobs and provide
23 workforce training for people who want to work in
24 the clean energy industry. Through this
25 partnership, we've already awarded \$12.5 million

1 this fiscal year in funding for workforce
2 opportunities for New Yorkers across the state,
3 especially young people from across the state like
4 the Say Yes Buffalo Youth Apprenticeship Program
5 and the Renaissance Technical Institute in New
6 York City, and others from disadvantaged
7 communities across the state, again, to pursue
8 good-paying clean energy, not just jobs, but clean
9 energy careers.

10 And with regard to the workforce on these
11 proposed projects, NYPA will require each and
12 every renewable energy-generating project to be
13 built with union labor. I'm going to say that
14 again: Every single project in NYPA's portfolio
15 must have a project labor agreement, and we will
16 require all contractors and subcontractors
17 associated with the project to utilize
18 apprenticeship agreements so those learning on
19 this first tranche of projects can be seasoned
20 veterans for NYPA's future tranches of projects.

21 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
22 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at small
23 national gas power plants in New York City and
24 Long Island, of course, as long as reliability and
25 environmental conditions are met. The plan to do

1 so is required by May next year, and we are
2 actively working with the NYISO exploring
3 strategies to meet this commitment while, of
4 course, considering the grid reliability and air
5 quality impacts, including the potential for
6 deploying battery storage at some of these sites.

7 We're in discussions with several
8 developers about energy storage and other
9 electrical infrastructure solutions to transform
10 these sites while also preserving very, very
11 important reliability. We need the lights to stay
12 turned on, right?

13 In conclusion, I know I've just laid out a
14 long list of actions NYPA has taken and continues
15 to take. It is hard work, but as we've said, this
16 is only the beginning of our commitment, and we
17 continue to be hard at work.

18 As a reminder, the draft plan is on our
19 website, nypa.gov/renewables. And I encourage all
20 of you to read it if you already haven't. Not
21 just because the people that wrote it are in this
22 room, and I'm trying to represent but it is
23 actually a very important document and it's
24 important for us to hear from all of you.

25 The draft plan spells out our approach to

1 renewables and our efforts like -- like the first
2 projects and partnerships NYPA aims to pursue.
3 This legislation represents a significant increase
4 -- increase in NYPA's role in the energy sector,
5 bringing us back to our roots to revolutionize New
6 York State's grid, and that would benefit all New
7 Yorkers.

8 So, thank you for taking the time to join
9 us to learn more and actually to provide your
10 feedback and importantly, your comments to us
11 today.

12 Charles, back to you.

13 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: Thank you, Vennela.

14 With that, I'm going to remind everybody
15 that the law requires NYPA to solicit public
16 comments and hold a minimum of three public
17 hearings in regionally diverse areas of the state
18 on the draft Strategic Plan that Vennela just
19 described.

20 Our timekeeper, Lindsay Kryzak, will call
21 on everyone who signed up to speak today, and our
22 speakers will be given three minutes to deliver
23 public comment for the record.

24 If anyone needs a translator, please alert
25 the NYPA staff at the sign-in table. We'll make

1 one available.

2 We recognize that some of you may have
3 longer comments than you want to make than others,
4 and if you run out of time, please be mindful that
5 we want to give everybody an opportunity to speak.
6 So, you should submit your comment if it extends
7 beyond three minutes to our website or email it
8 directly to strategicplancomments@NYPA.gov. QR
9 codes can also be found at the sign-in tables to
10 make it easier for you.

11 The feedback you give us this morning will
12 be transcribed and compiled with written comments
13 that must be considered and incorporated into the
14 final Strategic Plan. That plan will be published
15 on NYPA's website and submitted to the Governor
16 and the legislature by January 31st next year.

17 Thank you, again for joining us. I'll now
18 turn the program over to our timekeeper, Lindsay.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thanks, Charles.

20 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
21 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
22 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized,
23 required -- or authorized or required by
24 applicable law, regulation, or order. And it may
25 be made available in whole or in part in the

1 public record in accordance with the agency's
2 rules.

3 Each member of the public will be given
4 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.
5 Please note we have microphones in both aisles.
6 Use the one that's closest to you.

7 Additional comments can be shared via our
8 website nypa.gov, or again via email at
9 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

10 Our first speaker today is Assemblyman
11 Robert Carroll. Assemblyman.

12 ROBERT CARROLL: Thank you. Good morning.
13 I'm Assembly Member Robert Carroll, representing
14 Brooklyn's 44th District.

15 NYPA's Renewable Strategic Plan was
16 mandated by the Build Public Renewables Act, and
17 as the prime sponsor of the bill in the New York
18 State Assembly, I appreciate the opportunity to
19 testify before you.

20 The BPRA was born out of the recognition
21 that without a greater public sector role in the
22 renewable energy sector, the state was very
23 unlikely to meet the goals of the Climate
24 Leadership and Community Protection Act of 70
25 percent renewables by 2030.

1 The BPRA gave NYPA extended authority to
2 build, own, and operate renewable energy projects.
3 It was clear that the intent of the law was that
4 NYPA's Strategic Plan would include NYPA taking a
5 leading role in addressing any gaps in renewable
6 energy production needed to meet the goals of the
7 CLCPA.

8 I am encouraged that this draft Strategic
9 Plan includes NYPA projects totaling 3.5 gigawatts
10 of new renewable energy capacity. But even in the
11 most optimistic scenarios, this will not make up
12 the gap needed to hit the 70-percent renewable
13 energy targets by 2030.

14 In light of this, I support the call of the
15 Public Power Coalition that NYPA increase its
16 targets for this Strategic Plan to build 5
17 gigawatts of new renewable energy capacity through
18 2026, and recommend that you build a total of 15
19 gigawatts of new capacity by 2030.

20 And dare I say that if it would only cost
21 \$30 billion to build that capacity, that is just
22 half of the \$65 billion capital budget of the MTA,
23 and the MTA does not have the ability to partner
24 with private actors.

25 I realize that the exact number of

1 renewable projects is a moving target and that the
2 mix and sources required is difficult to factor in
3 many ways and is not in NYPA's control. The
4 cancelation, though, of offshore wind projects
5 this past year has only made it more imperative
6 that NYPA be as ambitious as possible.

7 I also understand full well that NYPA is
8 operating in a very complex environment and that
9 the uncertainty about policy at the federal level
10 has only added to those challenges, but only by
11 setting the bar high will we get to where we need
12 in the renewable energy space.

13 In addition to the expanded role of NYPA in
14 renewable energy production, the BPRA requires
15 NYPA to develop a program to reduce electric bills
16 for low-income residents and disadvantaged
17 communities, phase out heavily polluted peaker
18 plants, and invest in workforce training. I
19 commend NYPA for those efforts and the work that
20 you continue to do in that space.

21 Clearly, NYPA will need robust support from
22 the state to fulfill the BPRA mandates, and the
23 Governor and the Legislature must step up and
24 direct necessary resources to NYPA to the cause of
25 renewables. The dire consequences of failing to

1 do everything we can to address the climate change
2 issue becomes more and more evident every single
3 day as we face ongoing severe weather, from
4 flooding last year to droughts this year.

5 Let's continue to move forward together
6 with deliberate speed to do what's necessary to
7 fight climate change and to build public
8 renewables.

9 Thank you so much.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Assemblyman.

11 Our next speaker is Diallo Shabazz.

12 Diallo.

13 DIALLO SHABAZZ: Good morning. My name is
14 Diallo Shabazz. I am the Managing Director of
15 Braven Solutions, and I also am the New York State
16 Director of the P-TECH Program. I'm an expert in
17 sustainability, education, and workforce strategy,
18 and support the design of innovative schools and
19 training programs that prepare New Yorkers for the
20 future of work.

21 The clock is ticking on the most urgent
22 challenge of our generation: Building a clean
23 energy future while creating opportunities for our
24 communities to thrive.

25 Today, I will speak about the critical

1 intersection of clean energy grids, education, and
2 workforce development. Three pillars that are not
3 just interconnected, but inseparable if we are to
4 succeed in combating climate change and achieving
5 equitable economic growth.

6 The clean energy grids that NYPA is setting
7 out to create will be a lifeline for health and
8 sustainability. The transition to clean energy is
9 no longer optional. It is an economic,
10 environmental, and public health imperative.

11 Clean energy grids aren't just about
12 reducing greenhouse gasses. They're also about
13 using advanced technologies to distribute energy
14 more efficiently, reduce waste, and integrate
15 renewable sources like wind and solar.

16 These grids will replace fossil fuel-based
17 power plants that emit pollutants linked to
18 respiratory conditions like childhood asthma.

19 In the U.S., communities of color and
20 low-income neighborhoods are disproportionately
21 exposed to harmful emissions from outdated energy
22 infrastructure. Transitioning to clean energy
23 grids will not only lower carbon emissions but
24 also significantly reduce the pollutants that harm
25 our children.

1 Imagine a world where fewer families had to
2 rush their children to emergency rooms for asthma
3 attacks caused by smog-filled air. Clean energy
4 grids like those that are going to be built by
5 NYPA will bring us closer to that vision.

6 We also need to focus on education for a
7 green economy. This is where education plays a
8 transformative role with programs like P-TECH that
9 demonstrate -- that demonstrate the power of
10 aligning educational curricula with industry
11 needs.

12 About ten years ago, in a chemistry
13 classroom in Brooklyn, we transformed the nature
14 of instruction when private sector engineers have
15 brought (inaudible) real-world problems to the
16 curriculum. Students weren't just learning about
17 (inaudible) geometry; they were solving
18 challenge-type disasters like Hurricane Katrina
19 and Hurricane Sandy, learning about how you take
20 oil spills, how you take oil out of the water, and
21 analyzing the environmental economic impact.
22 That's environmental literacy in action, and we
23 need to ensure that this model and environmental
24 literacy, in general, is available here for every
25 New Yorker.

1 With workforce development, we need to
2 ensure that we complete this equation. We need
3 labor market intelligence to ensure that the
4 training aligns with job opportunities not just in
5 the future but today. Programs must go beyond
6 technical skills to include systems thinking and
7 help young people not just fill jobs but create
8 them.

9 And let's not forget underrepresented
10 communities, women, minorities, and marginalized
11 groups must have equitable access to these
12 opportunities. The green -- the green transition
13 must leave no one behind.

14 And finally, our call to action for
15 governments, for educational institutions, and for
16 industry leaders like NYPA is to continue to come
17 together to invest in clean energy grids, to align
18 educational pathways with green career demands,
19 and foster workforce development programs that
20 prioritize inclusion.

21 Thank you.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Diallo.

23 Our next speaker is Wayne Lynch and will be
24 followed by Rin Curzio.

25 Wayne.

1 WAYNE LYNCH: Thank you. My name is Wayne
2 Lynch. I'm the Vice President for Administration
3 and Chief Financial Officer for SUNY Niagara.

4 I'm here to talk in support of NYPA. And
5 not based upon the concepts and the theory of the
6 Strategic Plan (inaudible) Development Expanded
7 Authority, but actually on a practical measure of
8 a 6-megawatt solar (inaudible) that we're
9 undergoing that has demonstrated with observable
10 and quantifiable values that only a partner like
11 NYPA can bring to a small institution like ours to
12 allow us to endeavor on such a project.

13 The key fundamentals of that on why we
14 support NYPA on this endeavor are the following:
15 NYPA has the ability to align multiple parties'
16 technical components to develop engineered
17 solutions for the installation of renewable power
18 generating entities. These entities associated
19 for these highly complex projects require a deep
20 knowledge base for electrical infrastructure,
21 including utility providers, engineering
22 principles, interconnection means, and alignment
23 of the end user, our college, utility providers,
24 national grid, the developer who will provide the
25 installation of the power generated entity.

1 They have the ability to draft initial
2 requests for proposals to align the programmatic
3 goals of the client SUNY Niagara ensuring the
4 client receives maximum benefit in both carbon
5 footprint offset decarbonization, as well as
6 financial stewardship.

7 The variables of risk and reward as we went
8 through these RFPs from NYPA were conveyed and
9 displayed in such a simple manner it made the
10 decision-making process clear and concise for the
11 college on what was the most viable and beneficial
12 option for our institution.

13 NYPA (inaudible) qualify and illustrate in
14 simple clear financial terms of proposals,
15 allowing us to understand all foundations of risk
16 and reward, taking the complexity out of what is a
17 very difficult and complex industry to navigate
18 through, and allowing us to take clear and present
19 values of our Board of Trustees to alert them on
20 what the best solution would be for our students,
21 our campus, and our community moving forward.

22 NYPA has a deep understanding of the
23 financial payback methods and the net present
24 value calculations. These include incentives from
25 the federal government, state government, and

1 other programs that offset the capital costs of
2 the project, yielding both long- and short-term
3 financial benefits.

4 To close, with a few seconds I have left,
5 though this is a very small example of what NYPA
6 has brought to the table by (inaudible)
7 institution of our size, this 6-megawatt solar
8 farm is not only to lower our carbon footprint for
9 our community for generations to come, but will
10 also yield a 250 to \$400,000 annual economic
11 benefit to the institution, which will ultimately
12 allow us to keep our tuition rates low, and allow
13 those we serve to access education on a long-term
14 value for our community. Thank you.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Wayne.

16 Our next speaker is Rin Curzio, followed by
17 Jenna Kin. Rin.

18 RIN CURZIO: Hello. My name is Rin Curzio.
19 I was an intern in NYPA's P-TECH program for 2023
20 and 2024.

21 In the two years I attended, I learned
22 about the environmental considerations involved in
23 the site's renewable profiling. This year was
24 surveying maps for endangered species and
25 wetlands, and last year was research regarding

1 technology for floating solar arrays, and how they
2 might be installed on New York State reservoirs.

3 Since my graduation from the program with
4 an Associate's in Mechanical Engineering, I am
5 continuing my education. I'm currently at CUNY
6 for a Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering. And
7 NYPA has really pushed me to kind of pursue a
8 degree more in line with the goal of
9 sustainability, specifically taking classes with
10 regard to it.

11 I thank NYPA for the unforgettable
12 experience I had in the P-TECH program, and I'm
13 excited to see more opportunities with the
14 development of renewables all across New York
15 State.

16 Just this month, I saw a solar array
17 constructed in CUNY's parking lot. And honestly,
18 I would love to see more projects across the
19 state. Thank you.

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Rin.

21 Our speaker is Jenna Kane, who will be
22 followed by Lisa Sorin. Jenna.

23 JENNA KANE: Hello, I'm Jenna Kane. I am a
24 sophomore at Fordham University studying
25 chemistry. And -- yeah, so on November 9, 2024, I

1 turned 19 years old, and woke up early and I
2 walked out of my apartment in the Bronx and I
3 embraced the early morning smoke. The smell
4 became more pungent throughout the day, and it
5 followed me everywhere: The bus, the gym, my
6 home. My eyes stung, and my throat felt raw by
7 the evening.

8 Why? Because our warm and arid home,
9 usually cool and wet this time of year, was on
10 fire. I lived in New York here my whole life and
11 I never have to worry about going outside. But
12 now, this is the second year in a row where I've
13 had to stay inside so as to not exacerbate my
14 asthma.

15 And I'm scared about climate change. I'm
16 absolutely terrified. But I'm also enraged
17 because we -- we can fund all the studies and
18 reports that we want, but we already know enough
19 that we're screwed if we don't transition to
20 renewables.

21 There's so -- so much out of our hands,
22 especially with the incoming federal
23 administration, but this -- this is in our power,
24 and state-level action is really our only hope for
25 renewables, but it is real hope.

1 NYPA, Governor Hochul, and the New York
2 State legislature, you have the power to give New
3 York a chance to fight back. Everyone in this
4 room knows that 3.5 gigawatts is ambitious, but it
5 is still not enough. We need 15 gigawatts of
6 renewables by 2030, and I urge the state
7 government to assign the necessary funding to NYPA
8 to make that happen.

9 Thank you.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

11 Our next speaker is Lisa Sorin, and will be
12 followed by Matthew Smith. Lisa.

13 LISA SORIN: Good morning. Lisa Sorin,
14 President of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce. And
15 thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

16 Though statewide with NYPA's expanded
17 authority and Strategic Plan, they will do -- be
18 focusing on our beloved borough of the Bronx.
19 When we spoke with NYPA, it was clear that they
20 commit to supporting the future sustainability of
21 our borough, which is crucial to the future
22 well-being of this city.

23 As someone who advocates for different
24 businesses and entrepreneurs across many verticals
25 and industries in our borough, I believe that

1 clean energy transition should be implemented in a
2 responsible and measured way, but in a way that
3 will also include our Bronx sites.

4 I trust they will work hard to move us
5 closer to our state's goal to reduce emissions and
6 reach out to my neighbors in the Bronx. They are
7 committed to bringing education to the Bronx and
8 communities they have not engaged in the past.

9 With that said, I believe they also have a
10 valuable perspective to keep in mind from working
11 with a diverse set of customers, including private
12 and public customers.

13 The Bronx Chamber also recognizes that NYPA
14 is leading by preparing to update our electrical
15 -- our electric grid. We learned that the Propel
16 Project and other transmission projects in the
17 state within the Strategic Plan will decongest our
18 electric highways and build final
19 interconnections.

20 It matters that NYPA will help with
21 reliability and resilience of how energy flows to
22 the Bronx, especially as electrification will only
23 trend upward in the coming years.

24 Residents and businesses will benefit from
25 these NYPA transmission projects. Neither group

1 can afford to have disruptions or brownouts as old
2 infrastructure and climate change will impact our
3 (inaudible) environment.

4 I also care about the overall well-being of
5 the Bronx. We believe NYPA will use its expanded
6 authority as an opportunity to help build the
7 workforce of the present and future of our
8 borough.

9 The 25 million investment in the Department
10 of Labor can be a game-changer for the Bronx's
11 workforce (inaudible) organizations and nonprofits
12 like ours.

13 As this renewable energy initiative
14 expands, the Bronx has human capital it can bring
15 off the sidelines with the help of NYPA. With
16 this Strategic Plan and some of its recent
17 workforce development updates and its
18 environmental justice team, it is clear it's only
19 the beginning of the important work to help New
20 York State. We want to see them succeed and will
21 be a partner where it makes sense to help the
22 Bronx move forward. Thank you.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Lisa.

24 Our next speaker is Matthew Smith, who will
25 be followed by Duncan Wright. Matthew.

1 MATTHEW SMITH: As you've heard, my name is
2 Matthew Smith. I am a resident of the Bronx, and
3 I'm also a sophomore at Fordham University
4 studying mathematics and physics.

5 I'm here today to speak in favor of
6 building 15 gigawatts of renewable energy --
7 publicly-owned renewable energy. I went into
8 STEM, specifically physics, because I'm worried
9 about my future. My future is at risk right now.
10 New York was just on fire.

11 Like Jenna said, we couldn't even go
12 outside without our lungs burning. And what we're
13 talking about is building 3.5 gigawatts, which is
14 great, but it's nowhere near enough. We need to
15 tackle this like the crisis it is. This is an
16 existential threat to humanity, to the future of
17 humanity, to your kids, to everybody's kids, to
18 the future generations.

19 The world is on fire. 3.5 is ambitious,
20 but it's nowhere near enough. And though 15
21 gigawatts you say may cost a ton of money, think
22 about how much money it's going to cost when
23 climate change reaches us and we have to repair
24 all of these things. The cost of climate change
25 is -- the cost of 15 gigawatts is nowhere near the

1 cost of climate change. It is absolutely
2 unacceptable that I need to be here. I don't want
3 to be here. I -- I'm missing my classes right
4 now. You know, I don't want to be here, but I'm
5 advocating for my future. Okay. I -- I would
6 much rather be in class, which sounds weird to
7 say, I know, but I don't want to be here. I don't
8 like speaking in front of crowds. I -- you know?
9 But this is my future, and we have the opportunity
10 to not only build 15 gigawatts of renewable energy
11 to lead the country in climate -- in fighting
12 climate change, but we also have the opportunity
13 to create thousands of more -- past the 3.5
14 gigawatts, thousands of more green union jobs.

15 So, we're not just talking about climate
16 change here. We're talking about the future of
17 our economy here in New York, providing people
18 with good union jobs.

19 So I ask of you, please consider the future
20 generations. Please. The private sector is not
21 going to reach 70 percent renewable energy as
22 required by the CLCPA, so it's up to you. Build
23 15 gigawatts of renewable publicly-owned energy,
24 help my future, and help the future generations of
25 humanity.

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Matthew.

2 Our next speaker is Duncan Wright, who will
3 be followed by Hannah Weinstock. Duncan:

4 DUNCAN WRIGHT: Good morning. And thank
5 you, Ms. Yadhati. Thank you, and Mr.
6 Imohiosen for your comments. My name is Duncan
7 Wright, and I live in New York City.

8 I urge you to build 15 gigawatts of
9 renewable energy by 2030. This is technically
10 possible and morally necessary, as has just been
11 said very well.

12 In -- in our care for our common home, Pope
13 Francis asked this question: What kind of a world
14 do we want to leave to those who come after us?
15 To children who are now growing up?

16 We must think first of its general
17 direction, its meaning and its values. Unless we
18 struggle with these deeper issues, I do not
19 believe that our concern for ecology will produce
20 significant results.

21 But if these questions are courageously
22 faced, we are led inexorably to ask other pointed
23 questions: What is the purpose of our life in
24 this world? Why are we here? What is the goal of
25 our work and all our efforts? What need does the

1 earth have of us?

2 It is no longer enough then simply to state
3 that we should be concerned for future
4 generations. We need to see that what is at stake
5 is our own dignity. Leaving a livable planet to
6 future generations is, first and foremost, up to
7 us.

8 I urge you to summon the courage,
9 compassion and foresight needed to build 15
10 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030. Thank you.

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Duncan.

12 Our next speaker is Hannah Weinstock, who
13 will be followed by Michael Paulson. Hannah.

14 HANNAH WEINSTOCK: Hello, everybody.
15 Hannah Weinstein, Senior Director of Workforce
16 Development at LaGuardia Community College, one of
17 the city -- city universities of New York
18 colleges. I oversee our Workforce Development
19 programs, serving about 10,000 students a year,
20 helping them train to get a better job, pursue
21 their dreams, put food on the table for their
22 families, and to learn and grow, and fulfill their
23 ambitions.

24 I want to applaud the investment of 25
25 million a year in this plan for Workforce

1 Development. This will -- especially with a focus
2 on disadvantaged communities, again, to help
3 people fulfill their full potential and to help
4 those communities that have been most burdened by
5 fossil fuel pollution to lead the way in building
6 a new green economy in our state.

7 We have already benefited from investments
8 that NYPA has made in our Clean Energy Academy,
9 which trained over 100 public-housing residents;
10 it was a partnership with the New York City Public
11 Housing Authority, training over 100 public
12 housing residents to improve NYCHA facilities by
13 installing solar, putting in heat pumps,
14 electrifying the buildings, improving insulation.

15 And many of these students have already
16 gotten multiple promotions since they began only a
17 year or two ago, and the program really has
18 transformed their lives.

19 There's the opportunity to do a lot more,
20 whether it be through, you know, solar and
21 wind-tech training, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, or
22 other programs that you might not think of as
23 clean energy, but are just as relevant, like our
24 data analytics programs or different technology
25 and business programs.

1 So, we're excited about the opportunity to
2 partner with NYPA. And we encourage NYPA, in
3 addition to investing in these programs, to also
4 develop deep and thoughtful plans to hire from
5 these programs, and to look at your own hiring
6 needs and how you can partner with organizations
7 like LaGuardia to meet the diverse talent needs of
8 an organization as large and ambitious as NYPA.

9 So, thank you so much for your commitment
10 to Workforce Development, and we look forward to a
11 -- a future of creating more opportunity for our
12 communities.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Hannah.

14 Our next speaker is Michael Paulson, who
15 will be followed by Dietmar Detering. Michael.

16 MICHAEL PAULSON: Good morning. So, I
17 spent the last five years working with New Yorkers
18 around the state as part of the Public Power New
19 York Coalition to pass the Build Public Renewables
20 Act and to now encourage the New York Power
21 Authority to fulfill the vision of that law in the
22 way that it was intended.

23 And I want to speak about why we actually
24 came up with the idea to come to NYPA to help lead
25 our energy transition: NYPA has a history of

1 being a leader. It was founded by Franklin Delano
2 Roosevelt in the 1930s in another moment of energy
3 transition.

4 But I want to speak specifically to the
5 question of finance that we heard that it is too
6 expensive somehow for us to build enough renewable
7 energy to meet our climate goals. We came to NYPA
8 in part because of its financial profile, that it
9 has the ability to raise massive amounts of
10 capital, that it has an extremely successful,
11 profitable, and stable base of business. And, in
12 fact, they commissioned a study last year around
13 the feasibility of NYPA building a massive amount
14 of renewable energy, and they concluded that they
15 could do so while maintaining a financial profile
16 that is comparable to other public power
17 institutions.

18 So, the question is not, Is there enough
19 money that can be raised? The question is, What
20 exactly is the purpose of NYPA? Because we know
21 it is feasible to raise this money.

22 The question is, Is NYPA's job to preserve
23 an AA-plus credit rating? Which is, by the way,
24 this much lower than U.S. treasury bond rating,
25 which is thought to be the most secure thing you

1 can invest in. Is that their job?

2 Is their job to present pristine financial
3 reports to the Board of Trustees and be applauded
4 for that? Or is it to serve the people of New
5 York State to meet the energy goals that, by the
6 way, were decided not by just the governor or the
7 legislature but the people of New York?

8 Is it your job to serve that need? Is it
9 your job to create the green union jobs that
10 people want and need for our future? Is it your
11 job to remedy the questions of air quality that
12 have been raised so far by shutting down our --
13 your peaker plants by 2030 as mandated by law?

14 We're not going to shut those peaker plants
15 down if you build 3.5 gigawatts because of the
16 reliability questions that you raise.

17 So, ultimately, what I'm hearing from NYPA
18 in the Strategic Plan here today is that, well,
19 they want to mitigate risk for NYPA, but as we
20 heard from Matthew before, the risk is ahead of
21 us. The risk is a lot bigger than the balance
22 sheet of NYPA. The risk is our entire
23 civilization, for us, for our children, for our
24 grandchildren.

25 So, I would like to know if NYPA is going

1 to step up and meet that goal that the people have
2 entrusted you with and build 15 or more gigawatts
3 by 2030. Thank you.

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
5 speaker is Dietmar Detering. Dietmar.

6 DIETMAR DETERING: Good morning. My name
7 is Dietmar Dietary. I live with my family in
8 Queens, and I'm Chair of Nuclear New York, an
9 independent, nonpartisan advocacy group working
10 towards a prosperous, decarbonized future and
11 nature conservation.

12 There is so much to admire about NYPA's
13 leadership in energy. Niagara has long been a
14 beacon of innovation and reliability for New York,
15 embodying the kindred spirit that defines our
16 state; whether it's hydropower at Niagara Falls,
17 at the St. Lawrence River, pumped storage at
18 Blenheim-Gilboa for crucial transmission projects,
19 NYPA has consistently delivered where the market
20 could not.

21 But as NYPA expands into renewable energy
22 development, we must ask: Is this the best use of
23 its unique strengths? Renewable projects usually
24 don't struggle to attract investments, as they
25 have rather short lifespans and benefit from

1 federal tax credits, NYSERDA incentives, and
2 favorable permitting processes.

3 NYPA's involvement in these projects
4 dilutes its appropriate focus on projects that are
5 more challenging for the private sector. And make
6 no mistake, New York faces pressing challenges.
7 The growing reliance on intermittent wind and
8 solar is creating ever larger gaps between
9 electricity supply and demand, just when New York
10 is attracting data centers and advanced
11 manufacturing that depend on not just more but
12 ultra-reliable electricity.

13 The Public Service Commission's Zero by '40
14 Conference identified nuclear energy as the most
15 promising solution to stabilize our grid while
16 meeting our decarbonization targets. While wind
17 and solar burden the public with their high costs
18 of transmission, storage, and backup, nuclear
19 energy offers unmatched reliability and
20 efficiency. Furthermore, with lifespans of 80
21 years, nuclear power plants are built to last.
22 Yet nuclear energy struggles to attract private
23 capital because these same performance and
24 durability benefits translate to higher upfront
25 costs that are less appealing to investors that

1 seek short-term returns.

2 This is where NYPA can be transformative.
3 As a public institution, NYPA can step in where
4 private investors hesitate, leveraging its
5 expertise to champion projects that are critical
6 for New York's future. By investing in advanced
7 nuclear energy, NYPA can ensure reliability,
8 conserve land, and power the industries of the
9 future that will drive our economy, all while
10 accelerating their path to true sustainability.

11 In the past, NYPA was instrumental in
12 deploying nuclear energy in the state, providing
13 reliable and affordable electricity that continues
14 to benefit New Yorkers today. Building on that
15 legacy, let's position NYPA as the ace up New
16 York's sleeve, a partner that not only supports
17 innovation but delivers solutions for our greatest
18 challenges. Together, we can build a reliable and
19 resilient energy system that serves our
20 communities and meets our climate goals. Thank
21 you.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Dietmar.

23 Our next speaker is Michael Racioppa,
24 followed by Nancy Romer. Michael.

25 MICHAEL RACIOPPA: Hi. Thank you. My name

1 is Michael Racioppa. I'm District Manager of
2 Brooklyn Community Board 6, which includes the
3 waterfront community of Red Hook. And as many may
4 already know, it was greatly impacted by Sandy in
5 2012.

6 The renewable energy is -- in our
7 investments in climate resiliency has been part of
8 our district needs assessment for the entire time
9 I've been district manager, and this is certainly
10 an encouraging step in the right direction. 3.5
11 gigawatts is good. We would certainly agree to
12 the segment that it should be higher.

13 Assembly Member Carroll, who overlaps with
14 CB-6, talked about hitting 5, that would be
15 better. 15 would be perfect, or -- you know,
16 considering those situations.

17 And along with that, Workforce Development
18 is -- is a major issue for us as well, and NYPA
19 has been in Red Hook and they've done outreaches
20 like this, so we are encouraged by this, but we
21 hope that the investments grow. We hope the
22 Governor agrees to also (inaudible) investments so
23 you can hit higher targets than 3.5. Thank you.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Michael.

25 Our next speaker is Nancy Romer, followed

1 by Elizabeth Hovey. Nancy.

2 NANCY ROMER: Hi, I'm Nancy Romer. I'm a
3 Professor Emerita from Brooklyn College, and I
4 co-chair the Environmental Justice Working Group
5 of the Professional Staff Congress of CUNY, which
6 represents the 30,000 full-time and part-time
7 faculty and professional staff at the City
8 University of New York.

9 Thank you to the hardworking staff of NYPA.
10 This -- these comments are focused at NYPA
11 leadership and at Governor Hochul. With Trump's
12 election, it's now up to the blue states to do
13 everything they can to slow the process of climate
14 change by producing as much renewable energy as
15 fast as possible and eliminating dangerous fossil
16 fuel systems.

17 In New York State, the change falls to
18 NYPA, but NYPA's draft proposal falls so far short
19 of what we need; it is truly frightful. It has
20 minimal ambition to produce more renewable energy
21 in this state. We need at least 15 gigawatts or
22 more, not 3.5.

23 If shortchanges New York City with half the
24 population in New York State and only one
25 renewable energy project proposed for the whole

1 city, 70 percent of our city's carbon emissions
2 come from buildings. 70 percent of our city's
3 carbon emissions can be helped by decarbonizing
4 through NYPA.

5 COP29 cited New York City as the third-most
6 polluted city after Shanghai and Tokyo. NYPA's
7 proposal offers nothing to decarbonize the dirty
8 and unhealthy 300-plus buildings at the City
9 University of New York. Sited mostly in
10 low-income communities, many campuses could easily
11 develop geothermal networks making heating and
12 cooling much more efficient, and have solar panels
13 on our roofs. Instead, our antiquated heating and
14 cooling systems are belching out carbon to our
15 students, faculty, staff, and neighbors.

16 It completely fails the Build Public
17 Renewables Act which requires NYPA to build
18 renewable energy that private corporations refuse
19 to take up. NYPA's plan (inaudible) in New York
20 State climate law and it should be investing in
21 vocational apprentice programs and produce good
22 union jobs with expanded renewable energy.

23 Please recognize your historic role in the
24 lives of our people and planet. It is a huge
25 responsibility, but absolutely necessary. Expand

1 your vision and proposal. Tell your grandchildren
2 and mine that you did what you could do when you
3 could do it. Thank you.

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

5 Our next speaker is Elizabeth Hovey,
6 followed by Hennessy Garcia. Elizabeth.

7 ELIZABETH HOVEY: Thank you. I'll begin by
8 introducing myself as Elizabeth Hovey, but you use
9 a very common mispronunciation. And Nancy Romer
10 and I are both representatives of the PSC, and we
11 did not coordinate our remarks.

12 She mentioned geothermal energy, and I
13 thought perhaps I was going to be the first. I
14 had to replace an HVAC system this summer and
15 learned that geothermal is possible. I hope that
16 NYPA has the authority to expand, as we already
17 heard, for CUNY housing.

18 And prepared in two minutes -- I'm going to
19 go off script just a little bit -- my script.
20 Last Wednesday, I was visiting -- visited by a
21 woman in her mid-20s who was very upset about the
22 election, as I expected her to be. But when she
23 really broke down, she said, And what about
24 climate change? I thought this was our last
25 chance. I don't think I can have children now.

1 So I ask you, when we think about future
2 generations, to realize that if New York can give
3 people hope, we have a lot of possibilities for
4 lots of things.

5 I'm a historian and co-chair of the PSC
6 chapter here at John Jay, so a belated welcome
7 from a John Jay person. And I'm telling you, with
8 my expertise, time passes. You are leaders. You
9 will be speaking to other leaders. And many, many
10 leaders have come to regret that they did not act
11 more boldly for the greater good.

12 I want you to avoid that fate. I want the
13 future for you and for the rest of us knowing you
14 did what really needed to be done. Find a way
15 that 15 gigawatts of renewable energy will be
16 generated in New York State.

17 I have remarks from two students who could
18 not be here. One is Christina Vargas, a John Jay
19 student of environmental justice: Increasing the
20 levels of renewable energy at CUNY will not only
21 give ourselves a chance to thrive but see the
22 advanced effects of decarbonization. Relying on
23 fossil fuels to keep our institutions open isn't
24 just the way we should be handling greenhouse
25 gasses in New York City. The impact of greenhouse

1 gasses is getting in the way of our education.
2 Buildings fall apart, leaking roofs and outdated
3 facilities. Together, we want a cleaner, greener,
4 safer New York.

5 I have just -- I have a lot of comments
6 from Nicolas Solano. I'll submit them. He's also
7 a student. He said: Ultimately, we need to
8 realize that climate change and rising sea levels
9 are real problems that government officials and
10 large corporations cannot ignore. We see this all
11 over the country and, particularly, in New York.
12 Thank you.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Elizabeth.

14 Our next speaker is Hennessy Garcia, who
15 will be followed by Mike Menser. Hennessy.

16 HENNESSY GARCIA: Hi, my name is Hennessy.
17 I'm a climate justice organizer, a member of
18 Public Power New York and a senior at CUNY Medgar
19 Evers College studying environmental science.

20 The other day, my little sister, who is 17,
21 confided in me about her climate fears. She's
22 worried about the fact that it's still 60 degrees
23 in November. She's concerned about the droughts
24 this city is dealing with. She's worried if
25 she'll even have a livable future. She's 17 and

1 able to grasp that we are in a climate emergency.
2 And as a big sister, I don't know how to protect
3 my little sister from the freaking climate crisis.

4 And this is wild. I'm young, too. I don't
5 even know if I'm going to see a livable future
6 either. We come from the poorest and most
7 environmentally burdened neighborhood in New York
8 City. The South Bronx has the highest asthma
9 rates in the nation. My community has four
10 highways that go through it. The South Bronx
11 still has peaker plants poisoning our communities.

12 The governor and state agencies have now
13 admitted that we are badly off track on our
14 climate goals stated in the Climate Leadership and
15 Community Protection Act. According to the latest
16 projections, we will only meet 44 percent
17 renewable electricity by 2030. This is also
18 stated in NYPA's 2024 Conferral Report.

19 This is unacceptable. We are supposed to
20 be at 70 percent by 2030. The climate cannot
21 wait, and New York must act now. The Build Public
22 Renewables Act, or BPRA, was written and passed to
23 enable and ensure that NYPA leads our energy
24 transition. NYPA -- NYPA's leadership must
25 acknowledge this mandate and revise their

1 Strategic Plan to include at least 15 gigawatts of
2 renewables by 2030 to ensure we meet our CLCPA
3 goals. 3.5 gigawatts is not enough. It is not
4 too much to say that I want to see a decarbonized
5 community. I want more reunion jobs. I want a
6 green and healthy Bronx, not just for me, but for
7 my 17-year-old little sister. And I really hope
8 that NYPA can lead the way to a cleaner and
9 healthier New York. Thank you.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Hennessy.

11 Our next speaker is Mike Menser, followed
12 by Sarah Graham. Mike.

13 MICHAEL MENSER: Thank you. Well, a tough
14 act to follow. And thanks to everybody who's
15 testified today. Oh, it's wonderful to see all
16 the faculty, and students, and staff, and
17 community members here to show the importance of
18 this and the urgency of the moment.

19 Again, welcome to CUNY. My name is Michael
20 Menser, and I'm an associate professor at Brooklyn
21 College, CUNY. I have been at CUNY as a student,
22 as staff, and as faculty for more than 30 years.

23 I do research in this area. I teach this
24 in every class that I teach. I have students
25 working on these plans. I have students working

1 with community-based organizations. I'm the
2 co-director of the New York City Climate Justice
3 Hub. And I've held many positions working with
4 our union, and other colleagues, and other
5 community partners on these issues to make this
6 transition speedy and just.

7 And my main request to you today, with
8 respect to the Strategic Plan, is to put CUNY in
9 it. As of now, we are not. Surely, that is an
10 oversight. I say this especially because my
11 campus is one of the three CUNY campuses which is
12 part of the CUNY Decarbonization Leadership Plan
13 which NYPA is leading.

14 Brooklyn College is working with your
15 consultant, Ramboll, which just completed a report
16 assessing the energy use and energy infrastructure
17 of our college that I was hearing the details
18 about yesterday, and we were very excited about
19 the efficacy and the quality of the report; I have
20 to say.

21 Next, you and they are to work with
22 Brooklyn College with CUNY to develop a plan to
23 create projects to help reduce emissions and
24 pollution, and increase the energy efficiency of
25 our buildings. We are very excited to be part of

1 this, especially because many of the buildings on
2 our campus, as you've been hearing, are very old;
3 nine are approaching 90 years and in need of basic
4 upgrades as well as sophisticated retrofits to
5 make our buildings not only energy efficient, but
6 also healthy and safe.

7 And on this, I have to say that while we
8 appreciate the transmission expertise that NYPA
9 has, the buildings component, which NYPA has done
10 in the past with other public partners including
11 NYCHA, is really something that needs to be
12 urgently developed in your portfolio of expertise.

13 My buildings were, you know, also created
14 during a new deal. I have a picture of Franklin
15 Delano Roosevelt and Fiorello La Guardia opening
16 my building. Now we need this in this moment,
17 right, this new leadership to come up and bring us
18 into the next phase to deal with the urgency of
19 the problem.

20 So many of our buildings across CUNY, and
21 this is part of the challenge of decarbonizing
22 buildings, right, have these need for upgrades
23 because we're mold-prone, we're poorly insulated,
24 we're hot in summer, we're cold in winter, and our
25 HVAC systems also are in such bad shape that we

1 have not had a fully functioning cafeteria at
2 Brooklyn College since 2020.

3 In sum, for you, I would say today, please
4 put CUNY in the Strategic Plan, deliver it with
5 the funds and financing for the Decarbonization
6 Leadership Plan, and make us a strategic partner
7 to do engagement. We are a disadvantaged
8 community. We are an EJ community. And let's
9 lead together in a public -- public partnership
10 and show the world what New York can do. Go, New
11 York.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Mike.

13 Our next speaker is Sarah Graham, followed
14 by Janet Poppendieck. Sarah.

15 SARAH GRAHAM: Hi. I'm Sarah Graham, and
16 I'm from Brooklyn and a proud alum of Brooklyn
17 College, which is indeed cold in the winter, hot
18 in the summer.

19 MY -- I -- I have read the Strategic Plan,
20 and I'm stunned by how inadequate it is. It
21 simply does not meet the moment. We are in a
22 moment in which extreme rainfall flooded our
23 buildings and subways in August, extreme heat
24 contributed to the deaths of some 350 New Yorkers
25 this summer, and wildfires now burn in our public

1 parks because of drought. In a city where over
2 130,000 households are burdened with high utility
3 costs, we need more from our state government.

4 My remarks are directly -- directed
5 specifically to NYPA's CEO Justin Driscoll and to
6 Governor Hopeful because I think this plan shows a
7 failure in leadership, a reluctance to do what
8 needs to be done; as has been said over and over
9 again, the CLCPA mandates that 70 percent of our
10 electricity be generated by renewables by 2030.

11 We will reach 2030 in four years and 41
12 days and are on track, as Hennessy mentioned, to
13 build renewables capable of generating only 44
14 percent of our electricity.

15 The 3.5 gigawatts of projects that you have
16 in your plan are fine, but they're inadequate.
17 And in the planning, you do mention that some of
18 these are unlikely to be built. Moreover, only
19 one project is in New York City, a place where
20 Nancy says half, at least 40-something percent of
21 New York State residents live. We need more.

22 I ask that CEO Driscoll and Governor Hochul
23 demonstrate real leadership by expanding NYPA's
24 goals to 15 gigawatts and, particularly, by
25 ensuring that much more renewable energy is cited

1 in New York City. Thank you.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Sarah.

3 Our next speaker is Janet Poppendieck,
4 followed by Ladawn Haglund. Janet.

5 JANET POPPENDIECK: I'm Janet Poppendieck.
6 I'm a Professor Emerita of Sociology at Hunter
7 College, and a senior faculty fellow at the CUNY
8 Urban Food Policy Institute, and a member of the
9 Retirees Chapter of the PSC-CUNY.

10 But I'm here on behalf of one person, and
11 that's my granddaughter, Winter Rose Daily, age 8.
12 Do you want to see Winter Rose? And all her
13 classmates at PS10, and all the children in our
14 city, our state, and our country, and around the
15 world.

16 This crisis of climate is so urgent. We
17 need you to ramp it up, to aim higher, to have a
18 larger bolder vision. The 15 gigawatts is a -- a
19 minimum of what we need you to -- to plan for, and
20 to find a way to build renewables.

21 Our situation changed dramatically on
22 November 5. And the world's situation changed
23 dramatically. And now, I'm urging you -- I'm
24 really begging you, on behalf of all our
25 grandchildren, please take this faster, bigger,

1 more urgently. If -- this is not a time for
2 financial caution; this is a time for getting on
3 with demonstrating what can be done in the public
4 sector.

5 We're -- we're counting on you. I'm going
6 to be 80 on my next birthday, and I find myself
7 thinking, well, I'll probably get out in time.
8 You know, I'll probably get out before the world
9 becomes -- before our part of the world becomes
10 uninhabitable. Parts of the world have already
11 become uninhabitable, but my grandchild doesn't
12 have that -- that option waiting for her. So
13 please, get on with it as hard and fast as you
14 can.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Janet.

16 Our next speaker is Ladawn Haglund,
17 followed by Collin Maxwell. Ladawn.

18 LADAWN HAGLUND: Good morning. Thank you
19 so much for being here. Welcome to John Jay
20 College. My name is Ladawn Haglund, and I just
21 moved back to New York City after being in Arizona
22 for 18 years.

23 I'm happy and relieved to be in a place
24 where the government actually believes in climate
25 change and believes that it's caused by the

1 burning of fossil fuels.

2 I know that storms like Sandy and Ida were
3 real wake-up calls for New Yorkers, just like
4 wildfires are out west, and apparently here now,
5 too.

6 I'm a professor here at John Jay College
7 who focuses on water, climate, and environmental
8 justice. I teach about all of the local issues
9 that people have brought up today, and I have
10 students that are passionate like the ones that
11 you've heard from.

12 I also teach about longer-term global
13 trends like our flirtation with transgressing our
14 planetary boundaries in climate, in biodiversity,
15 and other areas.

16 I have this Jenga game that I sometimes
17 have my students play. It's called Climate Jenga.
18 And the blocks each have some aspect of the
19 climate emergency on it, either contributors or
20 things that we're facing. Just opening the top,
21 it says coral bleaching, droughts, species
22 extinction. And you can imagine the entire set of
23 Jenga blocks. I was -- we were able to put
24 something on every single one of them. So, this
25 is not just a single-issue problem.

1 So, as a sociologist, I'm always trying to
2 get my students to think with the sociological
3 imagination, to link the local issues like
4 renewable energy and peaker plants with these
5 broader, seemingly distant concerns like energy
6 transitions and reversing climate change.

7 One of the greatest frustrations of my
8 students and me, frankly, and you've heard it
9 today from the students who spoke, is how
10 mismatched our efforts are with the challenge. We
11 cannot, in New York or anywhere else, ignore our
12 planetary changes the way our incoming
13 administration and the federal government is
14 planning to do.

15 We're surrounded by water in New York. We
16 have 520 miles of coastline in New York City
17 alone. We're already seeing the threats. Sea
18 levels are expected to rise 2 to 3 -- 2 to 5 feet,
19 or more, swallowing up streets in Red Hook. You
20 heard from Red Hook, Staten Island, the Lower East
21 Side, the Bronx.

22 Slowing and reversing climate change is not
23 a hypothetical concern. Now is the time to take
24 decisive action and switching to renewables. And
25 with the -- the goals that have been set -- I

1 think I just ran out of time -- but just set a
2 good example for our students.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

4 Our next speaker is Collin Maxwell,
5 followed by Eric Dawson. Collin.

6 COLLIN MAXWELL: Good morning. Sorry.
7 Good morning. My name is Collin Maxwell. This is
8 my first public comment, so please bear with me.
9 A lot of the earlier comments got me a little
10 emotional.

11 This current plan does not do enough to
12 meet our climate goals. We need to increase the
13 capacity to 15 gigawatts. We need to get more
14 input from the AFL-CIO and Building Trades Council
15 to make sure that long-term union jobs are created
16 in renewable energy. And there needs to be a
17 solid plan to shut down peaker plants by 2020.

18 I am here speaking for myself and for my
19 children. I'm in a union. I'm a firefighter at
20 the FDNY. Literally, just last night, from
21 midnight to 3:00 am, I was sent to 167th Street
22 and Edgecombe, where I used to live, actually, at
23 (inaudible) to make sure the brush fire that had
24 burned through Highbridge Park earlier that day
25 didn't reignite.

1 I also grew up in California, and the joke
2 30 years ago was that the four seasons in LA were
3 drought, fire, mudslides, and earthquakes. But as
4 climate change has been intensifying these
5 wildfires, fire season is no longer a joke. My
6 child's home in California has been in evacuation
7 zones multiple times in the last few years. And
8 the idea that New York might have to live with the
9 yearly fire season is horrifying.

10 It should be a wake-up call to take to take
11 the swiftest possible action to decarbonize our
12 society. And this is not the time for
13 incrementalism. 3.5 gigawatts will not do it.
14 NYPA needs to build 15 gigawatts by 2030, and it
15 needs a plan to shut down peaker plants by 2030.
16 Thank you.

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Collin.

18 Our next speaker is Eric Dawson, followed
19 by Tyler Harmon-Townsend. Eric.

20 ERIC DAWSON: Hi, I'm Eric Dawson from
21 Nuclear New York. In recent years, NYISO has
22 explained New York's electricity system with a
23 Dickensian (inaudible) as the tale of two grids.
24 It's a short story. Upstate New York has a 90
25 percent clean grid with three operational nuclear

1 power plants, whereas Downstate New York has a 90
2 percent fossil fuel grid after shutting down all
3 its nuclear power plants.

4 The moral of the story is simple: To
5 decarbonize large electric grids in the 21st
6 century, nuclear energy is essential. Why is
7 this? Nuclear is the most reliable source of
8 zero-emission energy. It requires the least land,
9 least materials, least new transmission lines,
10 least backup, and least reliance on foreign supply
11 chains of any other zero-emission source.
12 Nationally, support for nuclear is now bipartisan
13 and it should be nonpartisan.

14 There are two main goals in the New York
15 CLCPA: The 2030 goal and the 2040 goal. The 2030
16 goal of 70 percent renewable-only electricity is
17 unreasonable, and it will not be achieved; whereas
18 the 2040 goal of 100-percent zero-emission
19 electricity is at least closer to being reasonable
20 because it is technology-neutral, but
21 realistically, it can only be achieved if nuclear
22 energy is expanded.

23 We should abandon all fanatical devotions
24 to any one specific technology and instead make
25 all goals technically neutral, as is the case with

1 the 2040 goal.

2 NYSERDA reported earlier this year that if
3 we continue our current path in New York, quote,
4 There is a renewable energy supply deficit of
5 42,000 gigawatt-hours that would have to be
6 addressed through future procurements in order to
7 reach the 70-percent goal.

8 In other words, a failure to meet the
9 technology-specific 2030 goal, but this has no
10 bearing whatsoever on a technology-neutral 2040
11 rule. In a nutshell, this means that New York's
12 climate policy is overestimating the capability of
13 weather-dependent renewables like solar and wind
14 and underestimating the need for reliable nuclear
15 energy.

16 The response you'll hear from radical
17 anti-nuclear renewables-only green groups is that
18 we should just follow the proverbial definition of
19 insanity, doing the same thing over and over
20 again, expecting different results.
21 Average-working families have suffered from the
22 highest inflation rates in 40 years, followed by
23 the highest interest rates in 10 years. And these
24 same people are tired of top-down mandates from an
25 out-of-touch radical-chic bourgeoisie forcing

1 their arbitrary fashionable whims on struggling
2 middle-class communities that only make energy
3 less reliable and more expensive without even
4 successfully decarbonizing.

5 There is an opportunity to learn something
6 from the most recent election. Decarbonization
7 should not take precedence over energy reliability
8 and affordability. New York should abandon insane
9 renewables-only laws, like the BPRA and the 2030
10 goal of the CLCPA, and instead make all clean
11 energy goals technology-neutral, inclusive of
12 solar and wind, and hydro, and geothermal, and
13 nuclear and carbon capture, and any other
14 zero-emission source.

15 We are tired of nonsensical demands from a
16 disconnected, loud minority whose economic
17 privilege shields themselves from the worst
18 results.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Eric.

20 Our next speaker is Tyler Harmon-Townsend,
21 followed by Sam Balzac. Tyler.

22 TYLER HARMON-TOWNSEND: Thank you. Hello,
23 my name is Tyler Harmon-Townsend. I'm a current
24 graduate student in sustainability at the City
25 College of New York. I'm personally aware,

1 therefore, of the lack of progress on our campus
2 towards decarbonization and electrification of our
3 facilities.

4 As an institution, we have a responsibility
5 to lead by example. Our campus's broad footprint
6 represents an exceptional opportunity for the
7 deployment of on-site renewables, which would not
8 only help reach our mandated renewables targets
9 but would also serve to reassure students and the
10 local community that, at last, something is being
11 done.

12 We passed the Climate Leadership and
13 Mobilization Act and the Build Renewables Act
14 because it is beyond time to move with the urgency
15 demanded by the climate and ecological crises that
16 we face today.

17 I hope you will join me in calling for our
18 leaders at NYPA, CEO Justin Driscoll, and the
19 Hochul Administration to honor their commitments
20 and move forward with real leadership towards 15
21 gigawatts of clean power and the decarbonization
22 of our campuses and all public facilities and
23 infrastructure.

24 Students like myself are standing by ready
25 to help make this happen in any way that we can.

1 Thank you.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Kyle.

3 Our next speaker is Sam Balzac, followed by
4 Gary Krellinstein. Sam.

5 SAM BALZAC: Hi, I'm Sam. I'm a theater
6 artist and service industry worker calling for
7 NYPA to immediately expand the scope of their
8 Strategic Plan and build at least 15 gigawatts
9 worth of renewable energy.

10 Climate change has framed my life from when
11 I was in high school when Hurricane Irene
12 decimated the towns and homes around where I grew
13 up, to just last week when my neighborhood park
14 was one of several like Jen's, Matthew's, and
15 Collin's that burned.

16 The crisis has had significant effects on
17 the mental health of me and my peers. We suffer
18 from high anxiety and depression because we truly
19 don't know what the world is going to look like
20 10, 20, or 30 years from now.

21 My partner and I are afraid to have kids
22 since we don't know what kind of planet the next
23 generation is going to inherit. Since last
24 December, we've known with certainty that the
25 private sector is not going to solve this crisis.

1 Now we know that the federal government is going
2 to send us in the wrong direction. That leaves
3 states like New York to finally take bold action
4 and show the world that America means business.
5 What we do here will provide an example of what is
6 possible to countries around the globe. But for
7 any of it to matter, we have to move quickly.

8 Let's not minimize what 3.5 gigawatts of
9 wind and solar and 25 million in green job
10 training would mean, but let's also not pretend we
11 wouldn't be at this hearing if it weren't for the
12 entire work of the Public Power Coalition and the
13 Democratic Socialists of America using every means
14 available to move the state government to pass the
15 Build Public Renewables Act. Meanwhile, it
16 doesn't yet appear that the powers that be at NYPA
17 are taking the climate crisis seriously.

18 NYPA's CEO, Justin Driscoll, has previously
19 donated to climate-denying politicians like Texas
20 Senator John Cornyn, and has voiced opposition to
21 the BPRA. And now presented with a real chance to
22 deliver change, the current low volume of
23 renewable projects is a slap in the face to all
24 the activists, union leaders, and researchers that
25 shaped and fought for this law.

1 I hope these hearings will cause some
2 sobering reflections among the NYPA leadership
3 about what can and needs to be done to address the
4 largest existential threat of our lifetime.

5 I invite everyone in this room to ask
6 themselves, will you be able to look your children
7 in the face and say you did everything within your
8 power to give them a habitable home?

9 I'm grateful I'll be able to sleep tonight,
10 knowing I did my part. Thank you.

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Sam.

12 Our next speaker is Gary Krellinstein,
13 followed by Margaret Perkins. Gary.

14 GARY KRELLINSTEIN: Good morning, and thank
15 you for your presentation, and for the ability to
16 address NYPA.

17 My name is Gary Krellinstein. I'm here
18 speaking for the New York Advocate for Clean
19 Energy. I've also had the privilege of working
20 with NYPA for over 20 years before my retirement
21 as the managing director of JP Morgan's Energy and
22 Environmental Group.

23 I was also part of NYPA's sale of its
24 Indian Point and FitzPatrick Nuclear plants to
25 Entergy about 20 years ago.

1 My question for you today is: Why is NYPA
2 only looking at renewable energy sources and not
3 just clean -- and not clean energy sources? Given
4 the low capacity factor, dependence on favorable
5 weather, and inability to dispatch, why is NYPA
6 not looking at adding nuclear capacity using its
7 unique low-cost financing ability in this state?

8 NYPA has a long experience with nuclear.
9 It owns the Indian Point three and FitzPatrick
10 nuclear plants, which, by the way, set -- at the
11 Indian Point plant, set a world record for
12 continuous operation and safety just before its
13 premature closure a few years ago.

14 So, I would like to understand why NYPA has
15 limited its scope and is not taking a more
16 aggressive stand on building more capacity,
17 including clean sources such as nuclear. Thank
18 you for your time.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Gary.

20 Our next speaker is Margaret Perkins who
21 will be followed by Adam LoBelia.

22 MARGARET PERKINS: Yes, good morning. My
23 name is Margaret Perkins. I'm a member of 350
24 NYC. And I thank you for holding this hearing.

25 As many of you here have said this week,

1 over the last two weeks in New York City there's
2 been a crushing realization that we are in a
3 period of climate disruption. It's here and it's
4 started, and we hold a lot of people in this room
5 responsible.

6 I recently became a grandmother. This is
7 very disturbing to see my little kid have to face
8 this future. But this hearing is about NYPA, and
9 lack of leadership. And we, as climate activists,
10 are fed up. We have fought it for years and years
11 and years to get this bill passed for the New York
12 Public -- Building Republic Renewables -- and what
13 have they done? What have they done?

14 They have come up with 3 gigawatts. And I
15 just want to show you this chart, which is from
16 the DC website. And this is the operating
17 renewables in New York State.

18 And I'll -- anyone who wants to have one,
19 extra (inaudible).

20 So, 30 gigawatts of hydropower,
21 utility-scale solar power, about 2 gigawatts.
22 Distributed solar power, a bit higher, maybe 5.
23 Land-based wind is almost nonexistent as offshore
24 wind has disappeared.

25 We are depending on you to show leadership,

1 not to bring in a pathetic 3 gigawatts. It's time
2 to realize we're in climate disruption, and you
3 have to do something about it. You have been
4 given the mandate from the government. The money
5 is here. People -- the industry has the money to
6 invest. They just want the policies and the
7 leadership from the government. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

9 Our next speaker is Adam LoBelia, followed
10 by Jean Grassman. Adam.

11 ADAM LOBELIA: Hi. I'm not here to beg or
12 plead or appeal to your humanity on this issue.
13 I'm here to just simply state that the proverbial
14 wolf is at the door. Whether the door is at my
15 place in Brooklyn, a mansion on Long Island, the
16 place in Upstate New York, or the Governor's
17 mansion, the wolf is there, and he's not really
18 impressed by 3.5 gigawatts.

19 Climate change is not going to give us a
20 break if we make incremental progress towards
21 fixing it. It's going to chop us all, regardless
22 of what we try to do if that -- what we try to do
23 is inadequate.

24 So, we need that 15 gigawatts, or else it's
25 going to be lights out sooner rather than later.

1 We need to have those peaker plants in New York
2 City shut down. We need to have a more
3 comprehensive plan for New York City. We need all
4 those things as soon as we can because we're not
5 dealing with a forest here that is going to be
6 impressed or moved by small changes or more,
7 quote, unquote, realistic goals.

8 Realistically, we're facing a catastrophe
9 that humanity has not seen in thousands of years.
10 And if the Governor and Driscoll think that they
11 will be faring any better if they fail to meet
12 their -- their goals as mandated by law, again,
13 they're not dealing with a force that's going to
14 be impressed by whatever it is they think is going
15 to happen if they don't move. Thank you.

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Adam.

17 Our next speaker is Jean Grassman, who will
18 be followed by Michael Magazine. Jean.

19 JEAN GRASSMAN: Hi. Good morning. My name
20 is Jean Grassman, and I'm an associate professor
21 at the CUNY School of Public Health, where I
22 specialize in environmental health sciences.

23 So, the people of New York have spoken by
24 passing the Build Public Renewables Act. This Act
25 has given NYPA an unprecedented incentive to

1 develop renewable energy. So, I'm here to urge
2 you to increase the energy production from 3.5 to
3 15 gigawatts.

4 Right now, in New York City, the -- there's
5 only a solar project with -- in Staten Island.
6 So, I urge you to reconsider your plan and use
7 this opportunity to collaborate with CUNY and make
8 New York City a world-class laboratory for
9 decarbonization. And this could be done by
10 developing innovative energy sources, geothermal,
11 solar, and other things, by siting utility-scale,
12 and distributed generation on CUNY campuses, and
13 building enough capacity to meet their energy
14 demands; the build-out of these projects can
15 create thousands of good union jobs.

16 As the professional staff of Congress's
17 Health and Safety Coordinator for over 10 years,
18 I've seen how energy-inefficient infrastructure
19 affects the learning conditions that our members
20 and CUNY students face. Only 8 percent of CUNY's
21 300 buildings are in good repair, according to
22 their own assessment.

23 Last summer, several campuses were asked --
24 asked to cut back on their energy consumption. To
25 concede these cuts, campuses reduced essential

1 services such as HVAC and ventilation. And these
2 steps come at a cost. They place the occupant at
3 greater risk of exposure to extreme temperatures,
4 chemical agents, and airborne pathogens.

5 So, the fact is that with climate change,
6 these sorts of events will become more prevalent
7 and more common in future years. So, I'm asking
8 that -- saying that this requires a Strategic Plan
9 that is comprehensive and effective, modifications
10 of the current plan is what's needed for CUNY for
11 New York City, New York State, and the plan.

12 Thank you.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jean.

14 Our next speaker is Michael Magazine,
15 followed by Peter Knox. Michael.

16 MICHAEL MAGAZINE: Good morning. I'm
17 Michael Magazine, a youth organizer with Fridays
18 for Future New York City. And I'm joining my
19 fellow New Yorkers here today in demanding that
20 NYPA meet the moment of the climate crisis and the
21 green transition.

22 We know the numbers. We are grossly
23 underprepared to meet 70 percent renewable energy
24 by 2030 and 100 percent by 2040. This isn't just
25 a suggested landmark; it's the law. But more so,

1 it represents our only shot at protecting New York
2 and the world from the worst elements of the
3 climate crisis.

4 Notice I said worse. As it stands today,
5 New York is in a drought, with fires raging in a
6 city of water. Just months ago, meteorologists
7 cried as they observed the rapid intensification
8 of Hurricane Milton. And we are on a multiyear
9 record of the hottest years in recorded history,
10 yet the coldest years for the rest of it.

11 Building more renewables is more than just
12 a law. It's logic. It's our lives. The lives of
13 grandparents, parents, and children yet to be
14 born. We can build more energy, but we can't
15 build it in a flooded city. We can't Strategic
16 Plan our way out of hurricanes, but we can
17 prepare.

18 NYPA needs to refocus towards charting an
19 ambitious path towards our CLCPA goals and beyond
20 them: A path that gives communities a timeline
21 for these projects, that has 15 gigawatts, that
22 decarbonizes CUNY, that phases out peaker plants,
23 and that doesn't drag heels, but runs towards a
24 better world.

25 When you see smoke, when you smell smoke,

1 let alone end up a few feet from a burning fire,
2 you don't walk fast enough to enter the next room;
3 you run, run away, run outside, run to safety.
4 You call 911.

5 But there's no hotline for the climate
6 catastrophe. There's no firefighters coming to
7 save humanity. If we stop, we die. So run, NYPA.
8 Thank you.

9 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

10 Our next speaker is Peter Knox, followed by
11 Martha Sickles. Peter.

12 PETER KNOX: Hi. My name is Peter Knox.
13 I'm a lifelong New Yorker. I grew up in Rockaway
14 Park, Queens, one block from the beach. And I was
15 there when Hurricane Sandy dropped 10' of water
16 onto my mother's lawn. Spending that night in the
17 hurricane, I can't describe it, but the next
18 morning the floodwater was gone, but it took three
19 -- over three weeks for Con Edison to restore
20 electricity to our end of the peninsula. So that
21 was three weeks where we did -- our home did not
22 have any electrical power. My mother's home runs
23 on -- the heating system is electric, so we did
24 not have any heat. And also there were no
25 streetlights.

1 I believe if we had a local source of
2 renewable power that we would have been able to
3 recover quicker, and we've been able to get
4 through it.

5 Jacob Park is a local park that has a very
6 large parking lot that I believe could be --
7 that's completely empty in the winter, and I
8 believe it would be an excellent site for solar
9 panels, or some kind of renewable electric system.
10 I believe the current -- under the current plan
11 there's really no projects slated for Rockaway
12 Peninsula; so I believe, under the current plan,
13 my family would be under the exact same situation
14 if Hurricane Sandy were to happen even 10 years
15 from now.

16 So, I don't believe -- there's sites that I
17 believe that could be converted. There are over
18 150 above-ground subway stations. The New York
19 City subway system runs on electricity. I believe
20 the stations could also be a site to -- to provide
21 electricity for the system.

22 And I just don't believe that the 3.5 goal
23 is adequate. And I think that if you think
24 anything below less than 15 is acceptable, then
25 you should resign. And I also believe the

1 Governor should resign because she has failed as a
2 leader. Thank you.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

4 Our next speaker is Martha Sickles.
5 Martha.

6 MARTHA SICKLES: Hi. Thank you very much
7 for the opportunity to make a statement.

8 Hi. My name is Martha Sickles. I'm an
9 urban planner and energy advisor focusing on
10 building decarbonization, primarily downstate but
11 also upstate.

12 So I -- I need to -- to echo what everyone
13 is saying: Climate change is here. We have a
14 drought warning, you know, in -- in New York City,
15 the smoke is billowing. All of these things just
16 indicate it's a serious situation.

17 I -- we've been working very hard now on
18 the regulatory process of the new efficiency New
19 York funding for building decarbonization, which
20 comes from the system benefit charge to try to
21 make sure that our monies, the monies that we pay
22 as ratepayers, are -- are best used to reduce the
23 major source of carbon in New York City, 70
24 percent which comes from our buildings.

25 However, the -- the process of eliminating

1 fossil fuels from buildings and electrifying
2 really depends on having a clean grid. And as
3 colleagues here have -- have said, you know, the
4 downstate grid is incredibly dirty, 90 percent
5 fossil fuels.

6 So, all of our efforts, you know, to
7 comply, we have Local 197 in New York City, which
8 is a great stick for people. It's nation-leading
9 legislation to propel building owners to
10 decarbonize, but it's only going to work if we
11 have a clean grid.

12 So, 3.5 megawatts is way too little work.
13 We definitely advocate for 15 or more. And we
14 also are advocating for more community engagement.
15 I've had the privilege to work with your
16 environmental justice teams and education teams.
17 They help us to educate New York City residents
18 about, you know, the -- the importance of reducing
19 their energy use in their buildings. There needs
20 to be much greater engagement.

21 There also needs to be thought about
22 community ownership of the renewable projects so
23 that communities can really benefit. It's really
24 important. We know that, as colleagues have said,
25 you know, we -- the Tier 4 projects, the offshore

1 wind projects have been delayed, you know, because
2 of supply chain issues. You know, they're being
3 rebid.

4 You are in a unique position to -- to
5 really step in, engage the community, and provide
6 the state with community-based renewable energy
7 that will provide jobs, benefit the communities,
8 and make New York State, you know, the -- the --
9 help New York State realize the goal that -- you
10 know, with the CLCPA and through New York City's
11 Climate Mobilization Act. Thank you.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Martha.

13 This concludes our list of registered
14 speakers thus far. If anyone would like to speak
15 who hasn't, please see our NYPA staff in the back
16 so we can get the spelling and pronunciation of
17 your names.

18 We will remain in the room until noon in
19 case other speakers arrive. Thank you.

20 (Brief recess.)

21 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: Thank you. A quick
22 reminder for everybody: If you have comments you
23 want to submit in writing, just make sure to do it
24 by December 9th.

25 (Brief recess.)

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Hi, everybody. We have a
2 few more speakers who registered if you guys
3 wouldn't mind taking your seats just to give them
4 our attention.

5 And again, if there's anyone else who would
6 like to speak, we are almost at noon, so if you
7 haven't done it, you can still submit comments
8 online or email us. Thank you, everyone.

9 Can we just ask everyone to take your seats
10 so our other speakers can have everyone's
11 attention? Thank you so much. Thank you,
12 everyone, for taking your seats. Thank you.

13 Our next speaker is Brandon Tizol. Brandon
14 Tizol.

15 BRANDON TIZOL: Hey, everyone. My name is
16 Brandon. I am a born-and-raised New Yorker. I am
17 old enough to remember spring in New York. It
18 used to be my favorite season. It doesn't exist
19 anymore. What we have now instead is a wildfire
20 season, apparently.

21 A lot of people got up here and made a lot
22 of cases of what we need to do, 15 gigawatts, all
23 that. Yes, let's do that.

24 I'm not going to make a case. It's already
25 law. Driscoll, Hochul, do your f***** jobs.

1 Right now, we have Donald Trump coming in
2 to lead a country in its most dire moment when it
3 comes to climate. He will make things worse. We
4 can either go along with that, or we can do what
5 the people already mandated that we do. So let's
6 do that.

7 That's it. I'm not going to make a plea.
8 Do your jobs.

9 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Brandon.

10 Our next speaker is Beverley Birks.
11 Beverley.

12 BEVERLEY BIRKS: Hi. My name is Beverley
13 Birks. I've been in New York since the -- since
14 1972. I was an activist in the anti-fracking
15 movement, you know, and we thought we would really
16 accomplish something, and New York was the leader.

17 I support all -- you know, basically the
18 activists today, and thank them for their -- their
19 time.

20 There were three more thoughts I wanted to
21 put into this: My son-in-law actually led a group
22 in the Senior Civil Service of the U.K., which is
23 now just -- has the -- the U.K. has agreed to
24 spend a billion pounds over a period of 10 years
25 using the heat from the subway, and the water from

1 the tents, to heat the public buildings of London.
2 That will include buildings such as Westminster
3 Abbey, the Parliament buildings, and many others.

4 We have many public buildings in New York
5 which squander energy. We need -- they're --
6 they're important. The New York Public Library.
7 These buildings would be -- would be an incredible
8 project. And we could lead in this -- in this
9 country, just as London is going to lead in -- in
10 their efforts.

11 This was only passed in the last two weeks,
12 so it's news. And I can certainly provide the
13 name of the man who led that organization -- led
14 that project because he's my son-in-law.

15 Now, the second -- the second thing I would
16 bring up is, I believe that the nuclear -- the
17 advocates for nuclear energy, behind them, really,
18 and really what's being pushed forward, is
19 cryptocurrency, and -- which uses staggering
20 amounts of energy and provides nothing for the
21 people.

22 Cryptocurrency, as far as I can see, has no
23 public use. What -- it enables criminals to
24 blackmail or kidnap and get paid. It enables, you
25 know, people who want to avoid taxes and hide

1 their money. It's -- it's a wonderful thing for
2 them. I see no public service on -- in
3 cryptocurrency, and yet its use in energy is
4 absolutely staggering.

5 And one of the reasons we face the problems
6 we have today is that we -- we put in renewable
7 energy, but the amount of consumption skyrockets,
8 not because the consumer, like myself, has
9 increased their -- their consumption of energy,
10 but other powers, like the cryptocurrency
11 billionaires, wanted it.

12 The other area, which is using staggering
13 amounts of -- of energy --

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Beverley.

15 Beverley Birks: Okay. Let me --

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Would you like to submit
17 it online? We just have one more speaker I want
18 to get to --

19 Beverley Birks: Okay. Okay.

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you so much.

21 Our next our next speaker is Beverley --
22 I'm so sorry, I couldn't find your name. Thank
23 you, Beverley.

24 Our next speaker is Elizabeth Crowley.

25 ELIZABETH CROWLEY: Good morning. My name

1 is Elizabeth Crowley. I am also the President and
2 CEO of the Building Trades Employers' Association.
3 It's New York's leading contractor association
4 representing over 1,200 different contractors,
5 from large general contractors to small specialty
6 trade subcontractors. A significant and growing
7 population amongst our membership is the MWBE
8 community that often works with New York State in
9 investing in our future and investing in our
10 infrastructure.

11 Today, I'm here to support NYPA's plan for
12 expanding renewables. It is so important as a
13 city resident who has spent her whole entire life
14 here in New York City and represents the New York
15 State companies, we know it's important to invest
16 in our green economy and to reduce our dependency
17 on fossil fuels.

18 But at the same time, it's important to not
19 only invest in our infrastructure and grow
20 opportunities for local New York City and New York
21 State residents for jobs and good-paying jobs.
22 Our contractors are union contractors. They pay
23 their workforce prevailing wages. They're known
24 for delivering projects safely, on time, and on
25 budget. So we are really supportive of this

1 expansion for the future of our state, and we're
2 encouraged to see that the draft plan also
3 includes funding for New York State Apprentice
4 programs, and all of our members draw from a New
5 York State Apprentice program, which gives
6 opportunities, again, to New York City residents
7 and state residents, as well as city residents, of
8 obtaining good union jobs, trades such as
9 electricians, laborers, carpenters, all
10 family-supporting -- family-supporting wages,
11 which is so important as we grow our union --our
12 -- our green economy, that we also grow good jobs
13 to do this work safely and on time. Thank you.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Elizabeth.

15 This concludes our list of speakers.

16 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: So, that's it for our
17 speakers this morning. I just want to thank
18 everybody for taking the time out of their morning
19 to come and contribute their feedback and input
20 into our draft Strategic Plan process. Without
21 your input, you know, we wouldn't have this
22 completed view from the state and from the
23 residents in the state as possible. So, thank you
24 so much for taking the time to do that.

25 Just a reminder: If anybody here knows of

1 anybody who has any additional comments that you
2 want to make, please send them to our website or
3 email them to strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

4 And as a reminder, QR codes can be found on
5 the outside tables as well.

6 Thank you again for coming this morning,
7 and we'll see you soon. Thank you.

8 (Thereupon, at 12:00 p.m., this meeting was
9 concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

- - -

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically
report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript,
page 1 through 94, is a true and complete record of my
stenographic notes.

Dated this 26th day of November 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky,
Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

524 West 59th Street

New York, NY 10019

November 20, 2024

6:00 p.m. - 8:10 p.m.

(Evening session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Charles Imohiosen, SVP Communications & External Affairs

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Laurie Wheelock

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Carole Harris (PSC Chapter Chair.)	35
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1 CHARLES IMOHIOSEN: All right. Good
2 evening. Good evening, everyone. Welcome.

3 All right. Thanks for joining us tonight.
4 My name is Charles Imohiosen, and I'm the Senior
5 Vice President for Communications and External
6 Affairs for New York Power Authority.

7 This evening, we're here to share
8 information about and collect comments from all of
9 you on NYPA's draft Renewal Strategic Plan. NYPA
10 issued its Strategic Plan -- draft Strategic Plan
11 on October 8th, and scheduled 12 public hearings
12 across the state in order to solicit input from
13 interested parties regarding the draft plan.

14 If someone you know wants to attend but is
15 unable to attend today in person, please let them
16 know that we will -- tomorrow, be hosting a
17 virtual meeting, and then our final in-person
18 session will be in Long Island on Monday. You can
19 find more information on NYPA.gov.

20 We'll begin tonight with a brief video, in
21 which we'll share our information from those of
22 you who weren't here in any of our other hearings
23 about the Power Authority, and that will be
24 followed by an overview of NYPA's expanded
25 authority and the draft Strategic Plan.

1 Primarily, however, we're -- and most importantly,
2 my colleagues and I are here to hear from you. So
3 after these presentations, those who signed up
4 will be invited to make a public comment, which
5 will be transcribed and entered into the public
6 record.

7 That said, let's begin with a short video
8 that provides an overview of the New York Power
9 Authority so you can get to know us better.

10 (Video played as follows:

11 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
12 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
13 the solution for New York State and its residents,
14 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
15 opportunities.

16 Through customer partnerships, energy
17 solutions, and the responsible supply of
18 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
19 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
20 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

21 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
22 serving customers in local and state governments,
23 industry, large and small businesses, and
24 nonprofit organizations.

25 The power for these customers is equal to

1 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
2 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
3 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
4 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
5 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
6 hydropower.

7 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
8 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
9 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
10 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
11 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

12 As we bring power to customers, we also
13 actively ensure people from our host communities
14 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
15 from our clean energy economy.

16 We work on projects across the state to
17 increase energy efficiency, improve
18 infrastructure, and support economic development.

19 Our hydropower projects support more than
20 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
21 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
22 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
23 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
24 the communities we serve.

25 Our economic and community focus extends to

1 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
2 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
3 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
4 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
5 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
6 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
7 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
8 from around the world.

9 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
10 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
11 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
12 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
13 years to come.

14 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
15 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
16 energy deployment and support other state
17 priorities. This expanded authority will
18 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
19 New York State, support expanded workforce
20 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
21 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
22 Energy Access and Community Help Program to
23 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
24 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned
25 utilities.

1 Additionally, we will lead the state's
2 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
3 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
4 production at our small natural gas power plants
5 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
6 certain reliability and environmental conditions
7 are met.

8 We are also developing action plans to
9 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
10 carbon-emitting facilities.

11 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
12 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
13 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
14 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
15 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
16 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
17 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
18 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

19 (End of the video.)

20 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: All right. Thank you.

21 As NYPA builds, owns, and operates new
22 renewable projects, we need to have an electric
23 grid that those projects can connect to, not one
24 that's locked with bottlenecks that prevent clean
25 energy from getting it where it needs to go.

1 That's why NYPA is pursuing the most ambitious
2 transformation in New York's electric grid in more
3 than 40 years. And the state has implemented new
4 procedures to ensure transmission can be sited,
5 connected, and built.

6 NYPA owns one-third of the state's
7 high-voltage transmission. We continue to make
8 major improvements to build a flexible
9 21st-century electric grid with significantly more
10 access to a mix of carbon-free energy resources.

11 We know that a modernized grid will be much
12 more resilient. That's all the part of the work
13 that we're doing today to ensure that we can
14 support the projects of tomorrow.

15 In the past two years, NYPA has launched
16 various public engagement efforts to inform the
17 foundation of building new renewable resources as
18 authorized by the 2023-2024 Enacted State Budget.
19 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to build
20 renewable initiatives subject to a Strategic Plan,
21 which must be approved by its trustees following a
22 public comment period and at least three public
23 hearings.

24 This is our 10th public hearing in New York
25 State, and we still have two more hearings over

1 the next week. That's because we felt it was very
2 important to hear from as many of you as possible
3 in as many places as possible. Like we did in our
4 2023 and 2024 conferral processes, we welcome
5 public engagement and feedback as we shape our
6 Strategic Plan to build more renewables across New
7 York State.

8 I know many of you came here tonight to
9 hear more about our plan and to speak about that
10 plan, so I'll now turn over the program to Vennela
11 Yadhati who will give a brief overview of the
12 draft plan. Vennela.

13 VENNELA YADHATI: I'm going to walk around
14 and continue to get my step count up.

15 Good evening, everyone. I'm Vennela
16 Yadhati. I'm the Vice President for NYPA
17 Renewables, leading this effort to build new
18 renewable generation and energy storage projects
19 across the state.

20 We're in the middle of what could be one of
21 the most significant eras in NYPA's 93-year
22 history. Last May, as part of the 2023-24 Enacted
23 State Budget, lawmakers entrusted us with new
24 expanded authority, new responsibilities, new
25 capabilities, but more importantly, new

1 opportunities to continue to further serve New
2 Yorkers in the clean energy space.

3 Let me explain: First, the expanded
4 authority gave NYPA the ability to build, develop,
5 own, and operate new renewable generation projects
6 such as solar, wind, and battery energy storage
7 systems to help the state achieve its bold
8 renewable energy objectives outlined in the
9 Climate Act.

10 My team at NYPA has identified the first
11 tranche of 40 such projects spread across every
12 region of the state. And while the state budget
13 did not require NYPA to meet any specific
14 threshold in its draft strategic plan, these 40
15 represent a total capacity exceeding 3.5
16 gigawatts.

17 Now, what is 3.5 gigawatts? Or how much is
18 it? That's the same as about 10 percent of the
19 electric load for all of New York City. I know it
20 seems small, but it's what it takes to power whole
21 cities of Zurich, Helsinki, or Reykjavik. More
22 recent or best examples: Boulder, Colorado,
23 Raleigh, Nevada, or Austin, Texas. That's what
24 3.5 gigawatts means.

25 And these 40 projects are just the

1 beginning of our commitment to expand our
2 portfolio, delivering clean, reliable energy to
3 every corner of New York. Right now, NYPA is
4 doing full due diligence on each project to
5 determine whether or not they are the best fit for
6 New Yorkers. We want to ensure these projects
7 truly benefit our communities and, therefore,
8 belong in NYPA's renewable energy portfolio.

9 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's
10 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment
11 in the state. We also want to explore meaningful
12 partnerships to support the state's equitable and
13 efficient transition to a clean energy future.

14 This first tranche includes a mix of NYPA's
15 own greenfield projects, that is, our
16 self-developed projects and co-developed
17 initiatives, where we will partner with the
18 private sector to combine or complement our skills
19 and strengths to jointly develop, construct, and
20 own, and operate these projects together.

21 And this first tranche also includes a
22 variety of sizes of products: Predominantly large
23 scale, reflecting today's current market of
24 renewable energy in New York State, and small
25 distributors scale products, especially those

1 community solar products. We continue to seek
2 opportunities and are partnering and are in
3 conversations with several community-based
4 organizations to identify opportunities to develop
5 in-community products for (inaudible). So, the
6 products that are in your backyard that are
7 tangible to you that you can touch and feel.

8 The first tranche also includes a variety
9 of technologies, solar PV, wind, and battery
10 energy storage, and a variety of locations and
11 site conditions. Half of our greenfield portfolio
12 includes projects that repurpose former landfills,
13 brownfields, and closed correctional facilities to
14 advance renewable generation. We call it turning
15 the brown to green, or as one of my colleagues
16 said it this morning, turning the brownfield into
17 the bright fields.

18 My point is, we're collaborating with our
19 sister agencies and NYPA's customers, including
20 local governments, to identify more such siting
21 opportunities because we cannot do this alone.

22 I'll take a couple of examples that we've
23 done within New York City right here. One is a
24 12.5-megawatt solar PV project paired with battery
25 energy and a solar system at the JFK Airport.

1 That project is the largest of any parking lot
2 airport in the world. When the development comes
3 online, it has (inaudible) recently, and when it
4 comes online, it will be serving local communities
5 surrounding the JFK Airport, especially the
6 disadvantaged communities, not just the clean
7 energy, but also the (inaudible) along with
8 powering and supporting the power to the AirTrain
9 system at the JFK Airport.

10 Another example: NYPA has partnered with
11 New York City to develop projects at several
12 Department of Education, K-12, and high schools
13 within New York City that exceed a little over
14 40-plus schools for that one, and also at several
15 wastewater recovery facilities as well in New York
16 City.

17 I do want to share a story that I shared
18 this morning with everybody that was present here
19 in the morning and with all of you as well. There
20 is a reason why we do what we do here at NYPA.
21 This is my personal story: NYPA has this amazing
22 program called P-TECH internship. The last two
23 years of high school, students can intern at NYPA,
24 learning about different things and understanding
25 what this work means. And I happened to be a

1 mentor for one such cohort, not too long ago
2 actually. And they are from the Energy Tech
3 School in Astoria, Queens. I asked my students
4 what prompted them to go to Energy Tech, and they
5 gave me a response. They said when they went to
6 school, they had the opportunity to actually go
7 visit the solar PV project on their school's roof.

8 That moved me because that's a project NYPA
9 had done, my team had built, not too long before
10 that. When we built it, it's about 159 to 200
11 kilowatts. A small little solar PV project.
12 Right? It doesn't move the needle when it comes
13 to (inaudible) even my resume, being very
14 (inaudible). Right? But the impact that the
15 project had, the unintentional, it's significant.

16 So, that's the kind of process NYPA is
17 looking for: Meaningful, impactful, those that
18 should belong in our portfolio. So, again, like I
19 said, that's where we're partnering with our
20 customers. That's where we're partnering with
21 stakeholders. That's why we are here to listen
22 from all of you and engaging with all of you
23 because we can't do this alone.

24 So far, we have pre-qualified a stable of
25 more than 85 developers and investors that can

1 collaborate with us to build this first tranche
2 and future ones. NYPA's goal and goals, again, is
3 not to crowd out the private sector but to work
4 together, leveraging our strengths to build more
5 renewables and help the state achieve its clean
6 energy goals.

7 By maintaining the majority ownership and
8 strategically partnering, NYPA can stretch our
9 finances further and accelerate the transition to
10 clean energy. As we described in our draft
11 Strategic Plan, NYPA has not received any state
12 funding to build new renewable generation
13 projects. Instead, we're self-funding all of
14 these efforts, including other critical
15 commitments we made to the CLCPA, such as new
16 transmission development and growing the clean
17 energy workforce, all entirely through NYPA's own
18 revenues.

19 I know there's been a lot of questions
20 about the size of this first tranche of products.
21 Just to put it in perspective, financing 15
22 gigawatts of energy would be roughly about \$30
23 billion, the same as paying for four new LaGuardia
24 airports all at once. That's a lot of capital.
25 So, we are working with industry partners. We

1 continue to talk to the state and federal
2 government, and we continue to look for partners
3 to build even more in future tranches.

4 Given these constraints, a balanced
5 approach is essential to bring more renewable
6 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
7 offer the highest revenues.

8 Why is that important? Because that would
9 help ensure we can reduce costs for ratepayers and
10 maximize the impact of every dollar we spend. And
11 there is more to come. This is only the first
12 tranche and the first Strategic Plan we have
13 published.

14 In a way, you could call the plan itself
15 renewable; that is a plan we will regularly update
16 as we add more projects for consideration by the
17 public, by all of you, and NYPA's Board of
18 Trustees.

19 Prior of preparing to release this draft
20 plan was making sure NYPA had the right tools and
21 is staffed right to support it. This includes
22 having the expertise to make sure the project
23 meets technical, economical, environmental, and
24 more importantly, environmental justice needs of
25 the state.

1 In the past 18 months at NYPA, we have
2 established a new business line and new business
3 structures and filled key personnel roles, like my
4 team, many of whom are here tonight with us.
5 We've obtained approval from our Board of Trustees
6 to form a renewable subsidiary and an initial
7 capital allocation of \$100 million for developing
8 and garnering other necessary resources to advance
9 this first tranche of projects.

10 We continue to source and solicit
11 additional project opportunities to append to our
12 pipeline. I am confident that NYPA will continue
13 to identify the same level of, again, meaningful
14 projects as it expands and grows its pipeline on
15 future tranches of projects.

16 And again, these projects are not being
17 built in a silo. They are part of a holistic
18 approach to renewable development that supports
19 environmental justice, workforce development, and
20 affordability.

21 How are we doing it? You see, the
22 2023-2024 State Enacted Budget also gave NYPA the
23 ability to establish the Renewable Energy Access
24 and Community Help Program, or -- being in
25 government, love our acronyms -- you all, too,

1 right? So, the REACH program, which allows us to
2 use a portion of the revenues that we generate
3 from the Renewable Energy projects to benefit low-
4 and moderate-income households in disadvantaged
5 communities through electric utility bill credits.

6 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
7 Service Commission has formally accepted our
8 application to create the REACH program. Once our
9 projects are online and are generating revenue,
10 and NYPA gathers funds from all available sources,
11 money will be available to flow to low-income New
12 Yorkers through the process set forth by the PSE
13 order.

14 While we are still under development, the
15 program will appear as automatic bill credits
16 alongside the Energy Affordability Program and the
17 statewide Statewide Solar for All credits.

18 NYPA will also invest up to \$25 million
19 annually in collaboration with the New York State
20 Department of Labor to create jobs and provide
21 workforce training for people who want to work in
22 the clean energy industry. Through this
23 partnership, we have already awarded \$12.5 million
24 this fiscal year in funding for workforce
25 opportunities for New Yorkers across the state.

1 Like the Say Yes Buffalo Youth Apprenticeship
2 Program and the Renaissance Technical Institute
3 here in New York City, and several others from
4 disadvantaged communities across the state to
5 pursue good-paying clean energy careers.

6 This one is important: It's not only
7 good-paying clean energy jobs, but sustainable
8 careers is what we want to build.

9 And with regard to the workforce on these
10 proposed projects, NYPA will require each and
11 every renewable energy-generating project be built
12 with union labor.

13 I'll say this one more time: Every single
14 project in our pipeline must have a project labor
15 agreement, and we require all contractors and
16 subcontractors associated with the project work to
17 utilize apprenticeship agreements. So, those
18 learning on the first tranche of projects will
19 become seasoned veterans for NYPA's future tranche
20 of projects.

21 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
22 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at our
23 small natural gas plants in New York City and Long
24 Island by 2030. Of course, as long as the
25 reliability and environmental conditions are met.

1 The plan to do so is required by May of
2 next year, and we are in active conversations with
3 NYISO exploring strategies to meet this commitment
4 while considering the grid reliability and air
5 quality impacts, including the potential for
6 deploying battery storage at some of these sites.

7 I know I just shared a long list of actions
8 NYPA has taken and continues to take as part of
9 this new expanded authority.

10 As a reminder, our draft plan is on our
11 website, NYPA.gov/renewables. I encourage all of
12 you to read it because, if you haven't already
13 done so, because it's important, the people that
14 wrote the plan are in this very room. We want to
15 hear from all of you, understand what it means,
16 and we actually want you to understand what it
17 also says.

18 Again, thank you for taking the time to
19 join us to learn more. And thank you for coming
20 here to give us your comments. Back to you,
21 Charles.

22 CHARLES IMOHILOSEN: Thanks very much,
23 Vennela.

24 With that, I will remind everyone that the
25 law requires NYPA to solicit public comment and

1 hold a minimum of three public hearings in
2 regionally diverse parts of the state on the draft
3 Strategic Plan that Vennela just described.

4 Our timekeeper, Lindsay Kryzak, will call
5 on those who signed up to speak tonight, and our
6 speakers will be given three minutes to deliver
7 public comment for the record.

8 If anyone needs a translator, please alert
9 NYPA staff at the sign-in table. The feedback you
10 give tonight will be transcribed and compiled with
11 written comments, which must be considered and
12 incorporated into the final Strategic Plan. That
13 will be published on NYPA's website and submitted
14 to the Governor and to the legislature on January
15 31st, 2025.

16 Thank you again for joining us this
17 evening, and I will now turn the program over to
18 our timekeeper.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

20 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
21 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
22 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized and
23 required by applicable law, regulation, or order,
24 and it being available in whole or in part in the
25 public record in accordance with the agency's

1 rules.

2 Each member will be given three minutes to
3 address NYPA leadership today. Additional
4 comments can be shared via our website at NYPA.gov
5 or via email at strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.
6 There are QR codes outside on the tables if
7 there's not time to finish your statement today.

8 Please note we have microphones on both
9 aisles, so please use the microphone closest to
10 you. And those of you who are seated on the
11 aisle, if you have bags or coats, if you wouldn't
12 mind clearing those out just for safety for
13 everyone. Thank you.

14 Our first speaker this evening is Ross
15 Pinkerton. Ross will be followed by Brandon
16 Medina. Ross.

17 ROSS PINKERTON: Hi. Thanks for being here
18 and for sharing with us. As a science teacher,
19 I've worked with many idealistic students who are
20 clear about our problems and know that we could
21 find the solutions if we tried.

22 Thanks to its history and the new power
23 given by the BPRA, NYPA can play a large role in
24 the solutions. My union at PSC proudly joined the
25 coalition to pass the BPRA and enable you to build

1 public power to meet the moment in cleaning our
2 air, protecting us from climate change, and saving
3 ratepayers money by cutting out for-profit
4 entities. We need you to live up to that great
5 promise and your legal obligation by planning to
6 build 15 gigawatts of clean electricity by 2030.

7 In particular, we need a good portion of
8 that to supply New York City, where our needs are
9 greatest, and the area is small, making offshore
10 grid and transmission a priority. I appreciate
11 hearing about your goals of an expanded smart
12 grid, which we definitely need. But we can also
13 use the many public buildings, especially schools,
14 as you mentioned but including CUNY, where I work,
15 to house distributed solar and storage, backing up
16 the grid, supplying electricity, reducing
17 pollution from dirty power plants, and to provide
18 safe spaces that would have electricity in the
19 case of outages.

20 NYPA also needs to publish its plan to
21 phase out peaker plants as required by law, which
22 also requires much more clean energy and storage.

23 As we speak, NYPA's staff or contractors
24 are installing higher efficiency LED bulbs at
25 Hunter College High School, where I work, and we

1 need more projects like that, and even more
2 ambitious ones, to decarbonize heating and hot
3 water at all of our public institutions in order
4 to provide clean air to our students, staff, and
5 neighboring communities, which makes for better
6 learning and health.

7 This could be a win-win: Delivering for
8 our state's laborers represented by unions that
9 have called for 15 gigawatts, for our students and
10 young people more broadly who deserve a future
11 with as little climate destruction as possible,
12 and for our neighbors who breathe the air polluted
13 by our oil and gas appliances and power plants.

14 Please keep up your plan to close small and
15 all gas power plants and help us close private
16 fossil fuel plants as well. Thank you for your
17 great work, and please scalerup your ambition to
18 meet the great needs of this emergency.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Ross.
20 (Inaudible). Brandon?

21 BRANDON MEDINA: Yes. Thank you. I'm
22 sorry to do this, but I'm going to lay down a
23 nightmare scenario, one that I think a lot of us
24 have not thought of.

25 I didn't even think of it until recently,

1 Imagine it's June 2025 -- maybe it's not even
2 that. Maybe it's February, March 2025, and there
3 are power outages all across the state. It's not
4 just power. There are heating, cooking outages
5 all across the state. Gas stations just empty.
6 No oil, so people aren't driving.

7 What happened? Well, for a long time now,
8 the fossil fuel industry has been a dying one.
9 And for some time, they've not been an industry
10 that recruits from the best and the brightest at
11 our top universities. They have increasingly been
12 hiring from -- immigrants, including illegal
13 immigrants. And so we need to anticipate that the
14 incoming Trump Administration's mass deportation
15 policies can and will affect personnel in the
16 fossil fuel industries.

17 And Governor Hochul has vowed to stand up
18 to the Trump Administration. She's joined a
19 number of governors in doing so: Gavin Newsom,
20 Ted Walsh. I applaud her for that, but we're
21 still vulnerable in a lot of areas.

22 We're not a petrol state. We're not Texas.
23 We're not Pennsylvania. We get our oil and gas
24 from those places. So, being a sanctuary state
25 will not protect us from mass deportations that

1 have been on the oil fields of Texas, or Oklahoma,
2 or Louisiana, the gas plants of Pennsylvania. It
3 will still leave us greatly vulnerable to these
4 problems. So, if Governor Hochul wants to protect
5 us, we need to be fast as possible to transition
6 all 70 percent of the Build Public Renewables as
7 quickly as possible because, frankly, we don't
8 know just how quickly the Trump Administration's
9 mass deportation policies will affect us. Thank
10 you.

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Brandon.

12 Our next speaker is Charles Heller. One
13 note before Charles: For those taking video,
14 would you just note that our ushers are student
15 workers, so if you can keep them out of your
16 footage, that would be great. Thank you.

17 Great. Our next speaker is Charles Heller,
18 followed by Stephanie Fox. Charles.

19 CHARLES HELLER: Hi. NYPA -- NYPA is a
20 public power authority. They're not owned by Wall
21 Street or banks or the Governor or Justin
22 Driscoll. They're owned by us. And what we New
23 Yorkers have called for with 15 gigawatts of
24 public renewables by 2030. Since the hearing this
25 morning, New Yorkers have sent 300 comments

1 calling for 15 gigawatts. For reference, a
2 successful campaign against the Astoria Energy
3 Plan totaled over 6,000 comments, which is enough
4 to force the Governor to listen and stop a
5 billion-dollar plan.

6 Those 600 -- or 6,000 comments were
7 collected over two years. We have collected 3,000
8 comments demanding 15 gigawatts in less than two
9 months, and they are counting. We are demanding
10 15 gigawatts through unprecedented engagement in
11 both size of people and a rare chance to make a
12 demand that is not just stop something, but to
13 start.

14 If Justin Driscoll, a former fossil-fuel
15 lobbyist and Republican who has donated to climate
16 deniers and should frankly have to disclose if he
17 voted for Donald Trump. He's going around saying
18 the response to the 3.5-gigawatt plan is anything
19 but overwhelming fury and its failure; he's lying.
20 And if any more than a fraction of thousands of
21 public comments in this process call for anything
22 less than 15 gigawatts, he'd say so every day.

23 Look, we're talking about our contribution
24 to the survival of humanity. Every excuse to not
25 do this is false. Financing and bonds -- experts

1 have shown that NYPA can finance this kind of
2 build-out and keep a standard public utility level
3 bond rate.

4 Actually, why don't you raise your hand if
5 you would rather NYPA give up on the climate and
6 keep its bond rate?

7 Okay. Raise your hand if you would rather
8 that NYPA have a slightly lower but still
9 top-level bond rating, and lead the way to protect
10 our planet. Great.

11 So, we're not asking for magic here. We
12 know how to build solar and wind and geothermal
13 and battery storage. It's not a perpetual motion
14 machine. It's just things we know how to do. But
15 we needed a few people who were given the
16 privilege and honor of heading a public
17 institution that helped create the new deal to
18 show an ounce of goodwill (inaudible) see from the
19 New Yorkers in this room and statewide.

20 That's why FDR created NYPA to do, and it's
21 time for Hochul, Driscoll, and anyone else in the
22 way to do it, or we will find somebody who will.
23 Thank you.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is
25 Stephanie Fox. Thank you, Stephanie.

1 STEPHANIE FOX: Thank you to the NYPA Board
2 for giving this hearing and providing me with the
3 opportunity to testify today.

4 My name is Stephanie Fox. I'm the
5 Strategic Organizer from Environmental and Climate
6 Justice at the New York City Comptroller's Office.
7 The New York City Comptroller's Office is
8 committed to a just transition from fossil fuels,
9 protecting New Yorkers vulnerable to climate
10 change, and promoting sound, equitable economic
11 policies. With an upcoming Trump presidency that
12 prevents the rollback of environmental rules and
13 funding, state and local action on climate is more
14 important than ever.

15 Comptroller Lander supported the Build
16 Public Renewables Act, and also is eager to see
17 the New York Power Authority implement the
18 Strategic Plan.

19 (Inaudible) NYPA's draft Strategic Plan for
20 expanding renewable energy resources is a crucial
21 step towards the cleaner future. We commend the
22 Authority on including solar fields in Santa Ana.
23 However, the downstate power grid needs more than
24 just one solar development. Over 90 percent of
25 the downstate power mix comes from fossil fuels.

1 NYPA must prioritize building new public
2 renewables in the five areas to green the
3 downstate grid.

4 The New York City Comptroller's Office also
5 encourages NYPA to prioritize the development of
6 energy storage solutions for New York City. New
7 York City faces significant risks from power
8 outages and creating stability. Energy storage
9 systems can mitigate these risks by providing
10 backup power during emergencies and smoothing out
11 fluctuations in rural energy generation.

12 NYPA should consider repurposing peaker
13 plants for battery storage solutions. While once
14 essential for meeting deep demand, peaker plant
15 can be inefficient and contribute to air
16 pollution, particularly in environmental justice
17 communities.

18 The NYPA-owned peaker plants in New York
19 City are slated for decommissioning next year.
20 NYPA has not yet put forward a clear plan for
21 their replacement. Battery storage systems offer
22 a cost-effective and flexible alternative to aging
23 gas-fired peaker plants. Like peaker plants,
24 battery storage can be quickly dispatched to meet
25 demand. Repurposing peaker plants sites for

1 energy storage will not only enhance greater
2 reliability and resilience but also revitalize
3 communities and create jobs in the clean energy
4 sector.

5 We hope to see these improvements in the
6 final Strategic Plan. By investing in these
7 solutions, we can create a cleaner, more reliable,
8 and more equitable energy future in New York City.
9 Thank you for your consideration.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Stephanie.

11 Our next speaker is Vanessa Jones, followed
12 by Carole Harris. Vanessa.

13 VANESSA JONES-HULL: Good evening,
14 everyone. My name is Vanessa Jones-Hull. I'm the
15 Tenant Association President for Astoria Houses.

16 The New York Power Authority has played a
17 major role in our Communities. It is well known
18 that in Astoria, mainly in Astoria Houses, our
19 area, the story of our city, it's called Asthma
20 Alley. And in that area, we have seen throughout
21 the years, even a couple of decades, how these
22 power plants have played a major role in the
23 health and well-being of our communities. And
24 being that recently the Power Authority came on
25 board and talked about clean energy, I got more

1 intrigued about our environment and knowing how --
2 how much of a major role it plays in our
3 well-being and our quality of life.

4 And when the Power Authority came forward
5 and had given us the idea and educated our
6 community about the resources that are affecting
7 us, and how our children are being sick, our
8 children are being born sick, how our pregnant
9 moms are being sick while they're carrying their
10 children, but just watching our community decline
11 health-wise, it became very important to our
12 community to get more involved environmentally so
13 we can let it be known of what we are not going to
14 continue to tolerate, and how you continue to
15 leave us astray and think that we are not educated
16 enough to know what you're doing to us.

17 We want to thank NYPA for coming forward
18 and making sure that we have clean energy, and the
19 things that they wish to do to make our
20 environmental situation even better.

21 NYPA plans to deploy 40 renewable energy
22 projects, which amounts to 3.5 gigawatts of clean
23 energy. It's a great and impressive start. The
24 more clean energy that we bring into our homes,
25 the better it is for our communities of Astoria

1 Houses and the communities that surround us.
2 (Inaudible) getting to see these efforts, our
3 community can be even more environmentally
4 structured.

5 As we transition into clean renewable
6 energy, we will no longer be considered Asthma
7 Alley. And we look forward to ever never being
8 called that again. And we look forward to seeing
9 how our children are not being born sick or even
10 dying because this -- we have witnessed this in
11 our communities alone.

12 Our community supports NYPA's efforts that
13 they will (inaudible) support Workforce
14 Development, help with energy bills and lower and
15 (inaudible) community housing, close down the
16 fossil fuel plants.

17 In addition to this, I would also like to
18 mention that NYPA has been a proud and consistent
19 partner of NYCHA Astoria Houses community. NYPA
20 has either led and/or supported numerous events,
21 such as the literacy workshops, youth STEM
22 activities, career panels, podcast discussions,
23 NYPA Family Days, and even funded hypo -- sorry --
24 hydroponics lab in our community centers.

25 The draft Strategic Plan for renewable

1 energy is a great and ambitious first step in
2 making sure New York State transitions to clean
3 energy.

4 I want to thank them for the great efforts
5 and things that they have done.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Vanessa.

7 VANESSA JONES-HULL: I appreciate all for
8 the work that you do.

9 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

10 Our next speaker is Carole Harris, followed
11 by Megan Nien-Yun. Carole.

12 CAROLE HARRIS: Yeah, my name is Carole
13 Harris. I'm the PSC Chapter Chair at the New York
14 City College of Technology. It's one of five CUNY
15 campuses undergoing a serious mold crisis in the
16 library. The City Tech archive had to close its
17 storage recently due to mold, and three librarians
18 with offices adjacent to the archive were forced
19 to find other offices because of allergic
20 symptoms.

21 Our archive includes a unique science
22 fiction collection, the centerpiece of a yearly
23 science fiction symposium, and that collection is
24 now at risk of being thrown out.

25 This crisis of mold in the archive is the

1 tip of the iceberg. Our college has struggled
2 with intractable issues of mold on various parts
3 of the campus, and these mold outbreaks predate
4 the pandemic.

5 To address this systemic problem, it's
6 essential to repair the source of the moisture in
7 the mold, in this case, the roof of the library
8 building. According to the latest Administration
9 and Finance newsletter, that roof, over 30 years
10 old, is in extreme disrepair, showing signs of
11 leaking and deterioration, and needs to be
12 replaced.

13 If NYPA puts solar panels on the roofs of
14 City Tech and other CUNY buildings, we'll have the
15 ammunition to push for funding for new roofs from
16 the New York State legislature.

17 CUNY has been starved of funding, both in
18 our capital and operating budgets, creating
19 backlogs of maintenance. We desperately need
20 clean energy and ventilation, and the
21 infrastructure to support it.

22 As the New York Power Authority, you have
23 the power to support a healthy and viable future
24 for CUNY, the country's largest urban public
25 university system, and be a fierce advocate for

1 the health and well-being of our planet.

2 We want more renewable energy produced in
3 New York State, and we want our CUNY campuses to
4 be decarbonized. Thank you.

5 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Carole. Our
6 next speaker is Megan Nien-Yun followed by Collin
7 Amandji. Megan.

8 MEGAN NIAN: Hi. My name is Megan
9 Nien-Yun, and I'm here representing an
10 organization called The RETI Center. We're a
11 nonprofit based in Brooklyn. RETI stands for
12 Resilience, Education, Training, and Innovation.
13 And our mission is to deliver tuition-free
14 workforce training in clean energy fields to
15 individuals from disadvantaged communities.

16 95 percent of our participants are from
17 these communities, and we focus on PV solar
18 installation, and EV battery and storage training.

19 NYPA's Strategic Plan represents a critical
20 step toward building a sustainable and equitable
21 -- equitable energy future for New York State.
22 NYPA's initiative to expand renewable energy
23 infrastructure, invest in workforce training, and
24 empower disadvantaged communities are deeply
25 aligned with the work that we do every day at

1 Ready Center.

2 We're particularly excited to partner with
3 NYPA on Workforce Development initiatives,
4 including our workforce training for EV battery
5 and storage systems, a large part of New York's
6 clean energy transition, and equipping local
7 residents with the skills to lead in these fields
8 will ensure the benefits of these advancements are
9 distributed equitably.

10 Additionally, we're inspired by the
11 potential job creation these projects will bring
12 to the communities that we serve, creating
13 pathways to economic mobility for individuals
14 historically excluded from such opportunities.

15 I was excited to hear about the
16 apprenticeship agreements, and we hope that there
17 will be a requirement built into all NYPA projects
18 that requires a percentage of graduates from
19 NYPA-funded training programs will be -- have to
20 be hired from -- from the graduates of these
21 programs.

22 We see tremendous alignment between NYPA's
23 Strategic Plan and small organizations like us,
24 RETI Center that foster equitable economic growth
25 while addressing the urgent challenges of climate

1 change.

2 Thank you for the work that you're doing.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. (Inaudible)
4 followed by Holly Clarke. Helen.

5 HELEN MANCINI: Hi, everyone. My name is
6 Helen. I'm a senior at Stuyvesant High School and
7 a member of Fridays for Future in New York City.
8 The first IPCC report I was old enough to
9 understand came out in 2018 when I was 11. That
10 report stated that in order to avoid crossing 1.5
11 degrees of devastating global warming, emissions
12 had to peak by 2025, my graduation year.

13 Now, I'm almost 18. I've spent almost all
14 of my teenage years attending and organizing
15 climate protests, canvassing for climate
16 candidates, and lobbying for climate legislation
17 like the BPRA. Yet, the world looks sleeker than
18 it did in 2018. We are heading into a
19 presidential administration that will do
20 everything in their power to roll back any
21 progress we've made on climate and continue
22 America's track of being the biggest expander of
23 fossil fuels in the world.

24 This is why, more than ever, we need state
25 leadership. New York State, with the landmark

1 Climate Leadership and Community Climate Act,
2 pledged to be this leader that we need by
3 mandating that New York reach 70 percent renewable
4 energy by 2030.

5 Now, this isn't New York alone's burden,
6 but because of how dire the situation is, we need
7 to take action. NYPA has the chance to do this
8 and to offer a Strategic Plan that can meet this
9 goal and establish a transition off of fossil
10 fuels but the current Strategic Plan is lacking.

11 We are here as students saying that we want
12 to decarbonize our schools, saying that we'll do
13 anything to scale-up renewables and retire peaker
14 -- peaker plants. We will fight for more funding
15 if funding is the constraint.

16 We're behind you. We want to create these
17 green union jobs. The BPRA has already passed.
18 It gives NYPA a mandate to do this work. All
19 we're asking is for NYPA to fight for us in the
20 implementation. We may not be able to vote, but
21 we deserve a say in our future. Thank you.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible). Holly.

23 HOLLY CLARKE: Hello. Thank you for
24 holding this hearing and for everyone who's here.
25 I'm Holly Clarke. I teach economics and public

1 administration at John Jay, and I'm also a proud
2 member of the Professional Staff Congress.

3 I'm here to do two things and one is to
4 read a statement from someone who couldn't have
5 come, and their name is as follows: Jason Oakes,
6 who is a graduate student in sustainability at
7 City College.

8 And he had this to say: As a current
9 graduate student and licensed professional
10 engineer, I believe additional funding should be
11 made available, which incentivizes studies and,
12 ultimately, construction projects with an energy
13 and sustainability component for the City College
14 of New York and the broader CUNY system.

15 Further, a committee should be established
16 between NYPA, the CUNY staff, the students, and
17 alumni, and faculty, which provides research
18 opportunities for students and faculty, reduces
19 project planning costs for NYPA, and incorporates
20 valuable feedback into the process. Please do
21 what's best for everyone. Make more funding
22 available for the institutions that need it the
23 most.

24 And that's his statement. I would just
25 like to add one -- one thought to this, which is

1 that you are in a very special position. Why?
2 Because it's a position working for NYPA, one that
3 you should cherish, because -- why? Because you
4 can make a significant contribution to the effort
5 to slow climate change for all of us as
6 individuals, our communities, the state, and for
7 us as global citizens. You have an opportunity
8 that others don't.

9 So what we ask is that you help New York
10 State reach or exceed its renewable energy goals
11 and expand your vision in the project to 15
12 gigawatts.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible) Beth
14 Livensperger, followed by David Munoz. Beth.

15 BETH LIVENSPPERGER: Hi. I want to say
16 thank you for holding this hearing and thank you
17 for all the work you've already done on the plan.

18 I'm Beth Livensperger, faculty in visual
19 arts at the College of Staten Island.

20 It's hard to communicate the depth of my
21 dejection at the current state of the climate
22 crisis. I will spare you an attempt. The facts
23 speak for themselves, and they're ever more
24 harrowing. World hunger, previously on the
25 decline, has increased since 2015, in part due to

1 adverse farming conditions like drought and
2 flooding.

3 Also, within the last several years, the
4 growth of renewables has been essentially canceled
5 out by increases in fossil fuel use. Despite
6 international agreements, current policies and
7 actions have us on track towards 2.7 degrees
8 Celsius of warming by 2100, not 1.5. So, there's
9 clearly a yawning gap between the pledge and
10 execution at all levels of responsibility.

11 NYPA is uniquely placed to bridge this gap
12 due to its status as a public authority and its
13 legal mandate. I urge NYPA to take advantage of
14 its status and meet the moment by authorizing all
15 gigawatts of green power.

16 The current goal of 3.5 gigawatts is
17 unfortunately unacceptable, especially in the face
18 of four years of moving nowhere or backward at the
19 federal level.

20 I'm especially interested in seeing a
21 distributed solar ramp up in NYC. The city
22 urgently needs reliable, non-polluting energy,
23 especially for the many low-income residents
24 already struggling with higher electricity bills
25 and brownouts. Due to the state's track record of

1 success with distributed solar, this seems like an
2 easy win.

3 Also, NYPA's energy discounts to giant
4 multinationals like City Bank, Amazon, and
5 Lockheed Martin should be reckoned with when
6 considering what is financially possible.

7 Much of the difficulty around the energy
8 transition is quiet subsidies like these that prop
9 up business as usual. As the century wears on,
10 business as usual is not going to be a viable
11 option no matter what we do.

12 I urge NYPA to eat the frog, do the
13 difficult, ambitious thing, and craft a plan for
14 15 gigawatts a generation as mandated. Thank you.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible) David Nunez,
16 followed by Michael Sandmel. David.

17 DAVID NUNEZ: Good evening. Thank you for
18 hosting this public hearing. I'm David Nunez.
19 I'm representing myself.

20 I live in Astoria. And as a previous
21 speaker mentioned, we're home to two power
22 generation plants, both the Astoria generation
23 plant and Ravenswood.

24 In my own life, as someone with respiratory
25 health issues -- excuse me. The emissions -- the

1 emissions from the power plants and fossil fuels
2 impact me every day. I have to look outside. I
3 have to see if the air quality rating is okay for
4 me to be able to enjoy my life.

5 So, I'm here today to speak to three
6 problems: The emissions problem, and the problems
7 I see in my neighborhood of affordability and
8 health and livelihood. The people of New York
9 have passed visionary climate legislation, gone
10 through the CLPA and -- CLCPA, and BPRA, but the
11 plan that the New York Power Authority has
12 proposed doesn't match that same ambition.

13 This year is the closest year that we have
14 to experiencing what 1.5 degrees of Celsius looks
15 like. And right now, our state is in a severe
16 drought, as well as having to breathe additional
17 pollution from the wildfires, both in our city and
18 in neighboring cities.

19 What you have is the responsibility to have
20 a local solution that not only impacts our state,
21 but the globe. I hope that you can consider
22 building more than those 3.5 gigawatts and pursue
23 the whole 15 gigawatts, including focusing on more
24 downstate and Hudson Valley solutions, whether
25 that's partnering with public institutions who are

1 hungry for supporting those projects or distribute
2 -- distributive solutions that impact the
3 communities where these facilities exist.

4 I hope you consider more public hearings to
5 extend the amount of time people have to engage
6 with the work that you're doing. And I hope you
7 continue to provide a detailed plan to phase out
8 these peaker plants, one that is in my
9 neighborhood.

10 And lastly, I hope that you consider the
11 volume of new projects that -- that you implement
12 so that there are going to be sustained union jobs
13 and sustained transitions to the green economy.

14 As we continue to try to electrify our
15 utilities, we need more electricity, not less, and
16 we need more of that to be renewable, not less.
17 So please go for 15 gigawatts. Thank you.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible) Michael
19 Sandmel followed by (inaudible). Michael.

20 MICHAEL SANDMEL: Thank you. Thank you for
21 the opportunity to testify here today for all of
22 your work. My name is Mike. I live in Flatbush,
23 Brooklyn. I'll keep my remarks brief because I'm
24 not here as an energy policy expert or a
25 representative of any larger organization. I

1 speak only as a New Yorker who, like many of us,
2 woke up on November 6, terrified of what a second
3 Trump Administration would mean for those we love
4 and for the future of our city and the larger
5 world in the context of a warming planet.

6 As you recall, the day of the election, it
7 was nearly 80 degrees in November. The following
8 morning, I woke up to the smell of smoke from
9 fires nearby at Prospect Park, where droughts
10 continued to create dangerous conditions.

11 At work, I had to postpone a major project
12 with a client in Western North Carolina,
13 supposedly (inaudible) in a climate haven, where
14 (inaudible) hurricanes have flattered out their
15 community. Seemingly, every bit of small talk I
16 have these days with a neighbor comes back to
17 weather and how we can see climate change
18 happening before our eyes.

19 New Yorkers know we are already living in
20 an age of climate consequences, and we're
21 terrified of what will happen now that we have a
22 President-elect's intent on flooring the
23 accelerator of fossil fuel expansion and
24 greenhouse gas emissions.

25 We need state-level leadership that will do

1 everything in their power to push for a
2 sustainable future. And the draft plan being
3 discussed today fails to live up to those needs.

4 NYPA's leadership must acknowledge both the
5 legal mandate under the CLCPA and the moral
6 mandate of our (inaudible). We need a final
7 Strategic Plan that includes at least 15 gigawatts
8 of renewables by 2030 to ensure we meet the CLCPA
9 goals, slash New York State's emissions, grow an
10 equitable green economy, and demonstrate to the
11 rest of the country that there's a better way to
12 do things. Thank you.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible). Our next
14 speaker is (inaudible) followed by Lena Goings.
15 (Phonetic). George Nunez.

16 Okay. Our next speaker is Lena Goings.
17 Lena.

18 Our next speaker is Ashen Harper. Ashen.

19 ASHEN HARPER: Hello, New York Power
20 Authority. My name is Ashen Harper, and I'm from
21 Fridays for Future, New York City. I'm a high
22 school senior, and I'm testifying to increase
23 capacity for the proposed 3.5 gigawatts to 15
24 gigawatts of renewables.

25 The Climate Leadership and Community

1 Protection Act sets the goal for New York State to
2 reach 70 percent renewables by 2030. This is the
3 law, and NYPA needs to implement it. However, it
4 is projected that we will only reach 44 percent
5 renewables.

6 As the youths inheriting the future, we
7 call upon NYPA to build at least 15 gigawatts of
8 renewables by 2030 and meet our CLCPA goals, and
9 become a leader in decarbonization. Benefits of
10 this include the creation of 20 to 30,000 green
11 union jobs and lowering the costs of utility
12 bills, as well as green jobs. And NYPA must also
13 consider environmental justice.

14 In New York City and across the state,
15 peaker plants emit twice the carbon dioxide as
16 well as pollutants, which detriment the health and
17 environmental justice communities in which peaker
18 plants are located in. Everyone deserves clean
19 air, and peaker plants must be shut down.

20 Right now, NYPA has the opportunity to
21 become a leader in clean energy deployment in the
22 U.S. After the results of the election, we were
23 all disappointed because it is clear that the
24 federal government will take us backward on
25 renewable development in which needs to be moving

1 forward. And that means it is now up to states to
2 lead our energy transition.

3 We are currently watching the fire's rage
4 across our state. We watched southern states be
5 ravaged by Hurricane Helene and then once again by
6 Hurricane Milton.

7 Last year, the skies turned yellow. As
8 youth, we fear that the future we inherit is not
9 one that will be livable for us. I want my
10 younger sister and myself to grow up in a world
11 that is safe from climate catastrophe. The fires
12 and the floods that we see every day should not be
13 normal, yet it is our new normal. And in order to
14 ensure that the new normal does not become even
15 more inhospitable, we need a renewable energy
16 transition, and we need it now.

17 So, we, as the youth who will inherit the
18 city, call upon NYPA to increase the planned
19 capacity of renewable development to at least 15
20 gigawatts of new, publicly-owned renewables by
21 2030, to plan at least 5 gigawatts for the Hudson
22 Valley in Downstate New York, to end peaker
23 plants, and to prove that New York State will be a
24 leader in the clean energy transition. Thank you.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible) followed by

1 Maya Ponton Aronoff. Maya.

2 MAYA PONTON ARONOFF: Hi, my name is Maya.
3 I'm a high school freshman of 14, and I'm
4 (inaudible) with Fridays for Future.

5 On my way to elementary school, every day,
6 I would pass by a building that had emitted thick
7 black smoke. When I first saw it, I was confused
8 and asked -- and asked people around me, why is
9 that weird stuff going to the air?

10 So, I began holding my breath until I got
11 to the next block, but little did I know that the
12 contamination didn't go away, no matter where you
13 were. My worry for the air stems from the fact
14 that I suffer from severe asthma.

15 I spent my nights hooked up to a nebulizer
16 machine. I struggled to hear my cartoons over the
17 hissing of the pumps supplying me with air. I
18 couldn't play in the park without the risk of an
19 asthma attack looming around the corner.

20 The state of our climate is a crisis.
21 Policies are not something that can be done
22 carelessly. 3.5 gigawatts is more than
23 disappointing. It's a failure. It's a failure
24 for both our environment and our health.

25 We, as New York State, must take the lead

1 in hopes of influencing other states to
2 decarbonize our air. We need to transition to
3 publicly-owned renewables because our clock is
4 ticking and much -- and much faster than we
5 realized.

6 Please take our futures seriously. We need
7 15 gigabytes by 2030. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you (inaudible)
9 followed by (inaudible). Aya.

10 AYA BOUTASSAMAT: Thank you so much. My
11 name is Aya. I'm a student starting at my law
12 school. I'm trying to show up to a lot of the
13 environmental justice organizations as I get to
14 know New York.

15 I'm here because nobody is coming to save
16 us. I know that NYPA is trying their best to
17 present a plan to comply with this potentially
18 groundbreaking, world-leading law of climate
19 justice. Right?

20 But there is no better next time. There is
21 no second chance. There is no "if we don't get
22 this right, maybe someone else will come and fix
23 it later." This is the time. This is the chance.
24 And we need you to stand up and fight back against
25 these politicians and these corporations that --

1 from New York to every place I have ever lived,
2 have been trying to weasel their way out of fixing
3 the problem that they not only caused but continue
4 to make billions of dollars off of. If I got it
5 right, going to 15 gigawatts would be what? 30
6 billion?

7 Exxon made 36 billion last year alone,
8 poisoning our communities as they've known all
9 along they would do, and killing millions,
10 displacing billions, as the climate crisis
11 continues to reach a fever-pitch, and Governor
12 Hochul has still not signed -- (inaudible) still
13 not signed the Make Loiters Pay Act. And we're
14 still talking about, you know, oh, well, 44
15 percent is the best that we can do. 70 percent,
16 as the law requires, of renewable energy is not
17 meeting the goal.

18 We need 100 percent yesterday. We need 100
19 percent 10 years ago. We cannot wait any longer.
20 We have to stand up and fight. And I bet if we
21 looked to those massive mega corporations that are
22 getting discounts and energy subsidies and cuts in
23 order to poison us: City Bank, Amazon, Lockheed
24 Martin. They kill our families. They make a
25 check, and then they have the billions. And then

1 they say, Where's the money for renewable
2 transition? That is not acceptable. While New
3 Yorkers are struggling to put food on the table
4 and putting every strategy (inaudible) save a
5 couple of bucks on our utility bill, those are the
6 people who should be getting discounts. Those are
7 the people who should be getting free energy. Not
8 the people who caused this problem in the first
9 place.

10 And the politicians who enable them and
11 cash their checks every step of the way. We've
12 got to stand up. There cannot be a single excuse
13 for why this is impossible. The peaker plants
14 that are (inaudible) we need a breathing example
15 of environmental racism. It needed to be gone
16 yesterday. We needed a plan to phase them out.
17 We need community-owned, community solar for
18 public schools and the most impacted by this
19 crisis.

20 We need investments directly in Indigenous
21 communities that can enable them to have energy
22 sovereignty, and we need it yesterday. You've got
23 to stand up with the power that you have. You all
24 have to ask yourself, What power do I have today?
25 And did I use it to its fullest? If the answer is

1 not that you used it to its fullest, we got to go
2 back to the drawing board, and we got to do
3 better.

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. (Inaudible).

5 CATHERINE DU: Good evening, everyone. My
6 name is Catherine Du, and I'm an (inaudible)
7 creator attending (inaudible) High School, and I
8 have to come all the way from my (inaudible).

9 I've come here today with a group of young
10 people from Fridays for Future, New York City, to
11 demand that you build a future that my generation
12 both urgently means and deserves. When people
13 talk about the climate crisis, it's almost like
14 it's an issue reserved exclusively for the future.
15 However, we are not addressing the fact that the
16 climate crisis is everywhere now, and that the
17 actions that we take today will set in stone what
18 the people of my generation's lives will be like
19 today and in the future.

20 We are already seeing Prospect Park
21 burning. We are in a drought. When I say in the
22 future, I'm not merely talking about when we turn
23 100, 80, or 70. I'm talking about 2050 when I
24 turn 39. I'm talking about 2040 when I turn 29.
25 I'm talking about 2030 when I turn 19.

1 These years are not too far off from the
2 future. All the disasters we've been facing, both
3 globally and locally, are showing us just what we
4 are doing to (inaudible) our future. New York
5 City is in a drought. We've been breaking records
6 for years in a row.

7 Prospect Park has been burned. We've been
8 hit by wildfire smoke, both from New Jersey and
9 Canada. Does this sound like an issue of the
10 future? Am I quoting some future predictions that
11 nobody else can understand, see, or feel?
12 Sometimes, it feels like it's that way because
13 some people seem so unobliged to act. They are
14 acting like there is infinite time left, while
15 there is so little time left to save our lives
16 from a climate crisis that we are trying to fight
17 against.

18 The New York Power Authority's Strategic
19 Plan must live up to its potential by phasing out
20 peaker plants to protect the health of our city
21 and marginalized communities in which they all lie
22 and building renewable energy to replace them.

23 By choosing to build these renewables, you
24 will be saving countless lives, both by reducing
25 peaker plant pollution and by working toward

1 meeting the New York's emission reduction goals of
2 being 70 percent renewable by 2030.

3 Our schools must also be decarbonized
4 because learning should not be a polluting
5 occupation. These emission reduction goals are
6 pivotal to protecting and saving all that we can
7 save. Cost of revenue is not something that our
8 climate listens to. Lowering the cost may be
9 good, but if you are trading off lives and our
10 future, that is unacceptable.

11 I'm going to close off by stating that we
12 have the opportunity to create 25,000 green union
13 jobs to clean our air and to protect -- sorry --
14 to protect the people of color in marginalized
15 communities by fully implementing the Build Public
16 Renewables Act.

17 I want to imagine 2040, the year I turn 29,
18 where New York is fully powered by renewable
19 energy. Let's save my generation's future and
20 present. Let's build 15 gigawatts of new
21 publicly-owned renewables by 2030. This is not
22 (inaudible) one, just like we need to breathe
23 clean air, just like we need to drink clean water,
24 just like we need to be forced not to eat plastics
25 along with everything else in our diet. We need

1 NYPA to follow the law, and we need 15 gigawatts.

2 Please, on behalf of our --

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Catherine.

4 (Inaudible). Our next speaker is Arif
5 Ullah, followed by Melanie Saenz Flores. Arif.

6 ARIF ULLAH: Thank you. Good evening. My
7 name is Arif Ullah. I'm with South Bronx Unite, a
8 community-led, community-founded environmental
9 justice organization based in Mott Haven and Port
10 Morris.

11 I am here today to speak on behalf of the
12 people of the South Bronx. The South Bronx is an
13 epicenter of environmental injustice, manifested
14 most clearly by the enormous and disproportionate
15 concentration of polluting infrastructure in the
16 area. This has resulted in diminished quality of
17 life and a range of illnesses, including asthma,
18 cognitive impairment, and heart disease.

19 In the Mott Haven/Port Morris section of
20 the South Bronx alone, we have waste transfer
21 stations, (inaudible) warehouses, a medical waste
22 facility, and the largest deepwater petroleum
23 products terminal in New York City.

24 If that weren't enough, we also have close
25 two peaker power plant sites, a total of four

1 smokestacks, which have been operating regularly.
2 Regularly. Not just during peak-energy demand
3 days, but they have been operating regularly.

4 In short, the South Bronx is suffocating.
5 Not metaphorically, but literally. The passage of
6 the Build Public Renewables Act offered hope for
7 communities like the South Bronx. But NYPA
8 doesn't seem interested in implementing the law in
9 good faith. Its current proposal of 3.5 gigawatts
10 flouts the goals of the New York State's Climate
11 Act, dismisses escalating utility bills, and
12 disregards the dangers posed by the climate
13 crisis.

14 NYPA's proposal is a profound betrayal of
15 the right to health and dignity for residents of
16 pollution-burned communities across the state.
17 3.5 gigawatts represents a continuation of
18 environmental violence.

19 We have watched for generations as
20 frontline communities have been transformed into
21 sacrifice zones, where the color of one's skin and
22 the depth of one's economic resources determine
23 the quality of the air we breathe.

24 NYPA's 3.5-gigawatt proposal reveals a
25 chilling truth: The lives of black, brown,

1 immigrant, and under-resourced people are still
2 being calculated as an acceptable risk, and that
3 the climate emergency is not a concern.

4 15 gigawatts is the minimum required to
5 begin healing the environmental wounds inflicted
6 on the South Bronx and other frontline communities
7 in New York City.

8 This is not just about energy production.
9 It is about recognizing a fundamental human right
10 to clean air.

11 To the New York Power Authority and to
12 anyone who will listen, the lives of frontline
13 communities are not expendable. The time for
14 performative environmental commitments has passed.
15 We need concrete action.

16 NYPA must invest in meaningful and adequate
17 clean energy solutions now. NYPA must prioritize
18 the health of our community over the profits of
19 fossil fuel corporations. Environmental justice
20 is not a distant ideal. It is an immediate
21 necessity, and all we are asking is for you to do
22 the right thing.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Arif.

24 (Inaudible) speaker is (inaudible) followed by
25 (inaudible). Melanie.

1 MELANIE SAENZ FLORES: Hello. Good
2 evening. My name is Melanie Saenz Flores, and I'm
3 here in support of Fridays for Future NYC, and my
4 future.

5 As you may know, fossil fuels lead to
6 extreme weather events, rise in sea levels, and
7 disruptions of ecosystems. As someone who is a
8 first-generation American, born and raised in
9 South Florida, who came to New York for a college
10 hoping for a brighter future, I'm faced with the
11 same challenges South Florida has: Flooding,
12 people in power denying climate change, and lack
13 of green jobs.

14 Right now, I live in Sedgwick, an area that
15 is still known as the manufacturing city, with
16 heavy amounts of pollutants to the detriments of
17 residents' health.

18 My friend, who lives in a nearby city, OSC,
19 has the -- her park closed down due to toxic
20 chemicals caused by the fossil fuels.

21 Last year, I was not able to commute to my
22 job because of the floodings in the stations. And
23 not only is my health being detrimental, but also
24 my future. I have not been able to file -- or
25 find an environmental job that I set out once I

1 graduated college five years ago due to the lack
2 of green jobs and honorable salaries with the
3 green jobs. Still, there's little enthusiasm for
4 the New York government to follow the law. And
5 frankly, I am unsure of what my future will look
6 like in NYC with rising sea levels, pollution, and
7 not having a sustainable job that pays for a
8 decent living if I want to have a family. Thank
9 you.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. (Inaudible)
11 Shay O'Reilly, followed by Daniel Chu.

12 SHAY O'REILLY: Good evening, everybody.
13 My name is Shay. I live in Flatbush, Brooklyn.
14 I'm a dad to a kindergartner.

15 I'm here to ask you to build more
16 renewables in the plan (inaudible). We know what
17 is at stake here. Since this Governor has taken
18 office, the state's renewable energy plan has
19 fallen apart. The bold offshore wind program
20 planned by her predecessor is in shambles, with no
21 signs of leadership from Albany, no vision, and no
22 path forward for a green economy.

23 This draft plan is part of that lack of
24 vision. It is too small to do what must be done.
25 Along with many other people here tonight, I'm

1 calling on you to expand it to 15 gigawatts, with
2 at least five of those gigawatts downstate. I am
3 particularly concerned by excusing gestures toward
4 the need to maintain a high-bond rating for some
5 unspecified future.

6 This is what your bond rating is for, for
7 developing what the people of New York need to
8 live and thrive, even in (inaudible) economic
9 top-market crisis.

10 The new deal, the original one, started in
11 New York. FDR, a portrait of him hung in the
12 Governor's predecessor's office, responded to a
13 market crash by countercyclical investment in what
14 people needed: Good jobs, renewable energy, a
15 model of good governance. It was such a success
16 that it was the signature domestic policy
17 accomplishment of the 20th Century.

18 Public power has been our past and will be
19 our future. All over the world, governments like
20 Victoria State in Australia are starting to build
21 publicly-owned renewable energy for the first time
22 since the privatization craze of the 1990s. They
23 are doing this because it is clear that this is
24 the way to enact an energy transition with a
25 maximum public benefit and the only way to stop

1 the worst gravitas of climate change.

2 In the wake of this month's election, many
3 people are pointing fingers, and some of them are
4 asking if blue states can govern. It's up to you
5 right now to prove that they can. Thank you.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Shay.

7 Our next speaker is Daniel Chu, followed by
8 (inaudible). Daniel.

9 DANIEL CHU: Good evening. Shout-out to my
10 fellow PSC community members (inaudible), but I'm
11 here on behalf of the New York City Environmental
12 Justice Alliance and the PEAK Coalition.
13 Together, we represent over 13 community-based
14 organizations, mostly made up of people of color.
15 And we represent nearly a million people living
16 within half a mile of a peaker power plant, around
17 80 percent of who are low-income or people of
18 color.

19 The 3.5 gigawatt plan is not enough. By
20 the state's own estimate, I checked this morning,
21 we are 12.9 gigawatts behind the 2030 goal,
22 according to NYSERDA's own numbers. And most of
23 the projects that NYPA proposed are in the solar
24 industry, which doesn't make any sense because we
25 are already on track to build 10 gigawatts of

1 solar by 2030, according to New York State's law.

2 What is really behind is offshore wind and
3 energy storage. Right? We are -- we only have
4 600 megawatts of energy storage in New York State,
5 even though we want to get to 6 gigawatts. We are
6 only 10 percent there, and we are so far behind.

7 NYCEJA is very disappointed that NYPA has
8 little plans for energy storage and zero plans for
9 offshore wind. If NYPA really wants to save
10 at-risk product- -- projects, as they stated in
11 the strategic roadmap, maybe it's time to look at
12 some of the big oil companies that have done a
13 terrible job at building New York's offshore wind
14 farms.

15 NYPA, as a public authority, has
16 (inaudible) harm in communities (inaudible) need
17 to represent for over 20 years by locating the six
18 peaker power plants in our communities. 1.5
19 megawatts of renewables in New York City is not
20 enough. Right? That's less than 1 percent of the
21 total 3.5 (inaudible) sort of gigawatt portfolio
22 in the largest city in the state and in the
23 country.

24 The city is also (inaudible) threats of
25 blackouts are more likely, and utility bills are

1 the highest across the state. NYPA is uniquely
2 positioned to improve transition security and
3 resource adequacy downstate, and it should not be
4 siloing efforts between phasing out fossil fuels
5 and building public renewables. Efforts must be
6 done now so we can secure as much federal funding
7 as possible before the possibility that any
8 federal support for clean energy development could
9 be dismantled over the next four years.

10 The environmental justice communities
11 should not be choosing between clean air,
12 affordable, and reliable energy. Environmental
13 justice communities all across New York City and
14 the state cannot wait any longer. Thank you.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Daniel. Our
16 next speaker is Margot Gregory, followed by Marcia
17 Neufeld.

18 MARGOT GREGORY: Hello. What follows is my
19 public comment for the New York State Power
20 Authority: To the people, thank you for being
21 present and caring about this crisis.

22 To the Governor and the Power Authority:
23 My name is Margot Gregory. I am a member of the
24 Sane Energy Project. And I am a lifelong New
25 Yorker, having grown up on Manhattan's Lower East

1 Side, and I now reside in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn.

2 I am appalled at the climate crisis
3 currently unfolding before our very eyes and New
4 York State hemming and hawing on its commitment to
5 its citizens. The new climate laws, including the
6 Build Public Renewables Act, are a definitive step
7 in the right direction. I urge you to implement a
8 real and genuine publicly-powered solution to the
9 horrendous global warming crisis by implementing
10 the goals of 15 gigawatts of renewable energy by
11 2030 immediately.

12 I implore you to act with urgency because
13 the time to stop the global climate crisis is now.
14 Your administration will be creating healthy,
15 green jobs, and finally retiring New York State's
16 frivolous reliance on CO2, which is outdated and
17 old-fashioned.

18 To Justin Driscoll and the Power Authority:
19 Our system is outdated and will soon become moot.
20 It is economically unsustainable as well as
21 polluting our air, water, and soil. Fossil fuels,
22 like disgusting and deplorable fracked gas, are
23 heating our bioregion and contributing to
24 devastating droughts, the spread of disease,
25 flooding, habitat loss, and pollution throughout

1 our region, not to mention the rest of the world,
2 including the most delicate coastal and island
3 regions in the global south.

4 It is time to think of the New Yorkers,
5 refugees, climate refugees, and people other than
6 ourselves and the profit-making motives built in
7 the capitalist system. We are part of a global,
8 interconnected community of humans, plants, and
9 animals that, through ingenuity and free-thinking,
10 can liberate ourselves from the confines of an
11 ecocidal, genocidal world order bent on killing
12 all life on earth.

13 The people of New York State will no doubt
14 benefit from less pollution and a publicly-owned
15 utility system. We needed renewable climate
16 solutions yesterday, not to mention today. All
17 people want peace and health and to live in safe
18 communities.

19 New Yorkers want a healthy society free of
20 violent extraction processes which devalue human
21 labor and the environment.

22 Your mandate is for New York State to be
23 consuming 70 percent renewable energy by the year
24 2030. This, madams and sirs, can be your legacy
25 and control --

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Margot.

2 MARGOT: Seize this time. There is no
3 escaping the stark reality of (inaudible) --

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

5 MARGOT: -- (inaudible).

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Marcia
7 Canuso. Followed by (inaudible) --

8 MARGOT: -- (inaudible) --

9 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Marcia.

10 MARCIA: Hello. I'm a retired CUNY
11 adjunct. I taught English for 30-plus years at
12 Borland Manhattan College was and still am a union
13 activist with the PSC, the Professional Staff
14 Congress, the union that represents 30,000 faculty
15 and staff, of which 12,000 are part-time like I
16 was.

17 I'm a New York City resident, daughter of
18 immigrants, who has spent most of my 89 years in
19 the city I love. Before I joined my union's
20 Environmental Justice Working Group, I was not
21 aware of the NYPA -- of NYPA -- I'm so sorry --
22 and the vast responsibility and job you have.

23 I thank you all for all you've done and
24 managed. Your website says it's 17 facilities.
25 Now, however, it's an even more important option

1 and mandate to increase renewables to take a
2 carbon-free environment by 2040 and 70 percent
3 renewable energy in New York State by 2030.

4 On behalf of CUNY's 300 ailing buildings --
5 300 ailing buildings -- the whole deal. You know,
6 the walls are falling down. There's -- there's --
7 what do you call that thing? The -- you know, the
8 -- the soot on the walls, at CUNY and SUNY, and
9 public students, over a million -- over a million
10 CUNY, SUNY, and public school students, they are
11 all affected by these sick buildings. These
12 buildings that aren't up to code.

13 So, if you create 15 megawatts of renewable
14 energy, 25,000 green jobs, and close plants and
15 waste energy, you will be affecting those people,
16 those over a million students.

17 Now, how can you not make the right
18 choices? I don't know what the constraints are.
19 I mean, Governor Hochul? I don't know. I'm just
20 a citizen who -- who listens to MSNBC. NYPA
21 should become a household word for fighting
22 climate change, not maintaining it.

23 Given the expertise -- and I read your
24 background, of the people who are your officers,
25 and your staff, and your trustees, you got a lot

1 of expertise there. A lot of people who've done a
2 lot of good things who have the capacity to do
3 anything. So, is Governor Hochul the one who's
4 stopping them?

5 So, I know that all of this can be done.
6 You can eliminate the blocks to get us to -- to
7 the big place where the -- NYPA is a great word.
8 Everybody knows NYPA. Right now, everybody knows
9 Con Ed. Does it help us? (Inaudible) NYPA is a
10 great word. (Inaudible).

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible).

12 COSTA CONSTANTINIDES: Hi. Good evening,
13 everyone. My name is Costa Constantinides. I'm
14 the CEO of Variety Boys and Girls from the Queens,
15 also a lifelong resident of Western Queens. And
16 where -- where I live has the capacity every day
17 to create about 55 percent of the city's power.
18 Right? The peaker plants, the fossil fuel
19 generation baseload. And there's been a cost to
20 that (inaudible) 21st Street.

21 Right? The young people that I serve, the
22 Boys and Girls Club, the 4,000 kids that I serve,
23 are coming from that same community, coming from
24 neighborhoods that desperately need relief. I --
25 I'm kind of looking at this a little bit of a more

1 nuanced way: From my -- from NYPA's perspective,
2 I look at this (inaudible) -- I'm very excited
3 about this Strategic Plan because we need
4 renewable energy, and we need it now.

5 We need to have relief in our communities.
6 And the kids that we serve need to have access to
7 those jobs of the 21st century. They should be
8 the scientists of the 21st century. So, your
9 Strategic Plan, I'm on -- completely on board
10 with. Please do more.

11 And as you move forward, it's about getting
12 the hydro (inaudible) plan up and running in '26.
13 It's about making sure that empire wind and beacon
14 wind, get built. It's about trying to make sure
15 that renewable Ravenswood gets back on track.
16 It's about trying to make sure that we turn Asthma
17 Alley into Renewable Road of Western Queens.

18 And, you know -- so, when I look at my
19 work -- we work really well with NYPA. And NYPA
20 has been a valued partner of the Boys and Girls
21 Club. You helped us start Sky Farm LIC last year,
22 which has been a beacon for our youth in Western
23 Queens. We got almost 1,000 kids up on that roof
24 this past year. We produced about 3500 pounds of
25 food that went to young people in the community,

1 and they got to learn about healthy eating,
2 healthy growing. They got to learn about, you
3 know, where their food comes from and how to grow
4 it. That was transformative for our kids, who
5 primarily live in food deserts. Right? Who live
6 in communities where there's one supermarket west
7 of 21st Street. So, your partnership on -- on Sky
8 Farm LIC went a long way to helping. It's not
9 going to solve that -- that crisis in Western
10 Queens, but it helps us move in the right
11 direction.

12 Your partnership on drones, your
13 partnership on -- you know, working with young
14 engineers on your team to find out what good jobs
15 have a possibility, those are the things that we
16 need more of in Western Queens. That's why I'm
17 here tonight. I -- I can't speak to all the other
18 projects, but I know that what you're doing here,
19 I'm excited about. Thank you.

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. (Inaudible)
21 our next speaker is Matta Khan, (phonetic)
22 followed by George Nunez. Matta. (Phonetic).

23 MATTA: Good evening, everyone. Climate
24 change is real. I'm sure everyone agrees on that,
25 and that's why we're here today. Right?

1 Especially because of the recent brush fires and
2 increased temperatures we've been seeing here this
3 month in New York.

4 For us to meet the 2030 Sustainable
5 Development Goals of the United Nations,
6 specifically Sustainable Development Goal 13,
7 Climate Action, New York needs to lead by example
8 in transitioning over to clean and renewable
9 energy and a fossil fuel-free future where we lead
10 the fossil fuel industry. And as a ripple effect,
11 inspire other states across the country to do the
12 same in following New York's leadership, and
13 hopefully inspiring other countries to do the
14 same.

15 The last time Trump was in office, he made
16 the U.S. leave the Paris Agreement. If New York
17 steps up now, we can hope for President Biden to
18 sign on to more bold legislation, such as a new
19 deal to help us take a step forward in addressing
20 climate change.

21 Unless we step up now and call on Governor
22 Hochul and President Biden to take action, things
23 here in -- not just the United -- the United
24 States, but across the world will only get worse
25 moving forward.

1 New York Power Authority is the literal
2 power broker in determining how much effort is put
3 into addressing climate change right here in New
4 York, which is the home of the United Nations
5 headquarters.

6 Former governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt
7 started the New York Power Authority to transition
8 us into using hydroelectric plants. It's time to
9 continue this vision in using clean and renewable
10 energy.

11 FDR also introduced the New Deal to help
12 our economy after the Great Depression. Right?
13 The Green New Deal is something introduced by
14 Councilwoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator
15 Bernie Sanders, a bill that is the best of both
16 worlds in addressing climate change by
17 transitioning out of fossil fuels completely and
18 boosting the economy by creating revolutionary new
19 jobs that -- you know, we could coin as
20 green-collared jobs.

21 If Governor Hochul believes climate change
22 is real and takes the matter seriously, and
23 wanting to help the United Nations meet the 2030
24 Sustainable Development Goals, then she will
25 prioritize on moving us away from the fossil fuel

1 industry here in New York, away from peaker plants
2 causing pollution and asthma, to instead support
3 things like public power, and ensuring that
4 electric power plants is publicly-owned and not
5 dictated by greedy-energy companies like Con
6 Edison, which happens to be a monopoly for
7 electricity, prioritizing on profits, not the
8 people.

9 Increasing the energy available here in New
10 York to 15 gigawatts, as folks here have
11 mentioned, with renewable energy, we can prevent
12 mass power outages and other incidents resulting
13 from these blackouts, which could occur if we have
14 anything less.

15 We can settle for more and hope for a
16 better future by starting here in New York and
17 prioritizing on climate action that the country
18 can do the same with the Green New Deal.
19 Addressing climate change is a global effort, but
20 it starts here locally in New York, leading by
21 example. It's time for New York --

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
23 speaker is George Nunez, followed by Nelly
24 Tornike. (Phonetic). George.

25 MATTA: (Inaudible).

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Matta.

2 MATTA: Thank you.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
4 speaker is George Nunez. Followed by Nelly Kine.
5 George.

6 GEORGE NUNEZ: Thank you, NYPA. George
7 Nunez, founder and CEO of Bronx Tech Hub.

8 So, the truth is, I come from a borough
9 that has faced environmental injustice for
10 decades, the South Bronx. Under urban planners
11 and private companies run highways through black
12 and brown, and low-income communities and place
13 their detox in the South Bronx. It is consistent
14 with people leaving the Bronx behind and not
15 including us in the picture.

16 Communities and climate activists have a
17 role to play in pushing for change as the climate
18 crisis advances and will impact the city,
19 especially vulnerable cities. I see the need in
20 the Bronx, as I grew up in the South Bronx. I
21 also believe the change we need to see will come
22 from building an intentional workforce development
23 pipeline for the brilliant, resourceful, and
24 dynamic talent from the Bronx in a clean energy
25 transition.

1 We refuse for the Bronx to be left behind.
2 The time is now to change what the future looks
3 like.

4 For my work and mission, NYPA has been an
5 important collaborator in helping me educate
6 Bronxites while also helping expand the
7 opportunities in this important space as this is
8 the important time.

9 NYPA's Strategic Plan and expanded
10 authority lays out the commitment to invest in
11 disadvantaged communities, and talking to people
12 that many do not think to include in the first
13 place.

14 Recently, I hosted the Inaugural Bronx Tech
15 Job Fair with Fordham University Community Engage
16 Learning Center. And at different time slots, 300
17 high school students, college students, and
18 working professionals joined the event to move
19 themselves forward in life.

20 NYPA was one of the primary employees at
21 the event. For many of the job seekers, NYPA was
22 the first touch point and potential opportunity to
23 join a clean energy transition. They played a
24 pivotal role of potential employees and educators.
25 NYPA knows the Bronx deserves a chance for change,

1 and changing that narrative and developing its
2 future. I respect that. They have been open to
3 new ideas from new places, and that they will
4 deploy \$25 million for the Clean Energy Workforce
5 Development.

6 I'm in the work of making this change
7 happen. While I want NYPA to do more, I'm
8 thankful they are beside me doing this work as
9 well. It takes a coalition, a village, and a
10 community across sectors and stakeholders to build
11 a new, inclusive picture and future. Thank you,
12 Philip Ellison and the NYPA team.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, George.

14 Our next speaker is Nelly Tournaki,
15 followed by Illiana Quinones. Nelly.

16 NELLY TOURNAKI: Hi. I'm Nelly Tournaki,
17 Professor of Education at the College of Staten
18 Island, CUNY.

19 I want to speak about the excitement that
20 we feel knowing that the offshore wind project
21 will be hosted on Staten Island. This project is
22 long overdue. It was supposed to start in 2023.
23 Now, we hear that it will begin in 2026. We want
24 NYPA to take over this project and move it
25 forward. It can be produced in -- not 3.5, not 9,

1 but up to 15 gigawatts of power by 2030, while it
2 provides many union jobs for our residents and
3 including our college graduates.

4 But it's not only the offshore wind
5 project. Staten Island has a lot of land which is
6 zoned M1 and M3, which is located near
7 transportation infrastructure. These zoned areas
8 are concentrated in the historic manufacturing
9 core of the borough and are currently
10 underutilized, making them good candidates for
11 larger-scale renewable infrastructure production.

12 If NYPA undertakes such projects, there
13 will be a benefit to the forgotten borough, and
14 can make it the epicenter of renewable energy.

15 And finally, on Staten Island, we have the
16 huge Amazon warehouse. We all know that such
17 corporations get big energy discounts. We demand
18 that these discounts get redirected to capitalize
19 renewable energy projects, or reduce New York's
20 skyrocketing energy bills.

21 The students and faculty of the College of
22 Staten Island, and the residents of Staten Island
23 deserve a future. Thank you for listening.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Nelly.

25 Our next speaker is (inaudible) Illiana,

1 followed by Asher Cohen. Illiana.

2 ILLIANA QUINONES: Hello. I'm a junior in
3 college in East Harlem, and I'm here to urge
4 Justin Driscoll and Governor Hochul to build at
5 least 15 gigawatts of renewables by 2030.

6 I'm currently studying environmental
7 science and have learned not only how damaging
8 non-renewables are for the planet while also how
9 we are entering a reality where energy sources
10 like coal and oil will simply not be an option.

11 It begs the question then of why we can
12 hang on to the old ways of non-renewable energy
13 when clearly the future will be run on clean
14 energy.

15 This future is clear from the fact that
16 building these public renewables would lower the
17 utility bills of many New Yorkers who are
18 suffering from skyrocketing utility bills
19 currently. As a state, we would be a model for
20 how to successfully implement renewable energy and
21 boost the economy through green union jobs rather
22 than only meeting 44 out of the 70-percent of
23 renewable energy that is required by the CLCPA by
24 2030, which is what we're currently on track for.

25 As a young person in the city who has no

1 plans of leaving, I want to see a sustainable
2 future that benefits all New Yorkers rather than
3 living in a path that ultimately benefits no one.

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Illiana.

5 Our next speaker is Asher Cohen, followed
6 by Lila Goldstein. Asher.

7 ASHER COHEN: Hi. Thank you very much for
8 this opportunity and for being with us today.

9 My name is Asher Cohen, and I'm a senior in
10 public high school and here as a representative of
11 350 Brooklyn, the students of Beacon High School,
12 and Ms. Roya Durrant's (phonetic) Environmental
13 Science Class.

14 A friend and I were in Prospect Park when
15 the fires there began. We originally thought that
16 some sort of festival was going on before
17 realizing that it was not, in fact, the lights we
18 were seeing, but flames.

19 The following day, the air in my
20 neighborhood tasted like smoke. And while I was
21 talking to a friend, she said something that stuck
22 with me. She said, Well, it's nothing that we
23 haven't seen before; at least the sky isn't orange
24 this time.

25 The fact that we have allowed these events

1 to become commonplace is shameful. My coworker
2 and her parents live right across the street from
3 Inwood Park, and on the day of the fire there, she
4 spent every three seconds checking the news to
5 make sure that her house had not burned down.

6 Her mother has COPD, and because of the
7 severity of the smoke and fumes was not only
8 unsafe outside of her home but inside it as well.

9 The work that NYPA has been able to do is a
10 great start, but our state as a whole is still
11 behaving as though climate change is a problem
12 only for the future. As long as we continue to do
13 so, we are telling New Yorkers with respiratory
14 conditions and the victims of natural disasters,
15 to either leave their homes or, frankly, to just
16 roll over and die.

17 Meeting the goals of the Climate Leadership
18 and Community Protection Act cannot be
19 aspirational when it is already clear that failing
20 to do so guarantees human suffering and an
21 unlivable environment for generations to come.

22 There is a strange irony in my friend and
23 me beginning to plan for the future life after
24 graduation when our own state is looking more and
25 more like an environmental war zone because the

1 consequences for burning fossil fuels are not just
2 coming. They are already here.

3 For the present and future of every young
4 person in our state, the vulnerable citizens with
5 respiratory conditions, and all of New York City,
6 we are asking NYPA to commit to building 15
7 gigawatts of renewable energy in the next five
8 years. Thank you very much.

9 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, (inaudible)
10 followed by Sigmund Shen (inaudible). Lila.

11 LILA GOLDSTEIN: Good evening, everyone.
12 Thank you for holding this hearing and for all the
13 work that you've already started on.

14 My name is Lila Goldstein, and I'm a
15 sophomore at Marymount Manhattan College. I'm
16 from Southern California, and we don't have
17 seasons, really. So, before moving to New York in
18 August of 2023, I haven't experienced fall or
19 winter. Despite that, even I know that this
20 weather is abnormal. I look around at droughts
21 and brush fires, which I myself have been
22 evacuated from, and it's like I never left.

23 Trees should not be regrowing their leaves
24 because they're confused by the heat. This region
25 of the U.S. should not be experiencing ramped

1 wildfires. It should not be 80 degrees in
2 November.

3 But there is a solution, your own plan
4 implemented to its full potential. Clearly, NYPA
5 agreed to Build Public Renewables Act to build
6 enough public renewables to ensure that we meet
7 the targets of 70 percent renewable energy by 2030
8 and 100 percent by 2040.

9 So, what's going on, guys? Why are we only
10 planning 3.5 gigawatts when we should be building
11 15? Why are we missing out on thousands of union
12 jobs that could benefit the countless New Yorkers
13 that are struggling? Why are we letting our city
14 and state students study on decrepit campuses that
15 could benefit from your action?

16 You call your plan ambitious. What I would
17 call it is patting yourself on the back for barely
18 over or a fifth of what you promised. We do not
19 have time for compromises anymore. Do what you
20 promised and build the infrastructure required to
21 have 70 percent renewable energy by 2030 instead
22 of just talking about how great it is to even
23 consider it. Include a detailed plan for your
24 plans that are poisoning our air. Give aid to our
25 students and decarbonize campuses.

1 And finally, it seems like you want public
2 opinion, but this is the only hearing for all of
3 New York City, a city of millions. Actions are
4 far louder than words. New York City is a shiny
5 beacon for many. Historically, the city has been
6 an aspirational place for people to live.

7 We can be better than this. Let's continue
8 that legacy and not wait around for someone else
9 to be better. You can take pride in achieving
10 this. When you do it, and when you do it to its
11 fullest potential of 15 gigawatts. Thank you.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible). Sigmund.

13 SIGMUND SHEN: Good evening, and thank you.
14 Sigmund Shen, Professional Staff Congress.

15 You know, we hear a lot about petrostates
16 and the U.N. climate talks, but did you know the
17 United States is the biggest exporter of oil and
18 natural gas in the world? We're bigger than
19 Russia. Did you know the GDP of New York State
20 alone is the 10th largest in the world, even ahead
21 of Russia, which is 11?

22 With the economic power of this state, we
23 have a chance to create union jobs so we don't
24 turn into Venezuela, clear the air so we don't
25 turn into Delhi, and spare the ice caps so we

1 don't turn into Atlantis. Will we use this power
2 or freeze up like a deer in the headlights?

3 There was this old TV show called Buck
4 Rogers in the 25th Century. In one episode, our
5 hero tricks a space vampire into sending their
6 spaceship on a direct course to the heart of the
7 sun. When the vampire realizes he is running out
8 of time to change course, he does nothing but
9 glare at his plot and cower in terror. This
10 hammy-B-movie-performative-overacting-couple with
11 the absurd refusal to do anything to get out of
12 the situation reminds me of Mr. Driscoll's plan to
13 squander two more years installing a grand total
14 of 3.5 gigawatts of renewables.

15 I cannot see Mr. Driscoll here, and I did
16 not hear in today's presentation any
17 acknowledgment of the state law, which my union
18 fought to pass, which sets goals 70 percent by
19 2030, about 30 gigawatts in only six years. If
20 you think that sounds hard, wait until you see how
21 hard it is after the next two years of this
22 proposed tranche.

23 Trump's election, the fossil fuel industry,
24 the climate crisis itself all are real reasons for
25 terror, but they are also all the reasons we need

1 for action.

2 And why wouldn't we take action when we
3 have the law on our side in the 10th largest
4 economy in the world? Holocaust historian Timothy
5 Snyder warned us that, quote, Most of the power of
6 authoritarianism is freely given.

7 In times like these, individuals to think
8 ahead what a more requested government will want
9 and then offer themselves without being asked.
10 It's not just Mr. Driscoll's two-year delay that
11 would be freely given; it's our future. It's our
12 students' future. It's my 11-year-old daughter's
13 future.

14 We need 15 gigawatts to realistically
15 support the state's own climate law. A real plan,
16 not an effective two-year delay that sounds like
17 it's based on right paralysis or wishful math, but
18 one that could be reasonably expected to keep the
19 state on course in the six years we have left
20 before the all-important benchmark of 2030. If,
21 as not your president, Mr. Driscoll is ready to
22 get to work on supporting the law, we stand by
23 you. But if you are not, do not expect us to sit
24 by cowering in performative terror. As the years
25 tick by, our children breathe polluted air, and

1 the planet burns while Amazon and your other
2 corporate friends rake in billions of dollars in
3 profits.

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible). Our next
5 speaker (inaudible). John. John Close.

6 Our next speaker is Allison Kirsch.
7 Allison.

8 Zachary Seigle. Zachary. Max Becker.
9 Max. Daniel Peloraro. Daniel. Max. Max Becker,
10 followed by Daniel Peloraro. Max.

11 MAX BECKER: Hello. Thanks for being here,
12 and for presenting this very inadequate plan. My
13 name is Max. I'm born and raised in Brooklyn, a
14 product of New York City Public Schools.
15 (Inaudible) Really great to see all these high
16 school and younger students out here. It's really
17 incredible.

18 I've been paying Con Ed bills for 15 years.
19 They keep going up and up and up. It seems this
20 new administration coming in, it's easy to feel
21 hopeless in the face of this climate crisis. But
22 you guys have an opportunity here at NYPA to give
23 people some hope and provide a way forward.

24 The BPRA is a good step. And the '23-'24
25 budget gives us a path. But the plan, as drafted,

1 is not enough. 3.5 gigawatts is not going to get
2 us to where we need. NYPA's own report shows that
3 we're only 44 percent on track, as people have
4 noted, so we're already way behind, and we can't
5 afford to keep kicking the can down the road.

6 It's great to hear all these jobs will be
7 union jobs as required. I don't know if anyone's
8 noted the AFL-CIO and the Building Trade Council
9 have also called for 15 gigawatts. They'll create
10 25,000 union jobs. We need to break Con Ed's
11 monopoly on the power in this city in particular.
12 It's good that there's more tranches of work
13 planned, but if there is a more ambitious secret
14 plan to get to 15 gigawatts, NYPA should publish
15 it, I think.

16 (Inaudible) New York should be leading the
17 country in renewables. I think this is a great
18 opportunity to do it. And you can see people are
19 behind you, so the ball is in your court.

20 And if 3.5 gigawatts is all that Justin
21 Driscoll can do, then we should find someone who
22 can do better.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you (inaudible).
24 Our next speaker is Daniel Peloraro followed by
25 Andrea Johnson. Daniel.

1 DANIEL PELORARO: Good evening. My name is
2 Daniel Peloraro. I guess the -- (inaudible) my
3 penmanship wasn't particularly great on the form.
4 That's okay.

5 I'm a lifelong resident of New York City, a
6 CUNY graduate twice over, and a proud child of two
7 CUNY and SUNY graduates as well.

8 I'm a historian by training, so I'm going
9 to give a couple of antecedents here: 200 years
10 ago, New York State completed the Erie Canal. I
11 imagine NYPA, the Canal Corporation, will be
12 celebrating that next year, so -- I hope they
13 will.

14 That (inaudible) New York, the Empire
15 State. It was a massive amount of public
16 investment, which was at one point considered De
17 Witt Clinton's ditch. It was once considered a
18 historical folly, but it had a massive return on
19 investment.

20 This plan is squandering the opportunity
21 for a massive return on investment. There's been
22 a lot of citations of the environmental factors at
23 play. There's been a lot of citation of the
24 opportunity at play.

25 I'm going to put it in language that

1 Mr. Driscoll and Governor Hochul might be able to
2 better understand. First off, think of the
3 massive scads of money that is going to be made
4 from 15 megawatts instead of 3.5, when it comes to
5 25,000 union jobs. When it comes to the tax
6 credit that comes from 15,000 union jobs. Then
7 also comes from not having to spend so much money
8 for disasters that comes from the climate crisis.

9 90 years ago, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in
10 the face of the Great Depression, called for
11 action and action now in his first inaugural
12 address. And that's what we're asking for here
13 today. What we're asking for today is for greater
14 action from NYPA beyond the 3.5 gigawatts in the
15 current plan.

16 15 gigawatts and working with other public
17 authorities and institutions, CUNY, SUNY,
18 (inaudible) Dormitory Authority, and others who
19 allow for greater economic return on investment.
20 And quite frankly, greater political power as New
21 York State becomes a hub for climate justice,
22 climate energy, for green jobs, more people coming
23 to the state, a greater political base.

24 And in the words of Dr. Peter Venkman and
25 Ghostbusters, millions of eligible voters will be

1 grateful at the legacy brought by Governor Hochul
2 200 years after De Witt Clinton and the Erie
3 Canal. Thank you.

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Andrea
5 (inaudible) followed by Ken Gavery. Andrea.

6 ANDREA JOHNSON: Hello, my name is Andrea
7 Johnson. I'm a landscape designer and a member of
8 PSA.

9 I would like to focus my testimony on the
10 tremendous opportunity public land offered in New
11 York State. I'll echo others that the proposal
12 for 3.5 gigawatts of renewables not only fails to
13 meet the law's mandate but also allocates less
14 than 6 percent of that capacity to be sited on
15 public lands or institutions. Public lands are
16 among our most valuable and versatile resources
17 for advancing climate action, and NYPA should
18 prioritize their use of a more ambitious plan to
19 achieve at least 15 gigawatts of renewable energy
20 by 2030.

21 Public lands can support multifunctional
22 landscapes that go beyond the mere energy
23 production. Renewal projects and partnerships
24 with public agencies can strengthen NYPA's
25 relationships with existing customers, be coupled

1 with recreational and green space design as
2 demonstrated at NYPA's existing hydroelectric
3 facilities, remediate contaminated lands, and
4 provide jobs and affordable electricity for
5 frontline communities.

6 With 64 SUNY and 25 CUNY campuses spread
7 across the state, their combined land area of over
8 43,000 acres, equivalent to two Mannhattans,
9 presents an enormous opportunity. Parking lots
10 alone account for 15 percent of this area, for
11 roughly 6,500 acres. Considering an average of
12 0.25 megawatts generated from one acre, solar
13 canopies over these parking lots could generate up
14 to 1.5 gigawatts of energy.

15 This number doesn't even account for
16 rooftop installation surrounding undeveloped
17 greenfields or building efficiency upgrades.
18 Furthermore, the majority, 58 out of 87 campuses,
19 are situated directly within or adjacent to census
20 tracks designated as disadvantaged by the New York
21 State Climate Justice Working Group.

22 Creating energy hubs across SUNY and CUNY
23 would provide energy redundancy to surrounding
24 communities, many of whom are disproportionately
25 impacted by power outages while meeting legal

1 mandates under the CLCPA.

2 Another -- another critical pathway is
3 converting state-owned brownfields, inactive
4 mines, and decommissioned landfills into renewable
5 energy hubs. These public lands total over
6 144,000 acres, utilizing just 10 percent of this
7 land for solar to generate 3.6 gigawatts of
8 energy, doubling NYPA's current proposed capacity.

9 The NYSERDA 12-megawatt Benson mines solar
10 project on a former iron-ore tailings pile is a
11 proven example of how these sites can be
12 successfully repurposed for clean energy.

13 Brightfield projects will also receive
14 considerably more community support and less
15 backlash compared to utility-scale projects on
16 agricultural or ecologically sensitive lands.

17 Together, CUNY and SUNY campuses and
18 state-owned contaminated sites alone can generate
19 at a minimum 5.1 gigawatts of solar energy, moving
20 us far closer to the 15-gigawatt goal.

21 Beyond these, there are an array of public
22 lands that we urge NYPA to continue to explore
23 more -- more robustly. Schools in NYCHA
24 properties, closed prisons, MTA train depots,
25 vacant malls, and commercial buildings now on

1 state and municipal-owned lands.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

3 ANDREA JOHNSON: We encourage NYPA to work
4 with --

5 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Jen
6 Gaboury. Jen.

7 JEN GABOURY: Hi. I'm Jen Gaboury. I'm
8 (inaudible) president of the (inaudible) CUNY.

9 I'm really happy to be here today, and like
10 so many of my CUNY colleagues, welcome you to John
11 Jay College. So many of us have come out and are
12 here tonight to implore NYPA leadership and
13 Governor Hochul to be bolder, and to fulfill the
14 law and supply 15 gigawatts of power.

15 The plan for 3.5 gigawatts lacks urgency
16 and seriousness, given the climate injustice
17 crisis that we face. Like so many people, I've
18 been really inspired here tonight to see so many
19 people talk about their desire to site these
20 projects on CUNY and SUNY campuses. I've been
21 taking notes across the evening, and I see you
22 have been too.

23 Part of our problem is that we here on our
24 25 CUNY campuses, we are poor neighbors. We are
25 polluters. And we want to be leaders, and we want

1 to be good neighbors. We don't want to make the
2 communities in which we are site dirtier and
3 unhealthier. And that is, unfortunately, the
4 situation that we are in.

5 We want you to be using every bit of public
6 land possible, and that is not what we currently
7 see in this plan. And I really strongly encourage
8 you to consider and look at the space available on
9 CUNY and SUNY campuses.

10 Part of what confuses me about the -- the
11 plan and the time in which you have been working
12 since the BPRA has passed is that at my college,
13 at Hunter College, we are about to move about
14 hundreds of people out of a site at 25th Street
15 and 1st Avenue, our Brookdale campus, and we're
16 about to knock down a bunch of new deal
17 (inaudible) developments, and we're going to
18 rebuild there, ironically, a center for science,
19 innovation, and public health. It's going to have
20 -- it's going to have a public-private partnership
21 that's going to have health and human hospitals,
22 CUNY, and a bunch of private science companies.

23 Is it a site for green energy currently?
24 No, it is not. I -- I can't really understand why
25 it was the case that the Sparc site at (inaudible)

1 Street is not a site that you have developed when
2 it was the plan for it (inaudible) exactly across
3 the (inaudible) which you have been citing green
4 energy projects.

5 I live in Southern Brooklyn, and so as I
6 was preparing my testimony last night, I was
7 really excited to see, in fact, something on your
8 website that jumped out at me. A plan to see that
9 Fort Hamilton Army Base had entered into an MOU,
10 but instead, what it said was, it was a plan to
11 explore energy efficiency. That lacks urgency.

12 Do you know what Fort Hamilton abuts
13 against? The ocean. Why is it not a site for
14 wind power? We are at a college of criminal
15 justice right now; please follow the law.

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible) followed by
17 Karen Nundower. Matt.

18 MATT: How's everyone still doing? You
19 still got energy? Thank you to our NYPA friends.
20 How are you guys doing up there? Feel good? All
21 right. Can we keep our heads up and our signs up
22 if we've got them?

23 My name is Matt Haz. (Phonetic). And I'm
24 from Manhattan. I'm a third-generation
25 Manhattanite. I went to public school. I'm a

1 graduate of Staten High School. I am a member of
2 the DSA Ecosocialists. Thank you very much.

3 Yeah. Let's hear it. And I was strongly
4 involved in the fight for the Bold Public
5 Renewables Act. I did go to jail for it. I would
6 be happy to do it again.

7 That's not a threat. That's just a sense
8 of my -- just to be -- to make it clear that is
9 not a threat. That is just me clarifying the
10 intensity of my commitment to this cause. Okay.

11 On a recent note, a time a crisis has hit
12 me very personally. My father lives in Greenwood
13 Lakes, just above the New York-New Jersey border,
14 where there's a massive wildfire over the past
15 week. The fire's rage came very close to burning
16 my family's house down. And by the grace of God,
17 stopped across the street from my family's home.

18 And I spent days believing that we were
19 about to lose everything. And when I found out
20 that my father, who had evacuated and couldn't
21 give me any more news overnight, was safe and had
22 come home to find no power but his home somehow
23 miraculously still standing.

24 I did not feel relief. I felt dread
25 because I realized that this was the smallest

1 natural disaster that I will experience for the
2 rest of my life. That feels like the beginning of
3 a turning point and not something that was saved
4 at the last minute where we're making a
5 turnaround.

6 We are not at a point where we can save
7 everything. We are in a phase of crisis
8 management at this point. This is not 1998 or
9 1970, where we have a green -- a -- a wide-eyed
10 idea of how we might save the future. I'm
11 serious. This is a crisis and (inaudible)
12 management at this point. And we need to be
13 realistic about it.

14 There's a good thing, which is that
15 everyone in this room has something in common,
16 including our members of NYPA on stage. And
17 that's why we know that 3.5 gigawatts is not
18 enough to solve that problem.

19 And with all due respect, the only
20 difference is that I have the freedom to say that.
21 And I'm so sorry that you don't. But if I showed
22 up at my job and gave a big presentation about how
23 I had a huge plan to complete 23 percent of my
24 work that I was legally required to complete, I
25 would lose that job.

1 I'm not suggesting that you do unless this
2 is Kathy Hochul listening in the future; I'm
3 suggesting that you recognize that this crisis is
4 not a good idea -- 15 gigawatts is not a good
5 idea. It is the bare minimum for survival. Build
6 16 gigawatts, for God's sake.

7 You can't give us 23 percent of the bare
8 minimum for survival. It's like we told you we
9 need insulin to live, and you gave us a picture of
10 insulin. We are at a crisis point in the
11 climate -- we are a state that can be a climate
12 leader. We are facing an administration that will
13 end any real response to climate change. We need
14 to take action. Not yesterday, 10 years ago, and
15 we need to take action now like we are living in
16 the future. Like we are living in the present.

17 And Kathy Hochul, if you're listening in
18 the future, just (inaudible) engine --

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

20 MATT HAZ: -- please, for the love of God.
21 (Inaudible) --

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible). Gareth.

23 GARETH CHASE: Hi, my name is Gareth. I'm
24 a climate activist, member of Public Power New
25 York. And I live in Brooklyn, right between two

1 peaker power plants owned by NYPA.

2 The Power Authority Act, which created NYPA
3 and since the mandate begins with a declaration of
4 the need for dependable electric power and the
5 preservation of New York's waterways.

6 The Act explicitly states time and time
7 again that these needs are in the interests of the
8 people of New York and the United States. The
9 current plan of 3.5 gigawatts does not do enough
10 for the people of New York. It forsakes the
11 urgent needs of New Yorkers impacted by the
12 climate crisis and peaker plants.

13 NYPA has an AA-bond rating almost on par
14 with the U.S. Treasury. Now is the time to
15 leverage that rating and finance 15 gigawatts of
16 power. It's not in the interest of the people to
17 prioritize that rating over 15 gigawatts when the
18 result is climate crisis. It is the poisoning of
19 our waterways and our air. It is the burning of
20 our forests and our planet.

21 In a NYPA board meeting earlier this year,
22 it was stated that the 3.5 gigawatts could see a
23 project attrition rate as high as 80 percent,
24 which would result in less than 1 gigawatt of
25 renewable energy. That number doesn't even come

1 close to the goals mandated by the CLCPA and BPRA.

2 NYPA's mandate is to build for New Yorkers,
3 not investors, not politicians, not massive
4 corporations like Amazon, Citibank, warmongers,
5 like (inaudible).

6 I've had the opportunity to talk with
7 thousands of New Yorkers about climate and hear
8 their concerns, concerns that I share, and I'm
9 sure everyone in this room shares about a rapidly
10 warming planet and peaker plants that are
11 polluting our neighborhoods.

12 The people of New York need clean energy.
13 We need green union jobs. We need a livable
14 future. And NYPA can build that future. NYPA can
15 lead the nation on climate. We need to build 15
16 gigawatts.

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: (Inaudible) Stella,
18 followed by Sergie Ross. Stella.

19 STELLA JIO: Hello. Sorry.

20 Thank you for being here. My name is
21 Stella. I'm a third-generation Manhattanite.
22 (Inaudible). And I work in a daycare. The kids I
23 work with are one and two. Each day, we do
24 whatever we can to give them even a little bit of
25 time outside because we've done our research, and

1 it is crucial -- that crucial for their
2 development.

3 The effect of the decision that you have in
4 front of you runs as deep as the lifetime health
5 of the minds and bodies of New Yorkers and has
6 implications for people everywhere, today and into
7 eternity. My kids will remember what -- what the
8 world used to look like, and they will remember
9 who was responsible. I will tell them.

10 Your power matters. It is the
11 responsibility of everyone in this world to not
12 create harm for other people. Your effect is
13 large and it is polar. You can do the right
14 thing, and you can be part of a positive example
15 that builds positive energy for other people to
16 take that step, for other people to take those
17 jobs, and for other people to continue that
18 momentum, or you can be part of the problem.

19 Part of the problem that we all need saving
20 from. It doesn't matter if you're rich. It
21 doesn't matter if you're powerful. Climate change
22 is coming, and it does not discriminate. 15
23 gigawatts of renewables by 2030. If not, you are
24 breaking the law.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Stella.

1 Our next speaker is Susie, followed by
2 Jenna Tipaldo. Susie.

3 JENNA TIPALDO: Hello. Thank you for your
4 time and your service to New York State. I'm a
5 PhD candidate at the CUNY Graduate School of
6 Public Health studying environmental health and a
7 proud PSC-CUNY member.

8 I grew up in Rockaway, Queens, and I'm a
9 product of public schools from Pre-K to PhD. It's
10 awesome to see so many students and educators
11 testify here today.

12 As a teenager, my home was flooded and
13 destroyed by Hurricane Sandy, and I was displaced
14 from my home and my school for months. I watched
15 my community struggle to recover, especially
16 people who were low-income and were people of
17 color, which eventually led me to study how
18 environmental and climate change-related hazards
19 threaten health.

20 Climate change is a massive threat to
21 public health in many ways, as noted by the New
22 York State Climate Impacts Assessment and the New
23 York City Panel on Climate Change -- Change's
24 recent assessment, on which I was a fellow and a
25 co-author.

1 Timely action is needed to reduce
2 emissions, to reduce the future impacts of climate
3 change, and to meet the goals of the CLCPA. We
4 need to expedite the transition to renewable
5 energy while considering the impacts on
6 communities and protecting workers.

7 This decade alone, New York City has seen
8 unprecedented rainfall and flash flooding, orange
9 skies from wildfires, smoke, and now drought
10 sparking -- sparking wildfires in our backyards,
11 reversing many of the gains we've made in
12 improving air quality.

13 Still, peaker plants within the city
14 pollute areas that New York State has designated
15 as disadvantaged communities, and they make it
16 hard for people like me with asthma to breathe, as
17 we've heard already here tonight.

18 Please add a detailed plan for shutting
19 down NYPA's peaker plants as required by law by
20 2030.

21 I also teach at CUNY Hunter College, and I
22 did my undergraduate degree there. CUNY buildings
23 are crumbling and need basic upgrades as well as
24 more sophisticated retrofits to make them more
25 energy efficient, more comfortable

1 temperature-wise, and free of mold, which we know
2 is hazardous to health.

3 My classroom doesn't have any ventilation,
4 and we had a gas leak a few weeks ago, which was
5 disruptive to learning. And Hunter College puts
6 buckets in the hallway to catch roof leaks. Yeah,
7 I know.

8 Please plan to build more renewable energy
9 capacity sitings at CUNY, including the new Hunter
10 College campus that Jen has mentioned before,
11 including 15 gigawatts of renewables by 2030.
12 Please include New York City and public school --
13 public schools in our plan so that we can
14 decarbonize CUNY and SUNY.

15 We support you. Thank you for your efforts
16 thus far and for your time and consideration of
17 these comments tonight. Thank you.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, (inaudible)
19 Rachel.

20 RACHEL YOUENS: Hello. Good evening.
21 Thank you for hosting this meeting and for
22 listening to the citizenry. I'm here to represent
23 Yael Amron, who is a graduate student in the
24 Sustainability and Urban Environment Program at
25 City College. I am an adjunct faculty at

1 LaGuardia Community College, CUNY, and a PSC
2 member.

3 Ms. Amron says that she is also a
4 professional who has worked in the sustainability
5 sector for 10 years. NYPA, unlike National Grid,
6 Con Edison, and PSEG, does not offer rebates to
7 its utility users to offset the costs of
8 efficiency projects. Unfortunately, many of these
9 users are public schools and universities who have
10 the smallest budgets for efficiency projects, and
11 therefore, they cannot implement upgrades within
12 their aging building stock, which are also some of
13 the worst performing in terms of carbon emissions
14 when you look at their benchmark and data. Money
15 must be allocated towards the schools like City
16 College and all of the 25 city universities and
17 other public schools to allow for projects to move
18 ahead. And I think you've been listening to some
19 very interesting advice from other faculty from
20 public universities tonight.

21 NYPA does not have an excuse anymore to
22 continue to no longer provide funding for this
23 type of work. It affects students, staff, and the
24 community and residents living around it.

25 We are asking for a budget to be given to

1 these schools to complete projects so that like
2 many -- so that like many of the private schools
3 in New York State, they too can become efficient.

4 And I think you've heard really wonderful
5 data about all that the public universities can
6 offer. The PSC helped pass, you know -- it's
7 really desirous to decarbonize the public
8 universities. We've been working and soldiering
9 with our students under austerity for many years.
10 So, please give us -- get us into the saddle to
11 help our schools recover, and thank you.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, (inaudible).

13 It is now after 8 o'clock, so we have to
14 close this public hearing session. There are many
15 of you that we did not get to hear from tonight.
16 Your names are in front of me. Please go to
17 NYPA's website, leave your comments in our web
18 form, use our email address
19 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. And on your way
20 out, there are QR codes on the sign-in tables to
21 get you to that web page even faster.

22 Please don't hesitate to use those
23 offerings. Put your comments in so that we can
24 read them and they can be added to all the voices
25 that came to our hearings. Thank you so much.

1 (Thereupon, at 8:10 p.m., this public
2 hearing was adjourned.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
certify that I was authorized to and did report the
foregoing proceedings, and that the transcript is a true
and correct transcription of my notes of the proceedings.

Dated November 27th, 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY
PUBLIC MEETING
VIRTUAL

November 21, 2024

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

(Morning session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Alexis Harley, Chief Risk and Resilience

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Cecily Morris

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Peter McCartt (Energy of Westchester County.)	35
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1 ALEXIS HARLEY: Good morning. And welcome
2 to our first virtual public hearing. I also want
3 to point out today, we have visitors joining us
4 from the Hawkins Point Visitor Center in Massena,
5 along with our NYPA trustee, Cecily Morris. Thank
6 you for coming and participating.

7 My name is Alexis Harley, and I'm the Chief
8 Risk and Resilience Officer at NYPA. Although
9 it's not in my title, I also oversee the
10 sustainability organization, so my role entails
11 helping NYPA to manage risks, ensure we are
12 resilient in the face of change, and also that
13 we're integrating sustainability into our work.
14 But really, my focus is on connecting pieces
15 together, balancing multiple priorities, and
16 making sure we are going in eyes wide open as we
17 work to support the clean energy transition in New
18 York State.

19 So, I'm really excited to be part of the
20 strategic planning process for renewables, and I'm
21 really looking forward to hearing your viewpoints
22 today.

23 We are here because NYPA issued its draft
24 renewables Strategic Plan on October 8th and
25 scheduled 12 public hearings across the state to

1 solicit input from interested parties regarding
2 our draft plan. We will begin today by providing
3 some common context for you.

4 We will begin by showing you a short video
5 about the New York Power Authority. We'll provide
6 you some overview of NYPA's expanded authority,
7 and then we're also going to highlight the key
8 elements of our draft Strategic Plan.

9 Of course, today, we are actually gathered
10 to hear from you, so after those presentations, we
11 will invite those who signed up to give a public
12 comment, which will be recorded, transcribed, and
13 entered into the public record.

14 With that, let's jump right in and roll to
15 the video so that you can get to know NYPA better.

16 (The video played as follows:

17 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
18 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
19 the solution for New York State and its residents,
20 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
21 opportunities.

22 Through customer partnerships, energy
23 solutions, and the responsible supply of
24 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
25 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically

1 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

2 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
3 serving customers in local and state governments,
4 industry, large and small businesses, and
5 nonprofit organizations.

6 The power for these customers is equal to
7 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
8 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
9 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
10 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
11 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
12 hydropower.

13 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
14 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
15 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
16 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
17 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

18 As we bring power to customers, we also
19 actively ensure people from our host communities
20 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
21 from our clean energy economy.

22 We work on projects across the state to
23 increase energy efficiency, improve
24 infrastructure, and support economic development.

25 Our hydropower projects support more than

1 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
2 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
3 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
4 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
5 the communities we serve.

6 Our economic and community focus extends to
7 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
8 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
9 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
10 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
11 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
12 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
13 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
14 from around the world.

15 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
16 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
17 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
18 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
19 years to come.

20 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
21 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
22 energy deployment and support other state
23 priorities. This expanded authority will
24 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
25 New York State, support expanded workforce

1 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
2 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
3 Energy Access and Community Help Program to
4 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
5 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned
6 utilities.

7 Additionally, we will lead the state's
8 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
9 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
10 production at our small natural gas power plants
11 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
12 certain reliability and environmental conditions
13 are met.

14 We are also developing action plans to
15 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
16 carbon-emitting facilities.

17 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
18 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
19 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
20 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
21 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
22 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
23 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
24 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

25 (End of the video.)

1 ALEXIS HARLEY: As you saw, NYPA is the
2 largest state public power organization in the
3 nation. We operate 17 generating facilities and
4 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission.
5 More than 80 percent of the electricity that NYPA
6 produces is clean, renewable hydropower. And we
7 believe we're in a unique position to do even more
8 to advance the state's bold clean energy goals.

9 While today, our focus is on our draft
10 renewables plan, I also want to point out that as
11 NYPA builds, owns, and operates new renewables
12 projects, we need to have an electric grid that it
13 can connect to, one that's not clogged with
14 bottlenecks that would prevent the clean energy
15 from getting to where it needs to go. So, that's
16 why NYPA is pursuing the most ambitious
17 transformation of New York's electric grid in more
18 than 40 years, and the state is implementing new
19 procedures to ensure transmission can be sited,
20 connected, and built.

21 NYPA owns one-third of the state's
22 high-voltage transmission, and we continue to make
23 major investments to build a more flexible
24 21st-century electric grid with significantly
25 greater access to a mix of carbon-free energy

1 sources. We also know that a modernized grid will
2 be much more resilient, and that's part of the
3 work we're doing today to support the projects of
4 tomorrow.

5 In the past two years, NYPA has engaged in
6 a variety of public engagement pathways to inform
7 the foundation for building new renewables
8 resources as authorized by the 2023-2024 Enacted
9 State Budget.

10 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
11 build renewables subject to a Strategic Plan,
12 which must be approved by its trustees following a
13 public comment period, as we are today, and at
14 least three public hearings.

15 This is our ninth public hearing in New
16 York State, and we have three additional hearings
17 that will be completed by the end of next week.
18 And that's because we felt it was important to
19 have more hearings to enable us to hear from more
20 of you.

21 Like we did in 2023 and 2024 with our
22 conferral process, we welcome public engagement
23 and feedback as we shape our Strategic Plan to
24 ensure we're building more renewables in the
25 state.

1 I know many of you came to speak about that
2 plan, and so now I'm going to turn the program
3 over to Vennela Yadhati to give a brief overview
4 of the plan details.

5 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Alexis.

6 Good morning, everybody. I'm Vennela
7 Yadhati, Vice President for NYPA Renewable Project
8 Development, leading this effort to build new
9 renewable generation and energy storage projects
10 across the state.

11 We're in the middle of what could be one of
12 the most significant eras in NYPA's 93-year
13 history. Last May, as part of the 2023-24 Enacted
14 State Budget, lawmakers entrusted us with new
15 expanded authority, new capabilities, new
16 responsibilities, but, more importantly, new
17 opportunities to further serve New Yorkers in a
18 clean energy space.

19 So, on to that, first, the expanded
20 authority gave NYPA the ability to build, own, and
21 operate renewable generation projects like solar,
22 wind, and battery energy storage systems to help
23 the state achieve the full renewable energy
24 objectives outlined in the Climate Act.

25 My team at NYPA has identified a first

1 tranche of 40 such projects spread across every
2 region of the state. And while the state budget
3 did not require NYPA to meet any specific
4 threshold in our draft Strategic Plan, these 40
5 projects represent a total capacity exceeding 3.5
6 gigawatts.

7 Now, how much is 3.5 gigawatts? That's the
8 same as 10 percent of the electric load for all of
9 New York City. I know that doesn't sound like
10 much, but it is actually what it takes to power
11 whole cities like Zurich, Helsinki, or Reykjavik.
12 Closer-to-home examples, Boulder, Colorado, Reno,
13 Nevada, or Austin, Texas.

14 And these 40 projects are just the
15 beginning of our commitment to expand our
16 portfolio of delivering clean, reliable energy to
17 every corner of New York.

18 Right now, NYPA is doing full due diligence
19 on each project to determine whether or not they
20 are the best fit for New Yorkers. We want to
21 ensure these projects truly benefit our
22 communities and therefore, belong in NYPA's
23 renewable energy portfolio.

24 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's
25 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment

1 in New York. We also want to explore meaningful
2 partnerships to support the state's equitable and
3 efficient transition to a clean energy future.

4 This first tranche includes a mix of NYPA's
5 own greenfield projects and co-developed
6 initiatives, where we will partner with the
7 private sector to combine our complementary skills
8 and strengths to jointly develop, construct, own,
9 and operate these projects together.

10 It also includes a variety of sizes of
11 products, both large, which is a predominant
12 portion of our portfolio reflecting the current
13 market conditions in New York State for
14 renewables, and small distributors scale projects.
15 More importantly, the community solar projects
16 that local communities can touch and feel and see
17 tangible assets in their own backyards.

18 It includes a variety of technologies, such
19 as solar PV, land-based wind, and battery energy
20 storage systems, and a variety of locations and
21 site conditions. Half of our own greenfield
22 portfolio includes projects that repurpose former
23 landfills, brownfields, and closed correctional
24 facilities for advancing renewable generation.

25 You know, turning the brown into the green,

1 or like a colleague of mine said yesterday,
2 turning brownfields to bright fields.

3 My point is we're collaborating with our
4 sister agencies and NYPA's customers, such as
5 local governments, to identify more such siting
6 opportunities because NYPA cannot do this alone.
7 The projects that we've already done include
8 examples of just the largest rooftop solar PV
9 project on any SUNY campus at SUNY Albany to the
10 largest parking lot canopy project serving the
11 communities surrounding the airport at the JFK
12 Airport. That is the largest solar PV project,
13 canopy project, at any airport in the world.

14 So, those are just some examples that we've
15 already been working on. So far, we have
16 pre-qualified a stable of more than 85 developers
17 and investors that can collaborate with us to
18 build this initial tranche, and also future ones.

19 NYPA's role and goal is not to crowd out
20 the private sector but to work together,
21 leveraging our strengths to build more renewables
22 and help the state achieve its clean energy goals.

23 By maintaining majority ownership and
24 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch out
25 finances further and accelerate this transition to

1 clean energy. As we described in the draft
2 Strategic Plan, NYPA has not received any state
3 funding to build new renewable generation
4 projects. Instead, we're self-funding these
5 efforts along with a lot of critical commitments
6 to the CLCPA, such as new transmission development
7 and growing the clean energy workforce, all
8 entirely through NYPA's own revenues.

9 There's been a lot of questions about the
10 size of this first tranche of projects and an
11 expectation of a request of 15 gigawatts.
12 Financing 15 gigawatts of energy would be roughly
13 about \$30 billion, the same as essentially paying
14 for four new LaGuardia Airports all at once.
15 That's a lot of capital. So, if you're working
16 with industry partners, we continue to talk to the
17 state and federal government, and we continue to
18 look for new partners to build even more in our
19 future tranches.

20 Given these constraints, a balanced
21 approach is essential to bring more renewable
22 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
23 offer the highest returns. This helps ensure we
24 can reduce costs for ratepayers and maximize the
25 impact of every dollar we spend. And there is

1 more to that. This is only the first tranche in
2 the first strategy plan we published. In a way,
3 this plan itself is renewable; that is a plan we
4 will regularly update as we add more projects for
5 consideration by the public and NYPA's Board of
6 Trustees.

7 Part of preparing to release this draft
8 plan was making sure NYPA had the right tools and
9 staffed right to support it. This includes having
10 the expertise to make sure the proposed projects
11 meet technical, economic, environmental, and the
12 most important aspect, environmental justice needs
13 in the state.

14 In the past 18 months, we have established
15 a new business line and new business structures,
16 and we filled key personnel roles, like my team,
17 many of whom are actually listening to this video
18 as we speak right now.

19 We have obtained approval from our Board of
20 Trustees to form a new renewables subsidiary and
21 an initial capital allocation of \$100 million for
22 developing and garnering other necessary resources
23 to advance this first tranche of projects.

24 We continue to source and solicit
25 additional project opportunities to append to our

1 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue
2 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
3 as we expand and grow our pipeline of future
4 tranches of projects.

5 And these projects aren't being built in a
6 silo. They're part of a holistic approach to
7 renewable development that supports environmental
8 justice, that supports workforce development, and
9 that supports affordability.

10 How are we doing that? You see, the
11 '23-'24 Enacted State Budget also gave NYPA the
12 ability to establish the Renewable Energy Access
13 and Community Help, the long name, but REACH
14 program for short, and the REACH program allows
15 NYPA to use a portion of the revenues from new
16 renewable energy projects to benefit low- and
17 moderate-income households in disadvantaged
18 communities through electric utility bill credits.

19 Since releasing this draft plan, the Public
20 Service Commission has formally accepted our
21 application to create the REACH program. Once our
22 projects are online and generating revenue, and
23 NYPA gathers funds from available sources, money
24 will be available to flow to low-income New
25 Yorkers through the process set forth by the PSC

1 order.

2 While REACH is still under development, the
3 program will appear as automatic bill credits
4 alongside the Energy Affordability program and the
5 Statewide Solar for All utility credits.

6 NYPA will also invest up to \$25 million
7 annually in collaboration with the New York State
8 Department of Labor to create jobs and provide
9 workforce training for people who want to work in
10 the clean energy industry. Through this
11 partnership, we've already awarded \$12.5 million
12 dollars this fiscal year in funding for workforce
13 opportunities for New Yorkers across the state,
14 like the Say Yes Buffalo Youth Apprenticeship
15 Program and the Renaissance Technical Institute in
16 New York City, and several others from
17 disadvantaged communities across the state to
18 pursue good-pay clean energy careers; not just
19 jobs, but clean energy careers.

20 And with regard to the workforce on these
21 proposed projects, NYPA will require each and
22 every renewable energy-generating project to be
23 built with union labor.

24 I'm going to say that again: Every single
25 project that will be in our portfolio must have a

1 project labor agreement. And we will require all
2 contractors and subcontractors associated with the
3 project work to utilize apprenticeship agreements
4 so those learning on this first tranche can be
5 seasoned veterans for NYPA's future renewable
6 energy projects.

7 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
8 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at its
9 small natural gas plants in New York City and Long
10 Island by 2030, as long as, of course, the
11 reliability and environmental conditions are met.

12 The plan to do so is required by May of
13 next year, and we, with the NYISO, are actively
14 exploring strategies to meet this commitment while
15 considering reliability and air quality impact,
16 including the potential for deploying battery
17 storage at some of these sites.

18 I know I just shared a long list of actions
19 NYPA has taken and continues to take as part of
20 the new authority.

21 On a personal note, it is hard work. As a
22 reminder, the draft of the plan is on our website,
23 NYPA.gov/renewables. And I encourage all of you
24 to read it if you haven't already done so. And
25 that's not just because, you know, the people that

1 wrote it are listening to this, and I need to tell
2 them that our work matters, that it is important
3 for us to hear from all of you.

4 Thank you again for taking the time to join
5 us, to learn more, and to give us your feedback
6 and your comments about this plan. Back to you,
7 Alexis.

8 ALEXIS HARLEY: Thanks, Vennela.

9 Maybe just a couple of technical and
10 logistical details to share with everybody as we
11 go into the public comment section: Number one, I
12 just want to remind everyone that the law does
13 require NYPA to solicit public comments and hold a
14 minimum of three public hearings in regionally
15 diverse parts of the state on this very Strategic
16 Plan that Vennela has just described to us.

17 Our timekeeper, Lindsay Kryzak, will call
18 on each person who signed up to speak tonight, and
19 our speakers will be given three minutes each to
20 deliver their public comment for the record.

21 We do recognize that some of you may have
22 longer comments, and if you run out of time, you
23 can submit your full comment on our website, or
24 you can email it directly to
25 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. You'll see that

1 we have the information -- we'll share the
2 information at the end again.

3 The feedback you give tonight will be
4 transcribed and compiled with written comments,
5 which must be considered and incorporated into the
6 final Strategic Plan, which will be published on
7 NYPA's website and submitted to the Governor and
8 the legislature by January 31st of 2025.

9 So, thank you for joining us, and I will
10 now turn it over to our timekeeper.

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Alexis.

12 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
13 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
14 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or
15 required by applicable law, regulation, or order,
16 and it may be made available in whole or in part
17 in the public record in accordance with the
18 agency's rules.

19 Each member of the public will be given
20 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.
21 Additional comments can be shared via our website
22 at NYPA.gov or via email directly to
23 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

24 Our first speaker today is Assembly Member
25 Scott Gray. Assembly Member.

1 (Please stand by while we're on mute.)

2 SCOTT GRAY: Okay. Great. Thank you very
3 much.

4 Good morning. I'm a -- I'm Assembly Member
5 Scott Gray. I appreciate the opportunity to
6 comment on the New York Power Authority's draft
7 Strategic Plan.

8 As we discussed the past -- the path
9 forward for a mission, free energy in New York
10 State is important to consider all available
11 technologies.

12 In particular, I want to emphasize the
13 importance of exploring innovative solutions like
14 advanced nuclear technology as part of our broader
15 energy strategy, including technologies such as
16 LWR or non-LWR small modular reactors that offer a
17 reliable, emission-free source of energy power
18 that can be -- that can complement New York Power
19 Authority's existing hydro facilities, providing a
20 stable and reliable energy supply and contributing
21 to our goal of lowering energy costs for residents
22 and business alike.

23 New York Power Authority's 3.5 gigawatt
24 target for renewable energy expansion is
25 ambitious, and I commend the leadership in taking

1 on this challenge. In pursuit of the goals, it is
2 crucial that New York Power Authority's fiscal
3 decisions reflect the commitment to both
4 innovation and sustainability. We must protect
5 and continue to invest, such as the LEM plants, in
6 our existing hydroelectric assets. This is key.
7 These facilities have been and must continue to be
8 cornerstones of New York State's energy
9 infrastructure and the grid's reliability,
10 providing affordable renewable power for decades.

11 Ensuring the preservation and maintenance
12 of these assets should be a top priority as we
13 look to diversify our energy portfolio in the near
14 future. New York Power Authority has a strong
15 reputation as a responsible and collaborative WET
16 energy industry partner.

17 New York Power Authority demonstrates an
18 excellent stewardship and a leadership spirit in
19 the communities it serves. I speak firsthand by
20 representing the St. Lawrence FDR facility. This
21 reputation is built on decades of transparent
22 decision-making, meaningful investments in local
23 economies, and a clear commitment to the public
24 good.

25 As we move forward, I urge New York Power

1 Authority to continue this tradition of
2 partnership, working closely with state and local
3 stakeholders to ensure that new projects are
4 fiscally viable.

5 I encourage New York Power Authority to
6 consider a balanced approach that includes
7 diversification of energy sources like SMR
8 technology and to continue its pursuit of
9 partnerships, whether they're public-public, such
10 as the DoD MOU that was just recently signed, or
11 public-private partnerships, together, we can
12 achieve our mission-free goals while ensuring
13 long-term economic and grid stability, and
14 preserving the invaluable resources and assets
15 that have served New York so well.

16 The advanced nuclear technology also
17 provides extremely good jobs for the communities
18 in which they will be located in and many of them
19 are certainly private labor.

20 So, thank you very much. I appreciate your
21 time and the opportunity to comment. That
22 concludes my remarks.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Assembly
24 Member.

25 Our next speaker today is Jamie Katz. I'm

1 so sorry. Jamie Kazi. Excuse me.

2 JAMIE KAZI: Hi, everybody. Thank you for
3 giving me the time to make a public comment.

4 I would start -- I would like to start by
5 saying that as we see the horrific impact of
6 climate change, rising sea levels, extreme weather
7 events, and devastating effects on communities,
8 the need to build a sustainable green energy
9 infrastructure has never been more urgent.

10 New York State has an obligation to lead
11 the way in addressing the climate crisis, which
12 requires an urgent and deliberate shift to
13 sustainable renewable energies. The New York
14 Power Authority has a critical role to play in
15 building systems that will support this transition
16 while ensuring that New York meets sustainability
17 innovation.

18 I must also point out it is critical that
19 we see the level of renewable energy capacity as
20 proposed by some of our colleagues today while
21 also ensuring financial health.

22 We also want to note that any plan for a
23 green economy must also contain green jobs.
24 Workforce Development must be the cornerstone as
25 well of green energy expansion. A robust and

1 well-prepared workforce is the backbone of any
2 green energy initiative infrastructure, and
3 infrastructure alone is not enough. We need
4 people to build, maintain, and advance these
5 systems. Investments in a workforce development
6 are essential. Equipping workers with skills and
7 training means providing equitable opportunities
8 to communities historically excluded from such
9 industries in developing partnerships with unions
10 like technological schools and community
11 organizations to create clear pathways.

12 We do commend the \$25 million annual
13 commitment to workforce development and its
14 proposed partnerships with the DOL and vocational
15 training institutions. As the assembly member is
16 a member of the labor committee, and these are
17 important initiatives for her. So these are the
18 parts that we would like to emphasize in this
19 plan, and emphasize that we want to continue to
20 see -- we want to continue to see expansion of.
21 With that, I will -- I will end my comment. Thank
22 you.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jamie.

24 Our next speaker here is Julie Tighe.

25 Julie.

1 JULIE TIGHE: Good morning. Thank you for
2 the opportunity to speak today. My name is Julie
3 Tighe. I'm President of the New York League of
4 Conservation Voters. We're a statewide
5 environmental advocacy organization that strongly
6 supports the transition to a clean energy economy
7 and New York's leadership in fighting the climate
8 crisis.

9 The years since the COVID-19 pandemic have
10 been hard on the renewable energy industry in New
11 York, with dozens of projects canceled due to
12 inflation, supply chain issues, and other
13 unexpected hurdles that project developers cannot
14 overcome. As a result, New York is not currently
15 on track to achieve CLCPA's goal of having a 70
16 percent renewable energy grid by 2030.

17 NYPA can play an important role in helping
18 the state get back on track, and NYLCV is
19 especially pleased that in developing this plan,
20 NYPA engaged with developers whose projects were
21 at risk but are also more mature and further along
22 the permitting process, making them easier to
23 deliver in the first tranche while the state
24 continues to advance Tier 1 and offshore wind
25 projects through the REC program.

1 We also strongly support the use of PLAs
2 and apprenticeship requirements for these
3 projects. The League is glad to see that the
4 proposed first round of NYPA's renewable projects
5 includes a diverse mix of solar, onshore wind, and
6 battery energy storage, accounting for over 3.5
7 gigawatts of energy total. While the climate
8 crisis requires us to go as big as possible in our
9 renewable energy procurement and construction, the
10 League is mindful that there are limits on supply
11 chains and labor that put a de facto cap on how
12 much renewable energy between NYPA and the private
13 sector can be built at once.

14 NYPA has an important role to play in
15 building the state's and region's capacity to
16 build more renewable energy. To that end, we were
17 pleased to see the draft plan, the commitment of
18 \$12.6 million across five programs to develop the
19 clean energy workforce.

20 We would note that the public renewables
21 legislation authorizes NYPA to allocate up to \$25
22 million per year to support these types of
23 projects, programs, and we hope to see larger
24 commitments in the future programs.

25 The draft plan also advances economic

1 justice in New York by developing the Renewable
2 Energy Access and Community Help program to
3 provide electric bill credits to low-income
4 ratepayers in disadvantaged communities around the
5 state.

6 We're pleased that the Public Service
7 Commission formally approved that program last
8 month, and look forward to monitoring the
9 program's results for any potential needed tweaks
10 in future programs.

11 While there is room to expand and improve
12 the public renewables plan in future iterations,
13 the League supports the contents of this draft
14 plan as a strong first step. We urge NYPA to
15 continue to focus on grid reliability,
16 transmission projects, reducing emissions in
17 environmental justice communities, and large-scale
18 decarbonization of public properties in future
19 plans.

20 Thank you for this opportunity this
21 morning.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Julie.

23 Our next speaker is Carolyn Townsend.

24 Carolyn.

25 CAROLYN TOWNSEND: Hi, everyone. Thank you

1 for the opportunity to provide a public comment on
2 NYPA's Renewable Strategic Plan. My name is
3 Carolyn Townsend, and I am the Community Energy
4 Advisor for Neighborhood Housing Services of
5 Queens. As a nonprofit that has, for almost 30
6 years, aimed to preserve and revitalize
7 underserved communities in Queens, we are deeply
8 invested in ensuring a clean energy future for
9 all.

10 In my role, I work with Queens residents,
11 helping them access energy efficiency and
12 electrification programming. Through this work, I
13 know that even with existing incentives, including
14 rebates, tax credits, and low-interest loans from
15 NYSERDA, residents still struggle to afford their
16 utility bills and/or upgrade their appliances to
17 more energy-efficient, low-carbon options.

18 As we all know, marginalized communities
19 are already experiencing the brunt of climate
20 impacts, such as when Hurricane Ida in 2021
21 flooded many of our Queens residents' basements,
22 destroying their boilers in the process.

23 This year alone, NHS of Queens received
24 over 317 inquiries related to utility bill
25 assistance and mortgage retention.

1 How are community members going to recover
2 from yet another climate-related event like a
3 hurricane or electrify their homes with heat pumps
4 if they are unable to make their utility bill
5 payments on time?

6 As such, NHS of Queens wholeheartedly
7 supports NYPA's efforts to ensure an equitable
8 clean energy transition.

9 In particular, the REACH program would
10 provide substantial benefits to New Yorkers who
11 live in state-designated disadvantaged communities
12 or DACs. Many New Yorkers need that extra
13 financial boost to get themselves back on their
14 feet and achieve financial stability. Utility
15 bills are more often than not one of those
16 barriers, particularly in New York City.

17 We urge NYPA to work directly with
18 community organizations such as ourselves to
19 identify additional low-income community members
20 who may not fall in the state DACs, as those will
21 not be able to benefit from the REACH program as
22 it's currently constructed.

23 I currently work primarily with customers
24 who are low- to moderate-income Queens homeowners,
25 many of whom do not fall in a DAC. This means

1 they would not be able to benefit from the REACH
2 program as well as other programs as they're
3 constructed, such as the Con Edison Clean Heat
4 program for heat pumps.

5 Moreover, while we acknowledge the ambition
6 of the goal, we strongly recommend that NYPA
7 expands the proposed renewable energy projects
8 beyond 3.5 gigawatts to further accelerate New
9 York's decarbonization and provide more support to
10 marginalized communities.

11 Additionally, we urge an expedited timeline
12 for launching these new projects so that
13 communities can begin receiving credits as soon as
14 possible, no later than Q4 of 2025, such as --
15 because 2026 and especially 2027 is far too late.

16 New York has long led the nation in climate
17 action, but now more than ever, it is critical
18 that NYPA take a much greater step to show that
19 the United States is committed to combating
20 climate change.

21 Thank you for your time, and that concludes
22 our remarks.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Carolyn.

24 Our next speaker is Peter McCartt. Peter?

25 We will come back to Peter if you are still

1 on. Our next speaker is Gregory Morris. Gregory.

2 Next, we'll hear from Michael Romita.
3 Michael.

4 MICHAEL ROMITA: Thank you, Alexis. Am I
5 un-muted? Great.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes.

7 MICHAEL ROMITA: I'm Michael Romita, the
8 President and CEO of the Westchester County
9 Association. We are Westchester's business
10 roundtable. Our mission is to unite and mobilize
11 professional leaders to address the most important
12 issues facing the regional economy. And one of
13 our foundational focus areas is energy and
14 sustainability.

15 And this draft Renewable Strategic Plan
16 comes at a critical juncture. The CLCPA is now
17 five years old and is facing some growing pains.
18 And where the state reports conclude that the
19 state has fallen behind in its efforts to meet the
20 Climate Act's ambitious timeline to eliminate
21 emissions from the state's electricity grid by
22 2040 and a carbon-neutral economy by 2050.

23 While the WCA understands the need to be
24 practical in meeting these goals in an efficient,
25 timely manner, this organization does not join

1 other membership organizations who are calling to
2 revisit the Climate Act's strategic underpinnings
3 or to reconsider the need to transition to a
4 low-carbon future, both of which are critical.

5 NYPA is tasked with playing a critical role
6 in this transition in resolving some of the
7 challenges faced by the Climate Act, that we are
8 particularly supportive of those aspects of the
9 plan, which invest in large-scale transmission
10 products and battery storage, such as Clean Path
11 New York and the Propel Project.

12 We also applaud a focus on smaller
13 distributed generation projects, which will be
14 increasingly important in the areas not easily
15 accessible by larger transmission projects. Two,
16 invest in programs such as REACH, which are
17 designed to assist energy affordability for
18 low-income households, and three, invest in
19 workforce training programs to ensure that we have
20 the local talent pipelines we will need for the
21 clean energy transition and to re-skill those
22 workers displaced by new technologies.

23 In addition, we urge NYPA to first develop
24 more robust strategies to mitigate and minimize
25 delays towards completing renewable energy

1 generation -- generation transmission projects,
2 which are often held up due to issues such as the
3 slow promulgation of operable program regulations,
4 delay in the approval procedures, the challenges
5 created by local land use and zoning, and the need
6 for flexibility in contract terms with private
7 sector partners.

8 And secondly, to ensure that a proportional
9 share of workforce-related funding finds its way
10 to Westchester, which is often overlooked in such
11 statewide initiatives.

12 On behalf of the WCA's hundreds of member
13 organizations and the hundreds of thousands of
14 workers they employ, I thank you again for the
15 opportunity to comment on NYPA's draft Renewable
16 Strategic Plan.

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Michael.

18 Our next speaker is Peter McCartt. Peter?

19 PETER MCCARTT: You can hear me now?

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can, yes.

21 PETER MCCARTT: Yes. Sorry about that.

22 It's my first Zoom ever, really.

23 So, thank you to Alexis, and to my good
24 friend Vennela, and the good people of New York
25 Power Authority for taking on this ambitious but

1 certainly vitally and necessary renewable energy
2 Strategic Plan.

3 I am the Director of Energy Conservation
4 and Sustainability for Westchester County. And
5 it's no secret that here in Westchester, we have a
6 tremendous electric bill. It's nearly \$2 million
7 a month spent mostly on our wastewater treatment
8 plant but also our various office buildings,
9 parks, transportation, and on our grassland campus
10 in Valhalla. That bill would be much higher if it
11 wasn't for NYPA's low rates for us as well as for
12 all our municipalities and schools. We thank them
13 for that.

14 We're certainly far ahead of almost any
15 country on electrifying our fleet, but we still
16 have a lot of work to do, especially we would
17 consider our heavy equipment and fully
18 electrifying the rest of our bus fleet.

19 It's very complicated. And although we
20 have wonderful engineers here in-house of the
21 county, we do still have to lean on the grid
22 experts at NYPA, especially on these massive
23 projects that we have. We thank them for that.

24 Speaking of large long-term renewable
25 projects, we are also currently working with NYPA

1 on several, including Clean Path, the electric
2 cable, bringing renewable energy down to us in New
3 York City from upstate, as well as Propel New
4 York, which is another set of electric cables,
5 switch boxes, transformers, and whatnot beyond my
6 scope of knowledge to ensure reliability to the
7 grid, especially considering all the new electric
8 coming from solar and offshore wind.

9 Lastly, and most interesting to me, is a
10 long-duration battery energy storage system that
11 we are working on with NYPA, utilizing some
12 state-of-the-art technology with an innovation
13 grant that we received, and they received from the
14 federal Department of Energy.

15 Storage is truly the key for intermittent
16 electric generation, and anything we can do to
17 develop more of the BSS around the state, and
18 especially here in Westchester, would be awesome.

19 So, I read through the plan. It's a good
20 strategic draft, and I've made my comments in
21 writing. But the bottom line is, as we all know,
22 we need more renewable electricity, period. And
23 thank you for this time to speak.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Peter.

25 Our next speaker is Paul Williams. Paul?

1 PAUL WILLIAMS: Hello. Can you hear me?

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

3 PAUL WILLIAMS: My name is Paul Williams.

4 Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this
5 Strategic Plan. I'm a resident of New York and
6 the Executive Director of the Center for Public
7 Enterprise. We're an organization that works with
8 public agencies across the country on energy and
9 housing programs.

10 Our focus, in particular, is on strategies
11 that help public agencies with a more active
12 approach and posture to accelerating investment
13 and development in those things that we need, like
14 clean energy and affordable housing.

15 So, you know, in January of this year, I
16 was, and we as a team were, very excited to see
17 NYPA's kind of first step in -- in creating this
18 portfolio with their request for information to
19 the state's renewable energy industry, which we
20 thought was a very smart strategy to -- you know,
21 to kind of gather interest and find out what is
22 the state of renewable and clean energy project
23 development across the state. And we immediately
24 recognized the value of that -- that document, and
25 the follow-up request for qualifications and

1 actually turned that into a model RFI and RFQ that
2 we've taken to other states around the country who
3 have been impressed by NYPA's work on building
4 this pipeline, and want to use NYPA's approach to
5 help them do similar work.

6 So, I want to commend NYPA on that smart
7 strategy that's now being used by other agencies
8 around the country. NYPA put out that call for
9 projects earlier this year and, over the course of
10 about eight months, has turned these documents
11 essentially into a 3.5 gigawatt pipeline, is
12 pretty astounding, not just to our organization
13 but, again, to those agencies across the country.

14 And all that's to say, I think it's clear
15 that NYPA has a sophisticated, dedicated staff
16 that's committed to creating a major clean energy
17 portfolio for the state. And that's, you know,
18 everything from engineers to underwriters to
19 project managers.

20 So, I think one of the questions is: What
21 are the resources that NYPA really needs in order
22 to expand on this work and take this 3.5 gigawatts
23 to 7? 10? 15 gigawatts?

24 It seems clear to me that -- that it's not
25 those internal constraints. NYPA clearly has a

1 dedicated team that wants to do this. It seems to
2 me that those constraints are on the financing
3 side and on the interconnection and transmission
4 side.

5 So, you know, I think what I would like to
6 hear more from NYPA on is what are the
7 interconnection and transmission constraints, and
8 what are the financing constraints that people in
9 government and in advocacy can -- can push for
10 that can facilitate NYPA expanding this portfolio
11 and this great work even further?

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Paul.

13 Our next speaker is Manna Jo Green. Manna
14 Jo.

15 MANNA JO GREEN: Am I un-muted now?

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: You are; yes, we can hear
17 you.

18 MANNA JO GREEN: Okay. Good.

19 Ulster County has created a -- and by the
20 way, I am an Ulster County legislator, and I serve
21 on the Ulster County 70 by '30 Renewable Energy
22 Implementation Plan Working Group. And we have
23 been working over the past, oh, four years or so
24 to provide training to municipalities using the
25 Scenic Hudson Solar Mapping Tool to ensure wise

1 solar siting that identifies opportunities and
2 then also identifies areas that need to be
3 protected and avoided.

4 We've trained more than 150 participants
5 from more than 50 municipalities, including many
6 board members, town board environmental
7 commission, climate-smart task force, etcetera,
8 and interested others.

9 And it includes -- the mapping tool
10 includes layers that identified hosting capacity.
11 And we have found that that's a major obstacle to
12 siting otherwise viable projects.

13 So, our major recommendation is to ease the
14 interconnection roadblocks for distributed solar
15 by coordinating and proactively developing
16 distribution interconnection improvements on
17 distribution feeders that have a large number of
18 projects, some of which have been withdrawn after
19 paying for a Caesar study, as well as on feeders
20 identified by local governments as having
21 prospective locations for megawatt-scale
22 distribution. And we'll be submitting details on
23 actual projects.

24 Also, the New York State Climate Action
25 Council Scoping Plan recommended developing a

1 similar tool for all of New York State.

2 I quote: Development mapping, the state
3 should develop clean energy development mapping
4 tool to help municipalities -- municipal
5 representatives and local communities, make
6 informed land use decisions and communicate local
7 wants to developers.

8 Is that underway? Are any of the state
9 agencies? I believe NYSERDA was assigned that
10 task, but I'm -- I'm asking if that is underway.

11 And then, resources to help municipalities
12 use this tool should be budgeted for and provided
13 in 2025 and beyond.

14 I commend the emphasis on environmental
15 justice and just transition. Working with local
16 municipalities, the Ulster County Renewable Energy
17 Working Group has found that insufficient hosting
18 capacity is the main obstacle to project
19 implementation, and NYPA should be working
20 directly with municipalities and -- and the
21 utilities to address that implement- -- to ensure
22 that the implementation coincides with municipal
23 planning for renewables, especially those
24 developed by local and county governments and
25 public schools. Attention --

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Manna Jo.

2 MANNA JO GREEN: You're welcome.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

4 MANNA JO GREEN: And I'll submit our full
5 comments. I do want to say that --

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: That's great. Yes,
7 anything else, please submit online. Thank you so
8 much.

9 Our next speaker is John Ravitz. John.
10 Yes, we can.

11 JOHN RAVITZ: Thank you very much.

12 My name is John Ravitz. I'm the Executive
13 Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the
14 Business Council of Westchester. We're the
15 county's largest business membership organization
16 that focuses on economic development and advocacy
17 on behalf of our 1100-plus members.

18 One of the key legislative priorities that
19 we've had at the BCW has been the changing energy
20 landscape. Westchester County has been at the
21 epicenter of that; with the closing of Indian
22 Point, with gas moratoriums that were imposed by
23 Con Edison, we realized that we needed to be very
24 proactive in dealing with that as we look to make
25 sure that we have a reliable grip so that when we

1 recruit and retain businesses, we can make sure
2 that they understand that that is the case.

3 We have raised concerns with the CLCPA, not
4 with what the CLCPA is intended to do, but with
5 the implementation dates and the cost. And we'll
6 continue to ask those questions.

7 But we also now are taking a very proactive
8 role. We've created the Westchester Clean Energy
9 Action Coalition, which consists of our members
10 who are on the ground now trying to build this new
11 renewable infrastructure, whether it's solar,
12 battery, or geothermal heat pumps. These folks
13 are the ones who are going to help us build that
14 process.

15 And we're going to continue to focus on
16 electricity to power everything, building thermal
17 for heating and cooling of hot water, and
18 transportation issues. And we're going to
19 continue to look at how we can help them make
20 their lives a little easier through battery, solar
21 battery storage, deployment plans, open doors for
22 biofuels, and really educating folks on that and
23 what new construction will have to do to make sure
24 that they are in compliance.

25 We are very fortunate that we have the

1 leadership in the New York Power Authority. We
2 have seen firsthand the work that you have done.
3 I have seen firsthand by attending numerous
4 community meetings that your teams are on the
5 ground, that your teams are leaning in to listen
6 to communities, to help them understand what these
7 new plans look like, and to deal with quality of
8 life issues that are raised -- that are raised.
9 That's the right way to get this done.

10 And so, we certainly support the plan that
11 NYPA has produced. We think that these 40
12 renewable projects throughout the state are going
13 to help not only Westchester County but obviously
14 the region and the state. And we encourage NYPA
15 to continue to be as transparent as you have been.

16 We need to build this renewable
17 infrastructure. We need communities to stop using
18 agents of delay to stop this from happening
19 because if they do, what's the alternative? So,
20 we need to do a much better and continue to do an
21 education process on what this new renewable
22 infrastructure will look like. And the Business
23 Council of Westchester and our Clean Energy Action
24 Coalition look forward to partnering with NYPA
25 over these next few years to make sure that we do

1 that for the businesses and citizens of the state.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, John.

3 Our next speaker is Gregory Morris.

4 Gregory.

5 GREGORY MORRIS: Good morning. Can you
6 hear me at all?

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can, yes. Thanks,
8 Gregory.

9 GREGORY MORRIS: Wonderful. Thank you for
10 the opportunity to testify on the NYPA Renewable
11 Strategic Plan. I'm speaking on behalf of the New
12 York City Employment and Training Coalition. I am
13 its CEO.

14 We represent 220 workforce development
15 organizations serving more than 200,000 New
16 Yorkers annually; all focused on bridging the gap
17 that exists in New York City between job seekers
18 and employers. We are in the practice of
19 supporting job training and career development
20 with a specific focus on under-resourced,
21 underserved communities.

22 The coalition I represent, NYCTC, commends
23 NYPA's leadership in integrating workforce
24 development into its renewable energy strategy.
25 The 25 million annually dedicated to workforce

1 training. This plan provides a historic
2 opportunity to create --

3 (Technical difficulty.)

4 GREGORY MORRIS: -- to jobs in the --
5 NYCTC's intermediary expertise, data-driven
6 approach, and advocacy efforts for underserved
7 populations, I think, positions us well to support
8 NYPA's objectives.

9 A couple of thoughts about that. NYCTC's
10 intermediary role connects employers with
11 workforce providers. Programs that we represent
12 help to create established networks with proven
13 ability to align to labor market demand. So, in
14 other words, putting training in the practice of
15 connecting with employers. That's what workforce
16 development is. That's how it looks. And it
17 ensures that communities and individuals find
18 success, sustainable career opportunities, and
19 economic mobility over time.

20 We are so grateful for your investment and
21 interest in workforce development. We want to see
22 that through. Part of the way to see that through
23 is through a second approach that we at NYCETC
24 use, which is a Workforce Impact Tracking
25 Initiative. This is an effort to measure outcomes

1 and investments. The tools that we have that
2 measure the impact of training effectiveness, job
3 retention, wage growth, we think, provides
4 transparency and, again, ensures alignment with
5 labor market needs. Our workforce interventions
6 improve job placement rates and help to boost
7 wages.

8 Last but not least, the organization I
9 represent, NYCETC, and its providers, the
10 coalition, help address systemic barriers such as
11 fragmented job matching systems and insufficient
12 supportive services. We are in the business and
13 interest of making sure that job seekers have
14 access to childcare, transportation, to ensure
15 workforce participation. As you know, without
16 those pathways, those resources, it is oftentimes
17 difficult for individuals to be able to find and
18 secure employment and grow over time.

19 NYCETC, once again, recommends formalizing
20 a relationship with NYPA to really see this
21 workforce investment -- workforce development
22 investment be put to work successfully and with
23 impact. We want to ensure a clean energy future.
24 We want to ensure clean energy jobs are accessible
25 to disadvantaged communities.

1 We look forward to collaborating. We wish
2 you continued success, and we work together to
3 drive equitable economic growth for all New
4 Yorkers.

5 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Gregory.

6 Our next speaker is Michael Zagrobelny.
7 Michael. And I will say I may have mispronounced
8 that, Michael Zagrobelny.

9 MICHAEL ZAGROBELNY: Thank you. And I
10 forgot to unmute.

11 Good morning. I'm Michael Zagrobelny,
12 Mayor of Waddington. I'm honored to speak today
13 as the leader of a community that has partnered
14 with the New York Power Authority for more than
15 six decades.

16 Waddington is proud to host the
17 St. Lawrence Franklin D. Roosevelt Power Project,
18 and we've seen firsthand the commitment NYPA has
19 made to our community and the North Country
20 region.

21 Throughout our long history and our
22 relationship, NYPA has proven time and time again
23 that when they make a promise, they keep it. This
24 reliability has laid the foundation for a strong
25 and enduring partnership. Our region is situated

1 at the strategic crossroads of renewable energy
2 development in New York State. It's well
3 positioned to play a key role in the state's clean
4 energy future.

5 Waddington has already seen numerous
6 proposals for large scale renewable projects.
7 What sets NYPA apart is the balanced approach and
8 their focus on the long-term well-being of those
9 communities.

10 We appreciate the careful consideration
11 given to the scale and impact of these projects,
12 and we support the target of 3.5 gigawatts
13 outlined in the draft Strategic Plan. This target
14 reflects an understanding with significant
15 resources and coordination needed to ensure these
16 projects are developed responsibly. NYPA's draft
17 Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance of
18 community benefits, and Waddington is a testament
19 for the positive impact of these efforts.

20 Over the years, NYPA has invested in local
21 infrastructure, supported job creation, and
22 contributed to initiatives that enhance our
23 quality of life. Their ongoing commitment to
24 community engagement, transparency, and
25 sustainable growth has set a standard for how

1 renewable energy projects can and should be
2 developed.

3 NYPA has also demonstrated a keen
4 understanding that the quality work provided by
5 union workers is unmatched. Union labor benefits
6 the state, the local community and provides a
7 clear financial stability through project labor
8 agreements and apprenticeships.

9 As we move forward, it is vital that we
10 continue to build on this strong foundation.
11 Communities of the North Country stand ready to
12 support NYPA's vision for a cleaner, greener New
13 York, but we also recognize the importance of a
14 thoughtful, measured approach.

15 Large-scale renewable projects, when done
16 right, have the potential to bring significant
17 economic-environmental benefits. We trust NYPA to
18 lead these efforts in a way that aligns with our
19 shared values and priorities, ensuring that the
20 benefits of clean energy are felt here at home,
21 not just across the state.

22 We also urge NYPA to promote the use of
23 low-cost electricity for residential use, as well
24 as commercial entities within the project
25 boundaries. To all those involved in this

1 Strategic Plan, we look forward to working
2 together to make these ambitious goals a reality
3 while ensuring that our community voice is heard
4 and respected every step of the way.

5 Thank you for your time.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Michael.

7 Our next speaker is Richard Khuzami.

8 Richard?

9 RICHARD KHUZAMI: Yes. Can you hear me?

10 Can you hear me?

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes.

12 RICHARD KHUZAMI: Very good. Yeah.

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can, Richard. Go
14 ahead.

15 RICHARD KHUZAMI: Thank you.

16 I am Richard Khuzami. I'm the President of
17 the Old Astoria Neighborhood Association. I'm
18 also a member of Community Board One in Astoria,
19 Queens, on the Western Queens Waterfront area.

20 I'm speaking as President of the Old
21 Astoria Neighborhood Association. Our area -- and
22 this will be a very brief comment -- our area has
23 been necklaced by power plants for -- well, many,
24 many years. We have, you know, deservedly
25 received the nickname of Asthma Alley. So, a

1 conversion of all of these various peaker and
2 power plants and other power facilities in our
3 area is -- well, number one, greatly supported and
4 greatly needed. And we fully support anything
5 that can be done to eliminate the use of fossil
6 fuels on all these plants.

7 We have, in fact, a community that's very,
8 very diverse, from three NYCHA campuses, up to new
9 luxury developments by the Durst Organization. So
10 we're -- all of us, though, a common denominator
11 is affected by our environment. So we applaud
12 anything that can be done to improve that
13 environment for everybody's health and well-being.

14 One comment I would like to make, similar
15 to the housing situation in New York City that
16 we're dealing with now, we -- a lot of the
17 problems we have is due to nimbyism. When certain
18 communities will mouth support, or when it
19 actually reaches their community, when they have
20 to make facilities and land available, all of a
21 sudden, they became strong opponents.

22 From what I understand, a similar situation
23 is developing in Upstate New York for solar farms
24 and wind farms, and I would like to know what NYPA
25 is doing in order to facilitate the conversion of

1 -- of these facilities to allow for power
2 generation for downstate. So that's our -- that's
3 one of our major questions.

4 Eminent domain, other extra incentives that
5 are being used, what -- what tools are out there?
6 And with that, we thank you, and you've done a
7 great job. And we look forward to the --
8 breathing cleaner air in Astoria in Western
9 Queens. Thank you.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Richard.

11 Our next speaker is Edwin Hill. Edwin.

12 Our next speaker is Jess Mullen. Jess.

13 Our next speaker is Keith Schue. Keith.

14 KEITH SCHUE: Can you hear me?

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can, yes.

16 KEITH SCHUE: Thank you.

17 Yes. My name is Keith Schue with New York
18 Energy and Climate Advocates. I have a master's
19 in electrical engineering, and I worked many years
20 in design and development. I'm also an
21 environmentalist who was employed with the Nature
22 Conservancy in Florida, where my focus -- where my
23 focus was on the relationship between human
24 infrastructure and ecosystems. When I moved to
25 New York, I became very involved in efforts to

1 fight hydraulic fracking.

2 But let's be honest, banning fracking in
3 New York was easy when there's plenty of gas
4 coming from Pennsylvania. It's a lot harder to
5 actually stop burning fossil fuels. It takes more
6 than political will. It involves hard science and
7 engineering. It involves setting ideology and
8 slogans aside and figuring out what actually
9 works.

10 Sadly, that is also where the mainstream
11 environmental movement has failed. You're hearing
12 people demanding 15 gigawatts of renewables
13 without knowing what that means, without
14 understanding the difference between power and
15 energy, or capacity factor, or energy density, or
16 the fundamental operational differences between
17 intermittent and dispatchable generation,
18 demanding an arbitrary renewable target without
19 attention to whether it actually displaces fossil
20 fuels or even reduces greenhouse gas emissions,
21 and without regard for how it promotes wasteful
22 sprawl or hurts the environment, wildlife habitat,
23 rural lands, farmland, forest, nature.

24 If any of those things are still important
25 to environmental groups, then they will support a

1 diversity of energy sources that includes firm,
2 reliable nuclear power, which has the lowest
3 lifecycle emissions, the smallest physical
4 footprint, and the smallest material and mining
5 footprint of any energy source.

6 I think the Strategic Plan is flawed, but
7 not because it doesn't build X amount of solar and
8 wind. It's flawed because it takes the eye off
9 the ball, which is greenhouse gas reduction and
10 providing the abundant reliable energy for a
11 healthy economy and workforce.

12 The BPRA gave NYPA authority to build
13 renewables. And that's fine. But you also have
14 the authority to assist in developing other
15 sources like nuclear, as you have done so
16 successfully before. The reason Upstate New York
17 has reliable affordable electricity, and the
18 reason our Upstate grid is 90 percent carbon-free
19 today already, is because of NYPA's excellent
20 leadership and expertise in helping to bring us
21 Niagara, St. Lawrence-FDR, Nine Mile
22 Point, Ginna, and FitzPatrick.

23 So, I respectfully urge you to use your
24 expanded authority to look at all carbon-free
25 sources, examine the unique attributes of each,

1 and then work to develop the best mix that can
2 actually get us over the finish line and fully
3 decarbonize our grid.

4 Yes, we need more renewables than today,
5 but we're also going to need more nuclear power,
6 so let's plan for that. New York is fortunate to
7 have a governor who is leveling with the public on
8 this, as we saw in Syracuse.

9 And frankly, I think it's kind of sad that
10 some misguided activists are harassing her for
11 being honest and now harassing NYPA for not
12 performing magic. Syracuse was a game-changer,
13 and your plan should reflect that.

14 Follow the governor's lead, we focus on the
15 goal of decarbonization and then do what is best
16 for all New Yorkers rather than just those who
17 yell the loudest. Thank you very much.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Keith.

19 Our next speaker is Lindsay Griffin.
20 Lindsay.

21 LINDSAY GRIFFIN: Good morning. Can you
22 hear me?

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can, yes. Good
24 morning.

25 LINDSAY GRIFFIN: Good morning. My name is

1 Lindsay Griffin, and I serve as the Northeast
2 Regulatory Director for both solar and co-chair of
3 the Public Power New York Coalition.

4 Thank you for the opportunity to provide
5 comments on the draft Strategic Plan. The first
6 piece I would like to address is the size of the
7 proposed portfolio projects. 3.5 gigawatts,
8 especially with attrition considered, is
9 inadequate to meet the mandate set forth by the
10 CLCPA.

11 Business-as-usual protections show that at
12 this rate, we'll only reach 44 percent of
13 renewable electricity by 2030, which is well below
14 the 20 -- well below the 70-percent target
15 mandated by the CLCPA.

16 To bridge this gap, NYPA must aim for a
17 much more ambitious build out of at least 15
18 gigawatts by 2030. The coalition commissioned a
19 report last November that evaluates New York's
20 progress toward its renewable energy goals using
21 various scenarios. Rather than assuming the full
22 implementation of all proposed and contracted
23 renewable energy projects, this was -- this report
24 examined different scenarios at the completion
25 rate.

1 Even if we double the historic completion
2 rate for successful projects, the state would only
3 reach 61 percent renewable energy by 2030, still
4 falling short of the 70-percent target.

5 Our call for 15 gigawatts is grounded in
6 expert analysis, not arbitrary numbers. In order
7 to fill the gap and actually meet the 70-percent
8 goal as mandated by law, NYPA will have to
9 construct and connect between seven and 20
10 gigawatts of renewable projects by 2030. We urge
11 the 15-gigawatt goal because we understand that
12 there are barriers to completion.

13 And the second piece I would like to
14 address is financing. New York is already feeling
15 the effects of climate change, from drought
16 emergencies to deadly flooding to other climate
17 catastrophes; we cannot afford to think small.
18 Pristine credit rating means little when the world
19 is on fire. You would say you can't afford to
20 build 15 gigawatts; New Yorkers cannot afford for
21 you not to. Financially, the draft plan makes
22 overly conservative assumptions.

23 NYPA's massive energy discounts to
24 multinational corporations like Amazon and City
25 Bank be reallocated to support renewable projects

1 for lower energy costs for everyday New Yorkers
2 who need it most. It is not a matter of
3 feasibility; it's a matter of priorities. We
4 already know that NYPA can build transmission
5 infrastructure. What we're asking for you is to
6 fully leverage the expanded authority under the
7 BPRA.

8 This means taking a multifaceted approach,
9 pursuing distributed-scale renewable energy
10 projects, building transmission where needed to
11 increase hosting capacity, acquiring distressed
12 renewable projects, and utilizing public buildings
13 for renewable development.

14 Perhaps most importantly, I would urge you
15 to prioritize transparent and proactive
16 communication with communities and stakeholders so
17 that the solutions you build meaningfully address
18 disparities in the current energy system. Rather
19 than dwelling on why this goal might seem out of
20 reach, let's focus our energy on finding solutions
21 instead of fixating on obstacles.

22 If NYPA falls short of achieving 15
23 gigawatts, let it be because the challenge is long
24 and painful, not because the effort wasn't made.
25 Thank you.

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Lindsay.

2 Our next speaker is Joanna Smith. Joanna.

3 JOANNA SMITH: Good morning. My name is
4 Joanna Smith. I'm a professional citizen and a
5 climate activist. I don't yell, but I use my
6 voice because I don't have the money that the oil
7 and gas interests have to throw around our state
8 and limit our climate action.

9 I'm aware that these public hearings on
10 NYPA's plan on how you'll fulfill your legally
11 required construction of renewables to decarbonize
12 our energy sector are just one checkbox on a long
13 bureaucratic list of checkboxes that end up
14 stalling urgent and meaningful action on our
15 rapidly accelerating planetary climate breakdown
16 that we can all see with our own eyes.

17 I also am aware that hundreds and hundreds
18 of citizen lobbying hours spent encouraging our
19 electeds to do the right and expedient thing for
20 our climate have, sadly, come too little, seeing
21 this plan. But I'm here showing up again for a
22 hearing because a few weekends ago, my
23 college-aged son came home to Brooklyn to play
24 sports on Randall's Island. It was my first time
25 getting to see him captain his scrappy little team

1 from a small school upstate in a sport that brings
2 him so much joy.

3 First, they triumphed over the huge team of
4 Columbia. Then, they fought their way to victory
5 over NYU. But before they did, I had to watch my
6 extremely fit child start to run slower and slower
7 and eventually remove himself from the field
8 because of an asthma attack.

9 I checked my rainbow app on my phone and
10 was dismayed to discover that the air quality was
11 over 100 because of forest fires in New York and
12 New Jersey. Forest fires here on the East Coast.

13 I had to watch my kid, unable to finish his
14 long-dreamed-of championships, slumped in a little
15 chair on the sidelines, gasping for breath.

16 So, I'm here filled with a mother's rage on
17 behalf of my child and the nine percent of New
18 Yorkers who have asthma, and the nine percent who
19 have cardiac disease, and the 11 percent who have
20 diabetes, and the 350 New Yorkers who die each
21 year from heat-related illness, as well as all
22 those in low-income households who can't afford to
23 stay warm in the winter, or cool in the summer.
24 And when I hear you saying that we cannot find the
25 capital to roll out a more ambitious renewable

1 plan, I want to remind you of your agency's
2 subsidizing of corporate energy usage, and suggest
3 you look there for capital. I want to say that
4 polluters should be paying more to pay for the
5 damage they've caused and that we all expect so
6 much more of our electeds and our public servants
7 in New York State.

8 We appreciate the work of NYPA, but we
9 understand that both Kathy Hochul and Justin
10 Driscoll are doing their best to hobble all of
11 your best-laid plans in the interest of oil and
12 gas lobbyists and special interests. And this has
13 to stop, or else we'll have nowhere for our
14 children to play. We'll have nowhere where anyone
15 can be safe, regardless of our income.

16 And I'm so glad that you guys are allowing
17 the public to speak on this. And I hope you
18 listen to an average mother's words as much as you
19 listen to all of the paid lobbyists that I've
20 heard before me. Thank you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Joanna.

22 Our next speaker is Roger Caiazza. Roger.

23 ROGER CAIAZZA: My name is Roger Caiazza.
24 I'm a retired air pollution meteorologist who's
25 worked on energy and environmental issues in New

1 York since 1981. I comment on those issues at the
2 Pragmatic Environmentalist of New York blog.

3 Today, I'm going to summarize my written
4 comments that argue that the Strategic Plan needs
5 to be paused until it's proven feasible. The
6 authors of the Climate Act, the enabling
7 legislation for this effort, believe that the New
8 York electric grid can transition away from fossil
9 fuels and instead rely on wind, sun, and energy
10 storage with no new technologies needed.

11 However, the Scoping Plan, Department of
12 Public Service, New York Independent System
13 Operator, and others have all determined that a
14 new technology called dispatchable emissions-free
15 resources, or DEFR, is necessary to keep the
16 lights on during periods of extended low wind and
17 solar resource availability.

18 No jurisdiction anywhere has successfully
19 developed an electric system that relies on wind
20 and solar generation, consistent with the NYPA
21 draft Strategic Plan. The DEFR requirement means
22 we cannot rely on renewables unless we have a
23 viable technology available.

24 I believe the draft plan should be paused
25 until a feasibility analysis proves that the

1 proposed renewables approach that includes DEFR
2 can work. The most likely DEFR backup technology
3 is nuclear generation because it is the only
4 candidate resource that is technologically ready
5 and can be expanded as needed.

6 Importantly, nuclear generation could be
7 used as backbone energy and eliminate the need for
8 wind, solar, energy storage, and a new DEFR
9 deployment to meet the Climate Act zero-emissions
10 mandates.

11 To sum up, the NYPA draft Strategic Plan
12 must address DEFR viability. It's needed for the
13 wind, solar, and energy storage systems proposed.
14 If the only viable DEFR solution is nuclear, then
15 renewables cannot be implemented without it. But
16 nuclear can replace renewables, eliminating the
17 need for a massive DEFR backup resource.

18 I think it would be prudent to pause
19 renewable development under the NYPA initiative
20 until DEFR feasibility is proven. Thank you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Roger.

22 Our next speaker is Tara Vamos. Tara.

23 TARA VAMOS: Hi there. Can you hear me?

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can, yes.

25 TARA VAMOS: Okay. Wonderful.

1 My name is Tara Vamos. I'm from Cold
2 Spring Climate. I loved the intro video. I
3 appreciate it that NYPA is ready is where you
4 ended.

5 I would love to see NYPA go for 15
6 gigawatts by 2030 because as an earlier commenter
7 said, that's the way that we will get the actual
8 amount of generation that we need in order to meet
9 New York's climate goals.

10 I think it is essential that Kathy Hochul
11 gets behind this instead of standing in the way of
12 it, and the same for Justin Driscoll.

13 I appreciate NYPA's commitment to going
14 with union labor, and as well as to going with --
15 with addressing issues of environmental racism
16 that have been ongoing.

17 I would like to take the next full minute
18 of my time for us all to have a moment of silence
19 for Dariel Vasquez, a firefighter in Greenwood
20 Lake, New York, who perished fighting a forest
21 fire in New York State in the fall. So, starting
22 now, I would like to have a moment of silence to
23 commemorate him.

24 (Silence.)

25 Thank you. Climate change is costing

1 people their homes, their lives, their health. It
2 is something that we can address and we must.
3 Please work on transitioning our grid with the
4 utmost haste, with a mind towards heading for 15
5 gigawatts by 2030. 3.5 gigawatts won't get us to
6 where we need to go to stay on target. Thank you.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Tara.

8 Our next speaker is Susan Van Dolsen.

9 Susan.

10 SUSAN VAN DOLSEN: Hello, can you hear me?

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Good morning. Yes, we
12 can.

13 SUSAN VAN DOLSEN: Hi. My name is Susan
14 Van Dolsen, a mother and grandmother living in
15 Westchester County. I was excited when New York
16 State passed the Build Public Renewables Act in
17 2023 and saw the law as a way to help fulfill the
18 CLCPA goals.

19 Time has passed quickly since the CLCPA
20 became law in 2019, and the state has not been
21 moving at the rate needed for renewable energy to
22 provide 70 percent of the state's energy by 2030
23 and 100 percent emission-free energy by 2040.

24 NYPA's draft Renewable Strategic Plan,
25 outlined some projects that have been initiated,

1 but it has many flaws. First, NYPA advanced only
2 a total of 3.5 gigawatts of renewable power in the
3 state in two years. This must be increased to 15
4 gigawatts by 2030.

5 I have lived in Westchester my whole life,
6 and I've never seen since such a wild period.
7 Wildfires in parks in New York City and the person
8 that perished in Orange County was just
9 commemorated highlight the need to act swiftly.

10 Dr. Mark Z. Jacobson of Stanford released a
11 landmark study that demonstrated how oil energy
12 needs could be met by wind, water, solar, and
13 battery storage. If the state had begun working
14 seriously on renewables years ago, we wouldn't be
15 this far behind. Instead, Governor Cuomo provided
16 over \$7 billion to prop-up unprofitable nuclear
17 power plants upstate. Had the money been used for
18 renewable energy, many more renewable projects
19 would have been deployed during the past years.

20 I'm strongly opposed to nuclear power as a
21 consideration to meet the CLCPA goals. Nuclear
22 power is too expensive, and new so-called advanced
23 nuclear has presented so many problems that a
24 developer of the Vz Test SMR Reactor, Ultra-Safe
25 Nuclear Corp, filed for bankruptcy in late

1 October. In addition, NextEra Corporation CEO
2 John Ketchum said he was, quote, not bullish on
3 the newer SMR technology. NextEra has an in-house
4 team dedicated to SMRs, he said, but so far they
5 have not drawn favorable conclusions about the
6 technology. Ketchum also raised questions about
7 the availability of nuclear fuel in the United
8 States and noted that SMRs remain very expensive,
9 even as the cost of renewable energy continues to
10 fall. We're prioritizing other generation
11 resources at this time, he said. Renewables are
12 here for the long haul. Nuclear power's full life
13 cycle is not emissions-free. There is no
14 repository for the 60-plus years of nuclear waste.
15 The closed plants are de facto radioactive storage
16 sites. This is an environmental injustice issue
17 for impacted communities in New York and for the
18 places where their uranium is mined in indigenous
19 areas.

20 Even if there was a solution to these
21 insurmountable issues, the time frame to deploy
22 enough nuclear power is at least 15 to 20 years.
23 Meanwhile, fossil fuels will continue to be used
24 during this time and emissions will increase. We
25 must not be distracted by a shiny new object.

1 NYPA must focus only on renewable energy.

2 Thank you.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

4 Our next speaker is Eileen Moran. Eileen.

5 EILEEN MORAN: I'm actually --

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Eileen Moran. Yes, we can
7 hear you now. Thanks, Eileen.

8 EILEEN MORAN: I'm Co-Chair of the PSC's
9 Environmental Justice Working Group. The Build
10 Public Renewables Act empowered NYPA to develop
11 enough renewable energy so New York meets its 2030
12 and 2040 targets, transitioning completely off
13 fossil fuels. New Yorkers experience the third
14 worst air quality in the world, according to
15 COP29, and have already experienced the damage of
16 floods and wildfires.

17 In Queens, where I live, 11 people drowned
18 during storm Ida, unable to escape their basement
19 apartments. NYPA has a unique opportunity to make
20 New York State a leader in meeting the climate
21 crisis head-on and improving the health and safety
22 of all New Yorkers.

23 Accordingly, your proposed plan is woefully
24 inadequate. NYPA must be far bolder and commit to
25 producing at least 15 gigawatts of renewable

1 energy and at least 5 gigawatts in New York City,
2 given our sizable energy demand.

3 As a union member, I applaud the strong
4 labor standards and training in the BPRA, and know
5 CUNY will be training workers for those
6 good-paying jobs, building and sustaining
7 renewable energy.

8 As a Queens College retiree, I urge you to
9 include many more CUNY campuses as sites for
10 renewable energy projects rather than giveaways to
11 big corporations. Decades of underfunding and
12 neglect means students, faculty, and staff work
13 and study in some of the most polluting buildings,
14 three making it to the state's top 20 worst
15 polluters.

16 I'm 83 and will likely not see New York
17 State hit its targets, but my former students, my
18 nieces and nephews, and the children and
19 grandchildren of my family and friends will. What
20 you do or fail to do will impact their health,
21 longevity, and the quality of their lives.

22 Do the right thing. Thank you, and I will
23 be there advocating to see that Governor Hochul
24 and Driscoll also do the right thing. Thank you,
25 NYPA, for your work.

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Eileen.

2 Our next speaker is Amy Tang. Amy.

3 Marcia North. Marcia.

4 Josh Karen. Josh.

5 JOSH KAREN: Yeah. Can you hear me?

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can, yes. Good
7 morning, Josh.

8 JOSH KAREN: Thank you. Thank you for --
9 NYPA for all of your work so far and for the
10 opportunity to have open public forums.

11 I'm testifying today because NYPA has a
12 responsibility to the people of New York to meet
13 the mandate-back demand of 15 gigawatts New
14 Yorkers have set forth. And because right now,
15 NYPA has a responsibility to keep their promise to
16 New York of a better, cleaner, more livable
17 future.

18 3.5 gigawatts is a start, but the moment
19 demands more. We are hurtling right now towards
20 more than 1.5 degrees of warming. Prospect Park
21 is on fire. New York is facing an unprecedented
22 drought and an incoming administration that denies
23 the climate crisis wholesale.

24 We cannot simply accept these as the new
25 normal, but if we do not take action now and build

1 a greener, more sustainable future, we will
2 quickly have no choice. And corporate profits and
3 bond ratings matter nothing when we're all
4 underwater.

5 NYPA right now has it in their hands with
6 the BPRA to build 15 gigawatts of public
7 renewables that will make New York a
8 sustainability leader, not just in our nation but
9 globally. By scaling up your existing closing
10 plans and the commendable start you have already
11 made and standing strong in this moment, we can
12 make a better future for all New Yorkers and do it
13 in a way that creates thousands of good-paying
14 union jobs for the working New Yorker through NYPA
15 and the mandate laid down by the CLCPA and BPRA.

16 We cannot afford to shrink at this moment.
17 We need to embrace the ambitious spirit of the
18 CLCPA, BPRA, and the people of our state. That is
19 why today we are calling on NYPA to listen to the
20 people, be ambitious, keep up your momentum, and
21 build on this plan, not to settle, but to lead, to
22 make New York a shining example.

23 We have the chance right now in this state
24 to lead by example and build a better future by it
25 for all New Yorkers. So, I call on NYPA right

1 now: Do not back down from the 15 gigawatt target
2 the people have called for. Thank you.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Josh.

4 Our next speaker is Edward Clee. Edward.

5 EDWARD CLEE: Hello.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Good morning, Edward. We
7 hear you.

8 EDWARD CLEE: Okay. My question -- I
9 should probably say the questions -- but I had to
10 offer a possible solution: Instead of 73 or 76
11 towers and you're taking down 600 acres of land,
12 is that -- is that 600 acres going to be replaced
13 with native plants that are perennial, that are
14 medicinal, and edible for their animals?

15 And two is, what would it be instead of
16 sending the power to the houses, we put in solar
17 wall boxes to stabilize the grid and then put in
18 the panels in the -- in the wind farms at the
19 homes, or offer a better program for the
20 homeowners, or better incentives for the
21 homeowners, and instead of receiving the power --
22 in Freedom, there's 700 or 800 houses, imagine 800
23 houses sending back the excess that is of what
24 they're not using in their homes. So, that's --
25 that's about all I got.

1 So, basically, to sum it up: Is solar wall
2 boxes for individual homeowners, and then
3 small-scale solar and wind panels, and then
4 replacing the 600 acres that you're about to cut
5 down, that's going to take the drainage and put
6 the water back into the land, we're replacing that
7 with perennials and natives that are medicinal and
8 edible for the animals to eat, and it's less
9 impactful to our environment. Thank you.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Edward.

11 Our next speaker is Tom McHale. Tom.

12 TOM MCHALE: Morning. Can you hear me?

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Good morning. We can,
14 yes. Good morning.

15 TOM MCHALE: Morning. My name is Tom
16 McHale. I'm with the New York State Laborers.
17 I'm an organizer. Laborers -- we would like to
18 recognize and commend NYPA's effort to create good
19 green union jobs so our members can go to work in
20 their own backyards. Our members live and work
21 where these projects would be cited.

22 The laborers are ready, willing, and able
23 to build New York's green future alongside NYPA
24 with our highly skilled and trained crew of men
25 and women. I appreciate the time to make a

1 comment. Thank you.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Tom.

3 Our next speaker is Harrison Watkins.

4 Harrison.

5 HARRISON WATKINS: Hi there. My name is --

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Good morning.

7 HARRISON WATKINS: Good morning. My name
8 is Harrison Watkins, and I also work for the New
9 York State Laborers Organizing Fund. We represent
10 44,000 union laborers across New York State.

11 And I would just like to echo my colleague
12 Tom's comments. We greatly appreciate NYPA's
13 commitment to creating good green union jobs. Our
14 44,000 members across the state stand ready to
15 build these projects. And we also stand ready to
16 partner with NYPA and commit to workforce
17 development so that we bring in people from New
18 York State's disadvantaged communities into our
19 pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs
20 across New York State to build a green workforce
21 of the future. Thank you.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

23 Our next speaker is Mike Jacobs. Mike.

24 MIKE JACOBS: Hi there. Number one,
25 Alexis, you're doing a great job in running this.

1 And I really think it's admiral that we're trying
2 to get off of fossil fuels.

3 My credentials are common sense. No
4 titles. I implore the fact that you work on
5 destroying the oceans with the illusion of
6 building wind turbines, conveniently called wind
7 farms and windmills, because the ugly truth is
8 they are destroying and desecrating our oceans.

9 There's no doubt about it. The incoming
10 administration, whatever you think, is not the
11 issue. The issue is supposedly that's going to be
12 stopped. Every day that money is spent continuing
13 on the issue of wind turbines is money lost. I
14 believe something must be done to get off of
15 fossil fuels. I'm not someone that's just a crazy
16 person that wants nothing.

17 The answer, even though we've had different
18 opinions, and Roger was right on target, is
19 nuclear. New nuclear. The scare tactics of some
20 people saying it doesn't work are not true. Why
21 are companies like Amazon -- after spending
22 incredible amounts of money trying to figure out
23 the best answer going towards new nuclear, because
24 building wind turbines, especially in our oceans,
25 is insanity. It is green energy unicorns. And

1 the only way they survive is through subsidies,
2 foreign petrochemical companies parading around as
3 green energy saviors.

4 Yes, we need answers. There's no doubt
5 about it. But everyone that pushes building wind
6 turbines in the ocean, in my opinion, is a green
7 energy criminal. I'm not looking to stop
8 everything. I'm looking for the right answers to
9 see what can be done to make a better world for
10 tomorrow.

11 Like that 83-year-old Eileen -- and Eileen,
12 I really hope you're around to see when these
13 changes are made; you sounded like a wonderful
14 person. Likewise, I may not be around at 79, but
15 what I want to leave is I inherited the beautiful
16 oceans from my parents and the parents before
17 them. For us to destroy the oceans with this evil
18 project, our children will hold us in the hall of
19 shame for what we are doing to the environment,
20 specifically when it comes to the illusion of wind
21 turbines being the answer.

22 Thank you very much for running this
23 seminar.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

25 Our next speaker is Anne Ruggles. Anne.

1 ANNE RUGGLES: Good morning. Can everyone
2 hear me okay?

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can, yes.

4 ANNE RUGGLES: Okay. Great. Thank you.
5 And thank you for the opportunity to comment
6 today.

7 I am a New York State taxpayer. I'm a
8 NYSEG and a National Grid customer. And I am a
9 former director in the renewable energy space
10 focused on PV and wind.

11 I'm commenting today specifically on what
12 we all agree New York State needs, which is an
13 affordable and reliable path for the future and
14 absolutely a cleaner planet.

15 But there's two things in the plan that I
16 would like to touch on and that a few others
17 already did. Specifically, let's talk about
18 reliability. I'm not going to go into detail
19 because I think -- I believe it's Ken Schue and
20 Roger Caiazza did an excellent job of talking
21 about reliability and the risk of using
22 intermittent technologies to fulfill this goal.
23 So, I'm in agreement with them that this plan
24 should be absolutely paused until other avenues
25 are explored to meet the goal quicker and more

1 efficiently, and potentially, you know, more
2 safely.

3 With that in mind, I would like to talk
4 then -- not about reliability, but about
5 affordability. What this plan is lacking is any
6 commitment or vision, short-term and long-term, to
7 what this is going to cost me, the taxpayer, me,
8 the ratepayer, businesses across New York State.
9 And I would like to refer you to the comptroller's
10 audit of NYSERDA, this was in July of 2024, of
11 their Climate Act Goals, Planning, Procurement,
12 and Progress document.

13 Now, I know NYPA -- you know, it
14 potentially is -- is taking the reins on this, but
15 specifically, they address -- they address the
16 fact that the costs are not known and have not
17 been researched -- or have not been reasonably
18 estimated. Data is inconclusive, and they're
19 using outdated variables and not looking towards
20 the future of things like electric cars and busses
21 and whatnot.

22 So, you know, as a -- as a ratepayer and a
23 taxpayer, you're telling me you're going to pay
24 \$25 million to create a renewable energy workforce
25 of New York State dollars or NYPA money, and

1 you're not telling me, you know, what it -- what
2 it would look like in the end for the average
3 citizen that resides in New York State.

4 The only other thing I'll mention in the
5 last couple of seconds here, I also believe that
6 the NYPA plan for private partnership for
7 renewables will further silence local communities,
8 not foster more engagement, and that ORES and the
9 RAPID Act are doing enough damage within our state
10 to -- to separate us. That's all I have. Thank
11 you.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
13 speaker is Klaus Yoder. Klaus.

14 KLAUS YODER: Hi. Can you hear me?

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes. Good morning.

16 KLAUS YODER: Good. Good morning. Thank
17 you for the chance to comment. I'm speaking today
18 as a layperson, Ulster County resident and
19 volunteer with Public Power New York, and as a
20 member of Middleton Valley Democratic Socialists
21 of America.

22 I'm speaking as an ordinary person, a
23 working parent, worried about the lack of urgency
24 the Strategic Plan displays as we are confronted
25 not only with climate disaster but also a

1 presidential administration that is actively
2 committed to exacerbating the crisis.

3 I'm calling on NYPA today to revise our
4 Strategic Plan to go from 3.5 gigawatts to 15 --
5 15 gigawatts of renewable energy because, frankly,
6 we're on the brink.

7 And I don't mean to sound shrill, but we
8 can see it enveloping us every day. It's -- you
9 know, it's raining today here in Hudson Valley,
10 but we've been plagued consistently this fall by
11 drought and forest fire. This impacts health,
12 mental health, business productivity, learning
13 environments; people are mentioning firefighters
14 who have died containing these -- these blazes.

15 I really appreciate the complexity and the
16 enormity of the task of decarbonizing, but we
17 cannot drop the thread and lose the plot. We need
18 to treat the situation as an emergency and take
19 responsibility now however we can.

20 This is not the moment to shrug our
21 shoulders and nibble around the edges. Someday
22 someone's going to be asking each of us what we
23 did in this situation. In doing something right
24 now means living up to the commitments the state
25 made in CLCPA five years ago. It means doing what

1 we can at the state level. NYPA has great power
2 through the Bill of Public Renewables Act to make
3 a difference and to do so in a way that brings a
4 just transition, working with organized labor to
5 protect jobs and grow in a green economy.

6 If we're worried about the practical
7 difficulties and the cost of the implementation of
8 the green energy transition, we need to also keep
9 in mind the mounting economic burden of dealing
10 with massive damage caused by flood, fire, and the
11 loss of productivity resulting from closed schools
12 of businesses.

13 We need to factor in the healthcare costs,
14 what this is going to do to our whole healthcare
15 system. So, in spite of the criticism of this
16 comment, I also think there's a lot of hope in
17 what NYPA could do and that they can lead the way
18 and make a huge impact in this environment.

19 So, thank you for this -- this chance to
20 comment, and I really hope that you reevaluate the
21 3.5 point gigawatt goal, and move it to 15. Thank
22 you.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Klaus.

24 Our next speaker is Joseph Stanton.

25 Joseph.

1 JOSEPH STANTON: Hey, can you hear me?

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can. Good
3 morning.

4 JOSEPH STANTON: Great. Thank you. Thank
5 you, NYPA, for holding this hearing. Thank you,
6 everyone, who commented.

7 I'm a regular person. I'll let smarter
8 people talk about -- you know, the science and the
9 transmission and things like that.

10 I am a parent of two kids. One is almost
11 six, and one is almost two. And today, we were
12 walking to school in the rain and my son said, I'm
13 so glad the drought's over. And I wasn't sure if
14 I should tell him that, like when you're older,
15 droughts are going to become much, much more
16 common. Fires are going to become much, much more
17 common.

18 You know, I don't think that 3.5 gigawatts
19 is enough. I trust everyone else who said that.
20 It doesn't seem like enough at all. You know,
21 we're trying to fight record droughts, you know,
22 and hurricanes, and things like that. I think
23 there is a lot of hope in building public
24 renewables in the NYPA plan. You know, and a lot
25 of hope for my son and my daughter. You know,

1 there could be a future where they're union
2 workers on renewable energy, on -- you know,
3 taking our -- our state and our country and our
4 world off these -- you know, awful polluting
5 sources of energy, but I don't think that that can
6 happen if we are not ambitious, if we're not up to
7 the scale of this problem. Right?

8 I don't want to tell him in 10 years, in 20
9 years, like, Well, we were worried about the cost,
10 or, Well, we were worried about, you know,
11 feasibility, things like that. I mean, you know,
12 like, you guys are experts. We have to -- I'm
13 relying on you to -- to do this.

14 So, I appreciate your time. I won't keep
15 you any longer. I just urge you to expand the
16 plan. Thank you.

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Joseph.

18 Our next speaker is Gabriel Hetland. I
19 believe Gabriel did try to come to our hearing in
20 person yesterday, and then we ran out of time to
21 hear from -- from you, so I'm glad to see you join
22 today, Gabriel.

23 GABRIEL HETLAND: Can you hear me now?

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

25 GABRIEL HETLAND: Hi. Can you hear me?

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can hear you.

2 Good morning.

3 GABRIEL HETLAND: Okay. I'm on a train
4 going to SUNY Albany, where I'm a professor, and I
5 -- amongst other things, teach classes on climate
6 change. And for the last few years, I've had to
7 avoid or minimize (technical difficulty) for my
8 students; I need to sort of really think about
9 their mental (technical difficulty) or about their
10 climate crisis.

11 And the one thing that has distantly given
12 them hope in recent years is the BPRA, in the last
13 year, specifically, of course. But I'm really
14 worried that if the plan remains as it is, that
15 hope will be lost, that -- you know, if we have
16 another example of an ambitious plan that gets
17 scaled back to something that won't actually make
18 a difference, my students will continue to feel as
19 though there's nothing we can do, that the hope
20 that they felt with the BPRA will not go there.

21 So, I think it's absolutely essential to
22 have the most ambitious plan possible to scale it
23 up from 3.5 gigawatts to 15 gigawatts. And to
24 also really think about the whole state, to think
25 about projects in the downstate area, in the

1 Hudson Valley, in New York City, where many of my
2 students, even though they're at SUNY Albany, many
3 of them come from disadvantaged communities across
4 New York City, Westchester, and elsewhere. And
5 so, having a plan that truly involves them,
6 involves their communities, but that is actually
7 ambitious, that actually will go to meeting the
8 needs of the moment, feels really essential.

9 So, the main message I have is, please,
10 please, please give my students hope. I'm also a
11 father of a five-year-old. I live near Prospect
12 Park. My wife has a job in the city, so we live
13 there. We couldn't go out recently because of the
14 wildfire.

15 So, I want a future for my son. I want a
16 future for my students. I want a future for all
17 of the disadvantaged communities across New York
18 State. And I think it's absolutely essential to
19 get 15 gigawatts into the plan.

20 I think the only realistic thing to do is
21 that, as Bill McKibben and others have said, the
22 science is unrelenting. The math of physics is
23 unrelenting. And if we don't attention to that,
24 we are literally facing a catastrophic future.

25 Thank you so much. And I hope you could

1 hear me on the train. I'm (technical difficulty)
2 know the sound is not great. Bye.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we were able to.
4 There were a couple of words at the beginning we
5 missed, and we'll just to follow up with you to
6 make sure that we get those right in the
7 transcript. But thank you, Gabriel.

8 Our next speaker is Lawrence Wang.
9 Lawrence.

10 LAWRENCE WANG: Can you hear me?

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can. Thank you.

12 LAWRENCE WANG: Fantastic. My name is
13 Lawrence Wang. I live in Brooklyn, and I'm a
14 member of the Public Power New York Coalition.

15 Having read your press materials and spoken
16 to a number of people on -- people who are at the
17 hearings as well as otherwise, it has become
18 abundantly clear that NYPA leadership thinks they
19 know better than us, that you think our calls for
20 50 gigawatts are just pie in the sky dreams of
21 tree huggers and do-gooders who don't know better.

22 I want to remind NYPA leadership that we
23 wrote the Build Public Renewables Act. I
24 personally know people who wrote the language of
25 the law. My friend named the bill. Our research

1 is informed by experts in public power, financing,
2 supply chains, and labor. Our demands are
3 informed by the community leaders and
4 organizations from across the state. It's how we
5 settled on 50 gigawatts as a number that NYPA
6 should target by 2030. And that's how we know
7 that NYPA does have the ability to raise the funds
8 to build more renewables.

9 The problem, at least for the Governor and
10 NYPA leadership, is that doing so would change
11 NYPA's role in the state.

12 What is NYPA for? When the then-governor
13 FDR established NYPA, the mission was to give back
14 to the people the natural power which is theirs.
15 But for Governor Hochul and NYPA CEO Justin
16 Driscoll, it seems like NYPA's mission is to
17 maintain their AA-credit rating while being a
18 discount code for the Amazons, Lockheed Martins,
19 and City Groups of the world.

20 What we and thousands of New Yorkers
21 believe is that NYPA should take its cues from its
22 founding, not its present. And this is not a
23 philosophical difference. You can't look around
24 at what's happening across the world and think
25 that 3.5 gigawatts is enough. You don't have to

1 look that far. Hurricanes devastating so-called
2 climate havens, brush fires from Brooklyn to the
3 Bronx. New York City, just one step away from an
4 emergency that would come with mandatory water
5 restrictions.

6 You don't think NYPA can afford -- can't
7 afford to build 50 gigawatts? New Yorkers can't
8 afford for you not to. What good is a pristine
9 credit rating if the world is on fire? A tool is
10 built for a purpose. NYPA was built for this one.
11 Wield it. Thank you.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

13 Our next speaker is AJ Ruther. AJ.

14 AJ RUTHER: Hi, my name is AJ Ruther, and
15 I'm the Organizing Coordinator at Alliance for a
16 Green Economy, which is a nonprofit based in
17 Syracuse, New York, that advocates for climate
18 action and affordable energy.

19 The climate crisis is already climbing and
20 killing New Yorkers, from the 350 New Yorkers who
21 die each year from heat-related illness to the
22 firefighter who just died fighting a climate
23 change-fueled wildfire. That means that every
24 moment that NYPA delays building as much renewable
25 energy as possible is paid for with billions of

1 dollars in climate-related damages, human lives,
2 and irreversible climate tipping points that will
3 make our planet unlivable.

4 We feel that NYPA's draft plan doesn't
5 reflect the urgency of the climate crisis. We
6 urge Governor Hochul and Justin Driscoll to show
7 real climate leadership by building at least 15
8 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030 to meet the
9 targets mandated by the CLCPA.

10 NYPA has an opportunity to save lives and
11 our planet, create thousands of good jobs, and
12 reduce energy bills for New Yorkers. We hope that
13 you'll take your responsibility to our
14 communities, the rest of the world, and future
15 generations seriously. We urge you to be as
16 ambitious as possible in your renewable build-out.

17 We also oppose the suggestion that NYPA
18 build new nuclear energy. The harms of nuclear
19 energy are well documented. There are higher
20 cancer rates in areas where uranium is mined,
21 transported, and stored, especially in indigenous
22 communities, which are often on the frontlines.
23 Nuclear is more expensive than wind and solar,
24 plus storage, and we should be pursuing the most
25 cost-effective energy options, as over one million

1 New Yorkers already can't afford their energy
2 bills.

3 Nuclear also takes a long time to ramp up
4 and down, so it wouldn't address the intermittency
5 of renewables in the ways that energy storage,
6 demand response, and energy efficiency measures
7 can.

8 In terms of siting, we urge you to plan at
9 least five gigawatts of renewables in the Hudson
10 Valley and Downstate New York, which have the
11 highest amount of fossil fuel generation in the
12 state. But we also urge NYPA to plan to build
13 more renewable energy in Central New York.

14 If Micron does decide to open up a chip
15 manufacturing plant in Clay, New York, it will use
16 more energy than the entire state of Vermont. So,
17 we hope that NYPA would partner with Micron to
18 ensure all of their operations are powered with
19 new, publicly-owned renewable energy.

20 We also have several unsafe, expensive,
21 aging nuclear reactors in Oswego, New York, that
22 will need to be phased out. And we urge NYPA to
23 proactively plan to build enough renewables to
24 replace these plants with renewables before they
25 need to be shut down.

1 We have an abundance of potential wind and
2 wave power from Lake Ontario, and we urge you to
3 consider setting projects there. We also urge you
4 to cite solar energy in places that are less
5 likely to face community opposition, such as
6 building solar canopies over parking lots and
7 buildings instead of farmlands and siting more
8 renewable energy on public lands.

9 We hope that you will prioritize fighting
10 the climate crisis, saving lives, and saving the
11 future of our planet over maintaining an AA-credit
12 rating, and that you will act with the urgency
13 that this crisis deserves. Thank you.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, AJ.

15 Our next speaker is Walter Mugdan. Walter.

16 WALTER MUGDAN: Hi. Can you hear me all
17 right?

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

19 WALTER MUGDAN: Thank you very much.

20 My name is Walter Mugdan. I'm the head of
21 a local conservation group on the Queens-Nassau
22 border in New York City and Long Island called the
23 Udalls Cove Preservation Committee. We've been in
24 the conservation business for 55 years.

25 I'm also recently retired from the United

1 States Environmental Protection Agency, where I
2 worked for 48 years.

3 My generation has been very active in a lot
4 of environmental protection over these last 50 --
5 50, 60 years, but my generation completely failed
6 on what is the most important and the most
7 critical function ahead of us, and that is to deal
8 with the global climate crisis.

9 I'm a very strong supporter of New York's
10 efforts under -- through the CLPA (sic) and the
11 targets that have been set there -- the ambitious
12 targets. I think that it is absolutely essential
13 that we try and promote all the renewable energy
14 we can, particularly offshore wind, but also, as
15 the previous speaker said, solar energy on
16 landfills, solar energy used on canopies, over
17 parking lots, on the rooftops of big-box stores,
18 things of that sort. We have to really scale it
19 up quickly.

20 I also think that the Propel project in
21 Long Island and into the -- into the Bronx is a
22 critical way of getting the offshore wind to where
23 it's needed. I'm a strong supporter of that. And
24 while I don't have the expertise of some of the
25 other speakers to speak about the particular

1 number of gigawatts that ought to be targeted, the
2 answer is absolutely the maximum that can be done
3 needs to be done. We are way too late. And so,
4 every additional day, week, month, year that we
5 spend not carrying out this terribly important
6 task is -- is just putting another nail in the
7 coffin.

8 So, I do strongly urge that the most
9 ambitious possible outlook be -- be incorporated
10 into the Strategic Plan and that NYPA work, and
11 along with other state -- parts of state
12 government, to really advance this effort as much
13 and as quickly as possible. Thank you very much.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Walter.

15 Our next speaker is Marsha North. Marsha.

16 MARSHA NORTH: Hello. Can you hear me?

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes. Good morning. We
18 can.

19 MARSHA NORTH: All right. Hi. I am a
20 rural resident, and I am seeing -- I get to see
21 the solar -- the solar project and the wind --
22 wind project. And -- and the electricity needs to
23 stay reliant and affordable. The value of solar
24 and wind decline, and economic value has become
25 larger shares of the -- of the electricity growth

1 for physical reasons. They produce too much
2 energy when it is needed and not enough energy
3 when needed, and will require reliable backup
4 (inaudible). To make up for the unreliability, it
5 needs to massively increase the physical footprint
6 of energy production, requiring a magnitude of
7 land, longer and less utilized transmission lines,
8 it needs large amounts of storage, and requires
9 materials for mining, to processing, to
10 installing, to dispensing the materials as waste
11 that is larger than for non-renewable energy
12 sources.

13 The cost of wind prices has significantly
14 risen due to global supply chains and the rising
15 cost of potential minerals. Wind projects have
16 significant adverse impact on the environment and
17 public health in our rural areas that have
18 carbon-free energy due to hydroelectric and new
19 solar power (inaudible) for Western New York.

20 Thy -- to the use of 30,000 acres of land
21 for wind -- one wind project that has 5,900
22 forested acres, of which 1,550 acres of
23 carbon-absorbing trees would be cleared, and 1,686
24 acres of forest to be fragmented, needing to clear
25 trees for access roads and electric quarter paths

1 (inaudible) for the environment, and over this
2 lifespan, 31-year lifespan, 26,000 and 39,500
3 insects with beetle-eating bats will be killed,
4 and two species are in -- in danger with -- and
5 the State Department of Health testified during a
6 hearing on the Alle-Catt Wind project proposal
7 that project noise has caused a significant public
8 risk.

9 How many more people will experience
10 adverse health risks due to the wind project? Is
11 it worth all this impact on the environment and
12 health of residents in the state to generate about
13 20 percent of electricity from wind compared to 98
14 percent for nuclear and counterpower?

15 There are smaller wind turbines that are
16 efficient, quiet, and work-friendly for the
17 private sector. And more of that needs to be
18 utilized. Should solar panels -- I agree with
19 what the other women have said, that solar panels
20 should not be placed on acres of farmland or land
21 in general. Only around 15 percent of sunlight is
22 converted to electricity. The rest is returned to
23 the environment with heat because the panels are
24 usually much darker than the ground they cover, so
25 it would be more beneficial on (inaudible) for

1 private sector use.

2 We need to have a plan where it's -- if we
3 can find energy -- energy project so that it can
4 -- so we can continue to keep the lights on
5 without damaging more of our natural resources as
6 our -- as our trees and -- and the land. Thank
7 you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our next
9 speaker is Tanzania Thomas. Tanzania.

10 TANZANIA THOMAS: Hello. Thank you. Can
11 you all hear me?

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

13 TANZANIA THOMAS: Thank you. Good morning.
14 I'm a New York City resident and a community
15 organizer, cultural worker with the Friends
16 Committee on National Legislation. I am here to
17 echo my support for Governor Hochul and the New
18 York Power Authority to build more public
19 renewables, which will only improve the living
20 conditions of New Yorkers as we are already facing
21 a series of crises in housing affordability and
22 climate.

23 I support the implementation of 15 gigawatt
24 renewables by 2030, which will lower electric
25 bills. Utility bills are outrageously high where

1 I am in New York, create 25,000 union jobs for New
2 Yorkers and bring us closer to our climate goals
3 with clean and renewable energy.

4 These are the outcomes that we should be
5 prioritizing if we care about a better future for
6 New Yorkers. There is no other option. Thank
7 you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you. Our final
9 speaker this morning will be Barb Massoud. Barb.

10 BARB MASSOUD: Hi. Are you able to hear me
11 now?

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we are.

13 BARB MASSOUD: Okay. Hi.

14 So, as you said, my name is Barb Massoud.
15 I'm just a concerned citizen. I also represent a
16 non-governmental organization called Finally
17 Defense. I've been involved in renewable energy,
18 you know, seeking that awareness for several years
19 now as it has affected my community. I'm from
20 Upstate New York area, Litchfield, New York.

21 I felt it was important to speak on behalf
22 of employing the use of critical inquiry processes
23 when we make our public energy decisions. I hear
24 so much as far as emotional stories, public --
25 public presentations from companies who will seek

1 to make great profits from employing green energy.
2 I had a personal experience where we were finding
3 it in our community, and this just speaks to the
4 example of what their objectives are. He would
5 come to a town hall meeting in a suit coat from
6 the Albany area and quickly change into a flannel
7 shirt to come into our board meeting where he
8 wanted to make -- make our community accept a
9 program -- a wind energy program.

10 So, when we're talking about making these
11 public energy decisions, I just really feel that
12 it's important that the people that are making
13 them at the New York State level and the federal
14 government, that we base it on the critical
15 inquiry of meeting our chief objectives in the
16 area of energy: Number one being energy stability
17 to assure safe communities regarding heat, power
18 for medical technologies, clean water plants,
19 sanitation, just to name a few of these.

20 Secondly, we need to have it
21 environmentally friendly or conscientious to
22 minimally have negative impacts. And thirdly, it
23 needs to meet an objective of cost-effectiveness.
24 All of this requires us to look at data. There's
25 much out there from both within the United States

1 as well as worldwide, where we can look at
2 different penetrations of renewable energy and how
3 that may actually pan out, like in the actual CO2
4 emissions, as well as energy stability. Just a
5 couple of examples.

6 And like I said, I'm a layperson, so I
7 would, in this conversation, just try to encourage
8 you to think about nuclear versus renewable. Is
9 that it?

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes. Thank you, Barb.

11 BARB MASSOUD: Okay.

12 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you so much.

13 Now, that concludes our list of speakers.
14 I would just like to wrap up today by thanking
15 everyone for joining us today. A special thank
16 you to those who did choose to speak up or to
17 supply us with some written comments.

18 If anyone has additional comments, please
19 recall you can still submit them via our website,
20 or you can email them directly to
21 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

22 Thanks again, everyone, and enjoy the rest
23 of your day.

24 (Thereupon, the virtual meeting was
25 concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
certify that I was authorized to and did report the
foregoing proceedings, and that the transcript is a true
and correct transcription of my notes of the proceedings.

Dated November 27th, 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY
PUBLIC MEETING
VIRTUAL

November 21, 2024

6:00 p.m. - 8:10 p.m.

(Evening session.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Alexis Harley, Chief Risk and Resilience

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Cecily Morris

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1 ALEXIS HARLEY: Good evening, and welcome
2 to our virtual public hearing. I want to call out
3 that we have some participants gathered in our
4 Hawkins Point Visitor Center in Massena with NYPA
5 Trustee Cecily Morris. Hello, Massena.

6 My name is Alexis Harley, and I'm NYPA's
7 Chief Risk and Resiliency Officer. Although it's
8 not in my title, I also oversee the sustainability
9 team. My role entails managing risk, ensuring
10 that NYPA is resilient in the face of changing
11 conditions, and embedding sustainability into our
12 work.

13 My focus is how we connect the pieces
14 together, balance multiple priorities, and make
15 sure we go in eyes wide open as we work to support
16 the clean energy transition in the state.

17 So, I'm really excited to be part of our
18 renewables strategic planning process, and I
19 really look forward to hearing your views tonight.

20 NYPA issued its draft renewables Strategic
21 Plan on October 8th and scheduled 12 public
22 hearings across the state to solicit input from
23 interested parties regarding the draft. Tonight,
24 we are going to begin by providing some common
25 context for you. We will show a video about the

1 New York Power Authority, give an overview of
2 NYPA's expanded authority, and then highlight key
3 elements of the draft Strategic Plan.

4 Of course, today, we're gathered to hear
5 from you. So, after the presentations, we will be
6 inviting those who signed up to give public
7 comments, which will be recorded, transcribed and
8 entered into the public record.

9 With that, let's roll to the video so you
10 can get to know us better.

11 (The video played as follows: SPEAKER:
12 For more than 90 years, the New York Power
13 Authority has been an essential part of the
14 solution for New York State and its residents,
15 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
16 opportunities.

17 Through customer partnerships, energy
18 solutions, and the responsible supply of
19 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
20 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
21 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

22 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
23 serving customers in local and state governments,
24 industry, large and small businesses, and
25 nonprofit organizations.

1 The power for these customers is equal to
2 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
3 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
4 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
5 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
6 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
7 hydropower.

8 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
9 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
10 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
11 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
12 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

13 As we bring power to customers, we also
14 actively ensure people from our host communities
15 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
16 from our clean energy economy.

17 We work on projects across the state to
18 increase energy efficiency, improve
19 infrastructure, and support economic development.

20 Our hydropower projects support more than
21 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
22 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
23 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
24 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
25 the communities we serve.

Our economic and community focus extends to the New York State Canal Corporation, which became a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs. The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New York. And together, NYPA and Canals are revitalizing the canals for the economic and recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors from around the world.

Our efforts to create a clean energy future for New York are gaining speed. We are looking ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious decarbonization goals and energy needs in the years to come.

In 2023, the New York State Legislature gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable energy deployment and support other state priorities. This expanded authority will accelerate the development of renewable energy in New York State, support expanded workforce training for jobs in the renewable energy sector, and provide for the creation of the Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program to provide bill credits for low and moderate-income ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned

1 utilities.

2 Additionally, we will lead the state's
3 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
4 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
5 production at our small natural gas power plants
6 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
7 certain reliability and environmental conditions
8 are met.

9 We are also developing action plans to
10 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
11 carbon-emitting facilities.

12 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
13 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
14 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
15 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
16 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
17 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
18 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
19 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

20 (End of video.)

21 ALEXIS HARLEY: As you just saw, NYPA is
22 the largest state public power organization in the
23 nation. We operate 17 generating facilities and
24 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission.
25 More than 80 percent of the electricity NYPA

1 produces is clean, renewable hydropower. And we
2 believe we're in a unique position to do even more
3 to advance the state's bold clean energy goals.

4 While the focus of tonight is on our draft
5 renewables plan, I want to point out that as NYPA
6 builds, owns, and operates new renewables
7 projects, we need to have an electric grid they
8 can connect to, one that is not clogged with
9 bottlenecks that prevent the clean energy from
10 getting to where it needs to go. That's why NYPA
11 is pursuing the most ambitious transformation of
12 New York's electric grid in more than 40 years,
13 and the state is implementing new procedures to
14 ensure that transmission can be sited, connected,
15 and built.

16 NYPA owns one-third of the state's
17 high-voltage transmission, and we continue to make
18 major improvements to build a more flexible
19 21st-century electric grid with significantly
20 greater access to a mix of carbon-free energy
21 sources.

22 We know that a modernized grid will be much
23 more resilient, and that's part of the work that
24 we're doing today to support the projects of
25 tomorrow.

1 In the past two years, NYPA has engaged in
2 a variety of public engagement pathways to inform
3 the foundation for building our new renewables
4 resources as authorized by the 2023-2024 Enacted
5 State Budget. The budget authorized and directed
6 NYPA to build renewables subject to a Strategic
7 Plan, which must be approved by its trustees
8 following a public comment period and at least
9 three public hearings.

10 Tonight is our 10th public hearing in New
11 York State, and we still have two additional
12 hearings that we will complete by the end of next
13 week. That's because we felt it was important to
14 have more hearings in order to be able to hear
15 from more of you.

16 Like we did with our 2023 and 2024
17 conferral processes, we welcome public engagement
18 and feedback as we shape our Strategic Plan to
19 build more renewables in the state.

20 I know many of you came to speak out
21 tonight about that draft plan, and I will now turn
22 over to Vennela Yadhati to give a brief overview
23 of the elements of this plan.

24 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Alexis.

25 Good evening, everyone. I'm Vennela

1 Yadhathi. I'm the Vice President for NYPA
2 Renewables, leading this effort to build new
3 renewable generation and energy storage projects
4 across the state.

5 We're in the middle of what could be one of
6 the most significant eras in NYPA's 93-year
7 history. Last May, as part of the 2023-'24
8 Enacted State Budget, lawmakers entrusted us with
9 expanded authority, new capabilities, and
10 responsibilities, or new opportunities for NYPA to
11 continue to serve or further serve New Yorkers in
12 the clean energy space.

13 Let me explain: First, the expanded
14 authority gave NYPA the ability to build, own, and
15 operate renewable generation projects like solar,
16 wind, and battery energy storage to help the state
17 achieve the bold renewable energy goals outlined
18 in the Climate Act.

19 My team at NYPA has identified a first
20 tranche of 40 such projects spread across every
21 region of the state. And while the state budget
22 did not require NYPA to meet any specific
23 threshold in our draft Strategic Plan, these 40
24 projects represent a total capacity exceeding 3.5
25 gigawatts.

1 What is 3.5 gigawatts mean? 3.5 gigawatts
2 is the same as 10 percent of the electric load of
3 all of New York City. I know that it doesn't
4 sound like much, but to put it in perspective, it
5 is what it takes to power whole cities like
6 Zurich, Helsinki, or Reykjavik. Closer-to-home
7 examples: Boulder, Colorado, Reno, Nevada, or
8 Austin, Texas.

9 And these 40 projects are just the
10 beginning of our commitment to expand our
11 portfolio of delivering clean, reliable energy to
12 every corner of New York.

13 Right now, NYPA is doing full due diligence
14 on each project to determine whether or not they
15 to become the best fit for New Yorkers. We want
16 to ensure these projects truly benefit our
17 communities and therefore, belong in NYPA's
18 renewable energy portfolio.

19 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's
20 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment
21 in New York. We also want to explore meaningful
22 partnerships to support the state's equitable and
23 efficient transition to a clean energy future.

24 This first tranche includes a mix of NYPA's
25 own greenfield projects and co-developed

1 initiatives, where we will partner with the
2 private sector to combine our complementary skills
3 and strengths to jointly develop, construct, own,
4 and operate these projects together. It includes
5 a variety of projects as well, both large scale,
6 that which is the predominant portion of the
7 portfolio right now, and reflects the market
8 conditions of renewables in New York State and
9 small-distributed generation projects, especially
10 those local to in-community-based projects that
11 the communities can not only see but tangible
12 touch and feel projects.

13 It includes a variety of technologies:
14 Solar PV, wind, and battery energy storage, and a
15 variety of locations and site conditions. Half of
16 our own greenfield portfolio includes projects
17 that repurpose former landfills, brownfields, and
18 closed correctional facilities for advancing
19 renewable generation.

20 We've been calling it turning the brown
21 into the green, but yesterday, a colleague said it
22 to me that turning brownfields into bright fields.

23 My point is we are collaborating with our
24 sister agencies and NYPA's customers, including
25 local governments, to identify more such exciting

1 opportunities because NYPA cannot do this alone.

2 A few examples of projects that NYPA has
3 already been pursuing range from a 2.1 megawatt
4 rooftop of solar PV project that we built at SUNY
5 Albany, to -- which is the largest rooftop solar
6 project on any SUNY campus, to the 12.5 megawatts
7 community solar project that we're developing at
8 the JFK Airport, which will serve the underserved
9 communities surrounding the airport through bill
10 credits.

11 So far, we have pre-qualified a stable of
12 more than 85 developers and investors that can
13 collaborate with us to build this initial tranche
14 and future tranche. NYPA's role and goal is to
15 not crowd out the private sector but to work
16 together, leveraging our strengths to build more
17 renewables and help the state achieve its clean
18 energy goals.

19 By maintaining majority ownership and
20 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch our
21 finances further and accelerate the transition to
22 clean energy. As we described in this Strategic
23 Plan draft, NYPA has not received any state
24 funding to build new renewable generation
25 projects. Instead, we're self-funding these

1 efforts, along with our other critical commitments
2 to the CLCPA, such as new transmission development
3 and growing a clean energy workforce, all entirely
4 through NYPA's own revenues.

5 There have been a lot of questions about
6 the size of this first tranche of projects.
7 Financing 15 gigawatts of energy would be roughly
8 about \$30 billion, the same as paying for four new
9 LaGuardia Airports all at once. That's a lot of
10 capital. So, we are working with industry
11 partners. We continue to talk to the state and
12 federal government and we continue to look for new
13 partners to build even more in our future
14 projects.

15 Given these constraints, a balanced
16 approach is essential to bring more renewable
17 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
18 offer the highest returns. This helps ensure we
19 can reduce costs to ratepayers and maximize the
20 impact of every dollar we spend.

21 And there is more to come. This is only
22 the first tranche and the first Strategic Plan
23 we've published. In a way, the plan itself is
24 renewable. That is, a plan we will regularly
25 update as we add more projects for consideration

1 by the public and NYPA's Board of Trustees.

2 Part of preparing to release this draft
3 plan was making sure that NYPA had the right tools
4 and staffed right to support it. This includes
5 having the expertise to make sure the proposed
6 projects meet technical, economic, environmental
7 and, very importantly, environmental justice needs
8 in the state.

9 In the past 18 months, NYPA has established
10 a new business line and new business structures
11 and filled key personnel roles, like my team, many
12 of whom are actually listening to this
13 conversation right now. We've obtained approval
14 from our Board of Trustees to form a new renewable
15 subsidiary, and we obtained approval for an
16 initial capital allocation of \$100 million for
17 developing and garnering, and other necessary
18 resources to advance this first tranche of
19 projects.

20 We continue to source and solicit
21 additional project opportunities to append to our
22 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue
23 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
24 as we expand and grow our pipeline on future
25 tranches of products.

1 And these projects aren't being built in a
2 silo. They're part of a holistic approach to
3 renewable development that supports environmental
4 justice, workforce development, and affordability.

5 How are we doing that? You see, the
6 '23-'24 Enacted State Budget also gave NYPA the
7 ability to establish the Renewable Energy Access
8 to Community Help. I'll repeat that again because
9 acronyms are easy to remember as an acronym, but
10 not the (inaudible): The Renewable Energy Access
11 and Community Help, or REACH for short, is a
12 program that allows NYPA to use a portion of the
13 revenues generated from our new renewable
14 generation projects to benefit low or
15 moderate-income households in disadvantaged
16 communities through electric utility bill credits.

17 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
18 Service Commission has formally accepted our
19 application to create the REACH program. Once our
20 projects are online and are generating revenue,
21 and NYPA gathers funds from all available sources,
22 money will be available to flow to low-income New
23 Yorkers through the process set forth by the PSC
24 order.

25 While REACH is still under development, the

1 program will appear as automatic bill credits
2 alongside the Energy Affordability program and the
3 Statewide Solar for All products. NYPA will also
4 invest up to \$25 million annually in collaboration
5 with the New York State Department of Labor to
6 create jobs and provide workforce training for
7 people who want to work in the clean energy
8 industry. Through this partnership, we have
9 already awarded \$12.5 million this fiscal year in
10 funding for workforce opportunities for New
11 Yorkers across the state, like the Say Yes Buffalo
12 Youth Apprenticeship program and the Renaissance
13 Technical Institute in New York City, and several
14 others from disadvantaged communities across the
15 state to pursue good-paying clean energy careers.
16 Again, good-paying clean energy, not just jobs,
17 but careers.

18 And with regard to the workforce on the
19 proposed products, NYPA will require each and
20 every renewable energy project that we will be
21 building to be built with union labor.

22 I'm going to say that again: Every single
23 project in NYPA's portfolio must have a project
24 labor agreement. And we will require all
25 contractors and subcontractors associated with the

1 project work to utilize apprenticeship agreements.
2 So, those learning on this first tranche of
3 projects can be seasoned veterans for our future
4 tranches of renewable energy projects. The new
5 law also requires NYPA to develop a plan to end
6 fossil fuel-based generation at its small natural
7 gas power plants in New York City and Long Island
8 by 2030, as long as reliability and environmental
9 conditions are met. The plan to do so is required
10 by May of next year.

11 And we, with NYISO, are actively pursuing
12 strategies and exploring opportunities to meet
13 this commitment while considering the reliability
14 and air quality impacts, including the potential
15 for deploying battery storage at some of these
16 sites.

17 I know I just shared a long list of actions
18 NYPA has been taking and continues to take as part
19 of the new authority. As a reminder, the draft of
20 our plan is on our website, NYPA.gov/renewables,
21 and I encourage all of you to read it. That's not
22 just because, again, I helped write it or the
23 people on this call are listening, and they know
24 that they're a part of writing the draft Strategic
25 Plan, but your feedback is important to us.

1 Again, thank you for taking the time to
2 join us to learn more and to give your feedback
3 and comments about this plan.

4 Alexis, back to you.

5 ALEXIS HARLEY: Thanks, Vennela.

6 Before we open up the public comment
7 portion of this evening, I'm going to spend a
8 minute, just a reminder for everyone, of a couple
9 of logistic and technical details: So, as a
10 reminder, the law requires NYPA to solicit public
11 comment and hold a minimum of three public
12 hearings in regionally diverse parts of the state
13 on this draft Strategic Plan that Vennela has just
14 described to us.

15 Our timekeeper, Lindsay Kryzak, will call
16 on everyone who signed up to speak. Speakers will
17 be given three minutes to deliver a public comment
18 for the record. We recognize that some of you may
19 have a longer comment; if you run out of time, you
20 can simply submit your full comment on our website
21 or email it directly to
22 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

23 The feedback you give tonight will be
24 transcribed and compiled with the written
25 comments, which must be considered and

1 incorporated into the final Strategic Plan, which
2 will be published on NYPA's website and submitted
3 to the Governor and the legislature by January
4 31st, 2025.

5 Thank you for joining us this evening, and
6 I'll now turn it over to our timekeeper.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Alexis.

8 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is
9 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
10 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or
11 required by applicable law, regulation, or order,
12 and it may be made available in whole or in part
13 in the public record in accordance with the
14 agency's rules.

15 Each member of the public will be given
16 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.
17 Additional comments can be shared via our website
18 at NYPA.gov or via email directly to
19 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

20 I would ask our speakers to let our tech
21 team unmute you when it's your turn to speak. Our
22 first speaker is Assembly Member Khaleel Anderson.
23 Assembly Member?

24 KHALEEL ANDERSON: Thank you so much. Can
25 you all hear me?

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can. Thank you.

2 KHALEEL ANDERSON: Thank you both for this
3 great presentation. I'm grateful to hear NYPA's
4 plans to help move us into a renewable space. My
5 concern, of course, is around making sure that all
6 renewable projects have an LBE component, Local
7 Businesses, and Entrepreneurship component for
8 both prime contracting opportunities and sub-prime
9 contracting opportunities, whether we're building
10 windmills, whether we are doing charging stations
11 of the like. So, that's one concern that I have.

12 Secondly, I have a concern that NYPA should
13 be focused on building at least 15 gigawatts of
14 renewable energy by 2030 to make sure that we are
15 on track to our renewable goals based off of the
16 CLCPA goals that we have in place, as well as the
17 Build Public Renewables legislation that I believe
18 was passed at the last session or the session
19 before.

20 So, I just want to make sure that we're
21 staying on track -- excuse me, it was last year.
22 Staying on track with our renewable goals, but
23 also including businesses, small businesses, LBEs
24 for contracting and subcontracting opportunities
25 via construction.

1 I also want to make sure that
2 apprenticeship programs actually reach the
3 hard-to-employ and/or individuals who are
4 economically displaced. And what I mean by that
5 is that an industry that may or may not exist
6 anymore, we should be placing folks through --
7 into this new industry. For example, coal
8 mining -- and I'm not saying that that's something
9 we do here in the state of New York, but
10 nonetheless, using that as an example, that is the
11 industry that's phasing out, and we want to make
12 sure that people who are being economically
13 displaced because of the changing job landscape
14 can -- can now have space in the green -- in
15 greening and growing our infrastructure.

16 Lastly, I want to make sure -- and I thank
17 you both again. I want to make sure that we are
18 focused on public housing residents and
19 individuals who, again, hard to employ but also
20 individuals that are disadvantaged as a part of
21 not just hiring, but also the contracting
22 opportunities as well. We want to make sure that
23 those folks are included as we're working through
24 this.

25 I do have faith that we will continue to

1 push towards making sure we reach our goals. I
2 did sign on to a letter indicating that this is
3 something that I'm passionate about, and it's my
4 hope not just to my service as a member of the
5 Energy Committee for the New York State Assembly
6 but also as an environmental advocate to ensure we
7 reach our goals, to make a greener, cleaner,
8 healthier, stronger, focused, energy-efficient New
9 York. Thank you all.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Assembly
11 Member.

12 Our next speaker is Brian Wilson. Brian.

13 BRIAN WILSON: Can you hear me?

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

15 BRIAN WILSON: Perfect. Thank you. Hello,
16 all. I am Brian Wilson, Representative of the New
17 York Energy Alliance, a participant in the
18 conferral process already held.

19 Since our position has already been
20 captured, my brief statement will be offered to
21 maintain a sense of balance in these public
22 comments. We would like to reiterate that we feel
23 NYPA is doing its best to implement its renewables
24 mandate while also acknowledging the physical
25 realities of the (inaudible). However, it has

1 been evident that even this conservative approach
2 is also pleasing no one.

3 On the one hand, the BPRA's most ardent
4 supporters see NYPA as not doing enough and are
5 pushing for far more aggressive renewable
6 generation targets. Reality be damned. On the
7 other, we have heard from fellow organizations
8 that NYPA has backed projects opposed by their
9 local communities, leading to a feeling that
10 there's now yet another state org they have to
11 fight to keep an unpopular project away.

12 With this being the state of play, we
13 reiterate that NYPA needs to be judicious in the
14 project, its funds, looking for impacted community
15 input wherever it can, and take past rejections
16 into account.

17 Also, we implore NYPA to look at its own
18 history to build where it has expertise, nuclear,
19 hydro, and transmission. These reliable
20 infrastructure projects would immensely improve
21 the state of the state of the grid and the lives
22 of all New Yorkers.

23 Thank you for the opportunity.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Brian.

25 Our next speaker is Stanley Litow.

1 Stanley.

2 STANLEY LITOW: Can you hear me now? Can
3 you hear me?

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can. Thank you.

5 STANLEY LITOW: Thank you.

6 The New York Power Authority's draft plan,
7 in my view, is an excellent outline of what the
8 Power Authority has done and will do to
9 substantially address the effect of climate change
10 in New York State.

11 The investments laid out in the plan are
12 strategic. They're well thought out. In one
13 example of its leadership, NYPA has exerted strong
14 community engagement and a commitment to social
15 justice by already providing a range of
16 high-quality experiential learning opportunities
17 to students across the state, especially
18 low-income students and especially students of
19 color, in its partnership with the PTECH schools
20 involving the State University of New York, the
21 City University of New York, and school districts
22 across the state.

23 The PTECH model is a global model that
24 provides a clear pathway for all students,
25 providing a pathway from school to college to

1 career into important, (inaudible) labor market
2 opportunities in the workplace for all students.
3 Clearly, workforce development is a core component
4 of NYPA's strategies going forward, and expanding
5 its partnerships with the state's schools and
6 colleges are a critical component of that work.

7 NYPA's leadership and its efforts to engage
8 its supply chain in this work is very much needed.
9 Going forward, NYPA can engage even more with
10 students and faculty by expanding their knowledge
11 of green jobs, connecting it to curriculum
12 coursework in schools and colleges, expanding the
13 opportunities, utilizing stackable
14 micro-credentials, which is a large part of the
15 partnership that post-secondary can provide, and
16 expanding experiential learning and career
17 guidance programs in the green jobs space for
18 many, many more students via internships,
19 structured workplace visits and mentoring for both
20 students and faculty.

21 This is something that NYPA is committed
22 to, is doing, and can expand so that more and more
23 students understand what a green job is,
24 understand how to get the skill and talent to be
25 able to take those jobs, incorporating the

1 curriculum that's required, and the learning
2 that's required, and what some people refer to as
3 soft skills, that I refer to as essential skills.

4 So, clearly, the draft plan that NYPA has
5 provided is a very strong and effective
6 opportunity for NYPA to continue its leadership.
7 This is an important first step. It should be
8 applauded, and we can move on to execute the plan
9 and then move on and increase the opportunity for
10 many more young people to have these
11 opportunities.

12 Thank you very much for your time. Thank
13 you.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

15 Our next speaker is Marjorie Monaghan.
16 Marjorie.

17 MARJORIE MONAGHAN: Good evening. Good
18 evening. Can you hear me?

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

20 MARJORIE MONAGHAN: Thank you for the
21 support earlier. My name is Marjorie Monaghan. I
22 am from the Long Beach area of Long Island, about
23 to be devastated by the Empire Wind One project.

24 Offshore wind is an unreliable and
25 inconsistent energy source that fails to meet the

1 demands (inaudible) stable power grid. It is
2 exceedingly expensive, placing an undue financial
3 burden on taxpayers and ratepayers the like.

4 Moreover, it raises environmental risk,
5 harming marine life and fish as a food source and
6 loss of fishing jobs. Offshore wind threatens to
7 devastate our quality of life and diminish
8 property values, and impact tourism.

9 In celebration of President Trump's
10 victory, he is committed to restoring common sense
11 to our energy policies. He intends to prioritize
12 efficiency, affordability, and reliability in
13 energy production a much-needed correction.
14 Offshore wind, with its high cost and reliability,
15 destructive environmental impact, should rightly
16 be the first on the chopping block.

17 I strongly oppose New York's current
18 renewable energy plan. It prioritizes on reliable
19 and costly -- costly solutions that threaten
20 affordability and affordability for residents.

21 I oppose the removal of home rules and
22 environmental productions under Section 904C and
23 the recent state budget, which strip local
24 communities of their voice in critical land use
25 and energy decisions, especially the RAPID Act

1 that bypasses essential checks and balances.

2 I oppose the loss of their tax assessments
3 for communities forced to host industrial-scale
4 energy projects, which unfairly burden local
5 taxpayers.

6 I oppose the use of eminent domain for
7 energy infrastructure. This undermines property
8 rights and disregards the interests of impassive
9 residents. Over a million ratepayers are
10 currently in arrears, and offshore wind
11 (inaudible) prices are four times the current
12 wholesale electricity rates, exacerbating
13 financial strain on New Yorkers.

14 No major economy is powered entirely by
15 solar and wind. California and Germany have spent
16 decades and billions on similar plans, resulting
17 in expensive and unreliable electricity. I urge
18 you the head -- to heed the warnings of the
19 comptroller and business council, conduct robust
20 engineering and fiscal analysis of the CLCPA and
21 (inaudible) plan before further engaging
22 (inaudible) good reliability and imposing
23 understandable costs on to taxpayers and
24 ratepayers.

25 NYPA has excelled in managing large-scale

1 hydroelectric and pump storage projects. They're
2 guarding its resources to compete with private
3 developers in solar and wind; construction is a
4 misuse of its technical expertise and taxpayer
5 dollars.

6 NYPA will face the same challenges as
7 private developers in building industrial solar
8 and wind projects, including supply chain issues,
9 material and labor shortages, inflation costs,
10 (inaudible) and local opposition.

11 Is this the best direction for New York's
12 Public Energy Authority? Thank you for the
13 opportunity to comment.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, (inaudible).

15 Our next speaker is Alex Malescio. Alex.

16 ALEX MALESCIO: Hello, can you hear me?

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

18 ALEX MALESCIO: Great. Good evening,
19 members of the New York Power Authority and all
20 present. My name is Alex Malescio, and I'm the
21 Senior Director of Government Relations at Urban
22 Upbound. I appreciate the opportunity to provide
23 comments on NYPA's Strategic Plan.

24 Tonight, I will focus my comments on the
25 workforce development aspects of the Strategic

1 Plan. At Urban Upbound, we embody the principle
2 that workforce development and community
3 engagement are crucial components of a just
4 transition to renewable energy. Our mission has
5 always been to break cycles of poverty by
6 providing access to opportunities that lead to
7 long-term economic mobility.

8 We've been at the forefront of workforce
9 development initiatives, particularly for
10 low-income and public housing residents. Urban
11 Upbound's workforce development programs are
12 designed to equip individuals with the skills and
13 support they need to thrive in high-demand
14 industries.

15 Through hands-on training, apprenticeship
16 programs, and job placement services, we've
17 successfully partnered -- prepared thousands of
18 individuals to enter the workforce in a range of
19 fields.

20 In addition to technical training, we
21 emphasize that wrap-around supports are essential
22 to ensure the success and retention of workers in
23 a complex training program. Our model integrates
24 services like child care, housing stability, and
25 transportation assistance, critical components

1 that help remove barriers to employment and
2 education.

3 These wrap-around services are not just
4 about supporting participants during training but
5 ensuring they can remain in their roles, advance
6 their careers, and build wealth for their families
7 over time.

8 This is where the renewable energy sector
9 presents a tremendous opportunity for economic
10 mobility. As New York accelerates its renewable
11 energy efforts, there's a growing demand for
12 skilled workers. This emerging industry provides
13 a pathway to living wage, union, and
14 wealth-building careers, opportunities that have
15 too often -- too often been inaccessible to
16 marginalized communities in previous economic
17 booms, such as in the tech and financial sectors.

18 The renewable energy industry offers the
19 potential to correct this imbalance by providing
20 equitable access to jobs, especially for
21 low-income and public housing residents.

22 I commend NYPA for including wrap-around
23 supports in its workforce development plans, such
24 as providing housing stability, transportation,
25 and childcare access. These initiatives are

1 crucial to ensuring that individuals from
2 disadvantaged communities can fully participate in
3 and benefit from this transition.

4 I also urge NYPA to explore taking this a
5 step further by including funding for stipends in
6 its workforce development programs. At Urban
7 Upbound, we have seen firsthand how stipends can
8 significantly improve retention and success in
9 training programs. Stipends help alleviate the
10 financial burdens that many participants face,
11 allowing them to fully engage with
12 industry-specific training, pre-apprentices
13 programs, and apprenticeships.

14 Providing stipends will ensure these
15 programs are not only successful but effective,
16 helping participants stay the course and succeed
17 in securing long-term, high-quality employment in
18 the renewable energy sector.

19 Thank you for your leadership in laying the
20 groundwork for New York State's transition to
21 renewable energy. Urban Upbound looks forward to
22 a continued dialog.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Alex.

24 Our next speaker is Maria Forbes. Maria.

25 MARIA FORBES: Hello. Can you hear me now?

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Hi, Maria. We can, yes.

2 MARIA FORBES: Thank you.

3 My name is Maria Forbes, and thank you for
4 allowing me the opportunity to speak at this
5 hearing. I am a New York City Housing Authority,
6 public housing President in the South Bronx, and a
7 president of Clay Avenue Tenants Association for
8 more than 30 years.

9 I have had the opportunity to speak to
10 people around the world, including at the United
11 Nations, on the behalf of women in public housing.
12 I am glad to see this presentation about NYPA's
13 Strategy Plan, and the update regarding their
14 progress in implementing their expanded authority.

15 I did not know about the New York Power
16 Authority last year. Through NYPA, it provides --
17 NYPA provides energy to most of New York City
18 Housing Authority developments. Like many people
19 in New York City, I have known Con Edison for
20 years. It has been a learning process to
21 understand the clean energy transition and the
22 role that NYCHA -- NYPA will play in moving New
23 York State forward to clean energy goals.

24 The reality is climate change and the need
25 for more renewable energy is here. The energy

1 transition is not just tomorrow; it's now. Last
2 year, I met with the Power Authority, and they
3 shared their goals and plans with me to build
4 renewable energy and to update the electric grid.
5 They had me thinking about my old building's
6 power, but mostly -- important, I was thinking
7 about the children in my community. I always
8 think about the children because they will help
9 determine what our future looks like, and they
10 will be the change we want to see in the world.
11 And they will be -- they will be the change we
12 want to see in the world.

13 The Power Authority has a valuable partner
14 every step of the way and a supporter of my
15 commitment to exposing the youth to STEM -- STEAM,
16 science, technology, engineering, and arts, and
17 mathematics. As a supporter of the United Nations
18 Sustainable Goals, I came back to NYPA with a new
19 idea to involve -- to be involved in my annual
20 Back to School Family Day this summer.

21 I knew my young people needed more hands-on
22 learning opportunities about energy, science, and
23 innovation. I did not want there to be left out
24 in the dark or behind the times as the energy
25 system moves forward. I applied and was awarded a

1 grant from the Public Housing Community Fund, and
2 I planned an event to give away STEAM kits to the
3 kids in my neighborhood. They have sent --

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Maria. Sorry,
5 we have to move on to the next. Thank you so
6 much.

7 MARIA FORBES: Okay. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker -- Maria,
9 you can still enter the rest of your statement
10 online, as all our speakers can. Thank you.

11 Our next speaker is Mark Heltzman. Mark.
12 Mark Heltzman. Mark? Mark Hounsman. Okay. We
13 can come back to you.

14 Our next speaker is Ginger Schroeder.
15 Ginger. Okay. Our next speaker is Caitlin
16 Cahill.

17 GINGER SCHROEDER: Hello. This is Ginger
18 Schroeder.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Oh, Ginger, great.
20 Caitlin, we will call on you next.

21 Ginger, go ahead. Thanks so much.

22 GINGER SCHROEDER: Thank you.

23 I'm a private attorney representing
24 municipalities and citizen groups in solar, wind,
25 and battery storage projects. I'm also a

1 Cattaraugus County legislator representing 77,000
2 rural New York constituents, and I'm a board
3 member of the Industrial Development Agency for my
4 county.

5 My first minute will be directed to the
6 agency's Strategic Plan, generally, and the
7 remaining two will be directed to a specific
8 project identified by the plan.

9 NYPA has been an efficient, reputable
10 public entity that has provided New Yorkers with
11 reliable, affordable electricity by building and
12 operating large hydropower plants and various
13 electric infrastructure projects. NYPA even has
14 helped develop nuclear power.

15 NYPA's draft plan will leverage its good
16 credit to help rescue about 31 private sector,
17 large-scale solar and wind battery projects. It
18 will also build nine projects itself.

19 Achieving carbon-free electricity requires
20 firm, reliable power. Bleeding more public money
21 and resources into intermittent generation not
22 only jeopardizes reliability and affordability but
23 it also ensures that New York will remain
24 dependent upon fossil fuels.

25 NYPA's good reputation for developing

1 cost-efficient and reliable power will be sullied
2 by its devolvment into doubling down on solar and
3 wind.

4 Unless we have more firm, reliable
5 dispatchable sources like nuclear and hydro, we
6 will not be able to end our reliance on fossil
7 fuel, ever. Instead, NYPA should do what it has
8 historically done best by working on reliable
9 public projects for the common good, that is,
10 nuclear and hydro and infrastructure.

11 Now, I wish to discuss the sole wind
12 project identified by the NYPA in its plan, the
13 big purple hexagon located in my county. I'm
14 going to point out that the project is wrongfully
15 identified in the written plan as a solar project
16 labeled as E1, but it's on (inaudible) to the
17 Alle-Catt Invenergy Wind Project being developed
18 in my county.

19 This is your headline: NYPA picks the most
20 unpopular, most divisive renewable project in the
21 state as its flagship wind project.

22 That really does need to be corrected in
23 the interest of transparency, and I think your
24 plan should bear the actual names of these
25 projects so that people can identify them.

1 I'm glad you're doing your due diligence.
2 I will tell you that the Alle-Catt developer
3 tricked many leaseholders into signing leases by
4 telling them that this project is going to happen
5 no matter what. We now find out that they need
6 the IDA, my IDA, to give them millions of dollars
7 in tax incentives in order to actually build the
8 project. So, they've been falsely stating that
9 they'll do it without and now need it.

10 I think NYPA needs to know the developer
11 it's getting into bed with and that the public
12 will now associate you with. This developer has
13 been cited by the attorney general for its
14 violations of codes of conduct. This developer
15 has entered into financial contracts benefiting
16 municipal officers and their family members
17 without publicly disclosing what they were
18 required to do, and that these municipal officials
19 then pushed the project on their constituents and
20 voted on win laws favorable to the project, all of
21 whom had financial contracts in the project.

22 And I think that's really bad. And I think
23 NYPA needs to just say no to Alle-Catt.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Ginger. Our
25 next speaker is Caitlin Cahill. Caitlin.

1 CAITLIN CAHILL: Hi, my name is Caitlin
2 Cahill, and I am an elementary school science
3 teacher, sustainability coordinator, and leader of
4 my school's Green Team in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

5 My school building, like many, is often too
6 hot or too cold because of our antiquated HVAC
7 system in all seasons. Some parts of our building
8 are freezing while others are boiling.

9 I don't know the exact numbers here, but
10 this kind of waste costs a lot. It costs our
11 school and our city financially since we are
12 literally releasing the overheated and overcooled
13 air out of the windows. And it costs our students
14 their health as they are forced to breathe fumes
15 from boilers. Students who are already contending
16 with respiratory illnesses and asthma living near
17 the BQE and industrial zones.

18 With energy efficiency retrofits and solar
19 power across New York City schools, we can save
20 more than 75,000 tons of carbon emissions every
21 year. The Department of Education spends about
22 \$275 million per year on energy. A 50-percent
23 improvement in efficiency will save approximately
24 \$137 million annually, in addition to savings from
25 solar and other renewables on schools and related

1 public facilities, which reduce energy costs to
2 near zero in the aggregate, resulting in savings
3 of approximately \$250 million.

4 This money that we so desperately need can
5 be reinvested in our schools. It can help us hire
6 more teachers, start new clubs, feed more students
7 and their families, provide more support for our
8 students experiencing the greatest need.

9 I urge you to increase the total plan
10 capacity to at least 15 gigawatts by 2030 and to
11 fully decarbonize our public schools. There are
12 many young New Yorkers like my third, fourth, and
13 fifth-grade Green Team members who believe in our
14 ability as adults to make real changes for our
15 health and the health of our planet.

16 I hope that we can show them that we commit
17 boldly to a better future for them by increasing
18 the total planned capacity to at least 15
19 gigawatts by 2030 and to fully decarbonize our
20 public schools. Thank you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Caitlin.

22 Our next speaker is Jennifer Furioli.
23 Jennifer.

24 JENNIFER FURIOLI: Hi. Can you hear me?

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, Jen, we can.

1 JENNIFER FURIOLI: Okay. Great. Thank
2 you.

3 Thank you for giving me the opportunity to
4 offer my comments in support of the New York Power
5 Authority this evening. I run the Downtown White
6 Plains Business Improvement District. We are a
7 nonprofit economic development organization which
8 supports the Central Business District of Downtown
9 White Plains, where NYPA happens to have its
10 headquarters.

11 Because of NYPA's presence in our downtown,
12 I am very interested in their work and mission, in
13 addition to appreciating the vibrant customer
14 workforce that breeds so much support into our
15 main commercial corridors and businesses.

16 I did read the Strategic Plan in its
17 entirety, and I want to congratulate you on such a
18 heavy project. This plan feels very relevant
19 right now. I actually recently took part in a
20 vibrant conversation with my fellow downtown
21 managers from across the nation just recently
22 regarding policy priorities and what we wanted to
23 look at in the coming year.

24 And one of the key issues that continuously
25 rose to the top was the effects of climate change

1 that we are collectively start -- that we are
2 collectively starting to see in our commercial
3 corridors and that are now affecting our small
4 businesses, and we had a lot of discussion about
5 the need to do everything possible to mitigate for
6 those all too frequent climate-created natural
7 disasters.

8 As I heard from many of my colleagues on a
9 national scale, whether it's small businesses
10 flooding from extreme weather conditions or
11 ever-escalating utility bills to increased
12 temperature -- temperature fluctuations, climate
13 change is really beginning to show its face on
14 Main Street and within the businesses that are
15 within. So, the impact of plans like this would
16 be profound and would really help small
17 businesses.

18 I was also very interested in the parts of
19 the report that spoke to the important role that
20 NYPA must play in community engagement. It's
21 clear that this was outlined as key and a priority
22 in the many communities and that these efforts --
23 excuse me -- this was outlined as a key priority
24 in bringing these efforts outlined in the plan to
25 fruition.

1 I just want to say in terms of community
2 engagement, NYPA in our community has been
3 fantastic. They've really demonstrated their
4 commitment here in White Plains. They've been
5 supportive in collaboration -- supportive and
6 collaborative with our organization. They've made
7 every effort to come to our many public gatherings
8 that we put on for the community to meet people
9 where they're at and to demystify what the New
10 York Power Authority is and what its -- what its
11 mission is. They've offered to put articles in
12 our e-newsletter, and so we really appreciate
13 that. And I think they would do a great job
14 moving that forward with the plan.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jennifer.

16 Our next speaker is Michelle Leo.
17 Michelle.

18 MICHELLE LEO: Hi, can you hear me?

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

20 MICHELLE LEO: Okay. Great. Sorry, I just
21 got home from work. Give me a second.

22 I want to take the opportunity to thank you
23 for the opportunity -- the opportunity to comment.
24 I just would like to say NYPA has been doing a
25 great job with hydropower and nuclear with

1 success. Because offshore wind, solar are
2 intermittent, we still need fossil fuel plants.
3 Under New York State's definition, the hydropower
4 is renewable. I'm not really sure why there isn't
5 any hydropower listed in NYPA's -- NYPA's future
6 projects.

7 We need a diverse, affordable portfolio, a
8 reliable energy that is not experimental does not
9 remove local municipality input or a home rule,
10 like we witnessed with the Governor's RAPID Act.
11 Offshore wind, solar, and battery storage are at
12 risk to weather elements just like the current
13 electricity, but far worse.

14 The self-imposed mandates, not goals, of
15 green energy by New York State are in danger of
16 creating an unstable grid. With more mandates
17 such as EVs and electric heat pumps, we need more
18 reliable power. Solar and wind are intermittent,
19 and the best facilities can only store power for
20 four hours.

21 All New York State ratepayers will be
22 forced to purchase electric heat pumps and
23 components that go along with it. The costs are
24 in thousands. New York State Energy Affordability
25 Program is not financially equitable, and it's a

1 right for all New York State ratepayers to have
2 cost-effective, equitable, reliable energy.

3 Governor Hochul's own budget director
4 stated that the Governor is uneasy about what this
5 will cost all -- all ratepayers. This past
6 summer, we witnessed the Vineyard offshore wind
7 turbine blade disaster off Nantucket, closing
8 beaches and directly impacting local businesses.

9 The threat of future offshore wind
10 catastrophes will impact shore communities is not
11 no -- what are the long-lasting environmental
12 impacts of that? Why are we destroying our ocean
13 to save the planet?

14 I'm urging NYPA to do right by all New York
15 State ratepayers and listen to the New York State
16 Comptroller and Business Council to require a
17 robust community engineering and financial
18 analysis of the CLCPA mandates.

19 The CLCPA, again, is inequitable. I would
20 like to bring back to an earlier comment from this
21 afternoon about the Comptroller's audit this past
22 summer of July 2024: Where is the oil and
23 cost-benefit analysis for these renewable energy
24 projects? Does the governor have it? Do
25 legislators have it? Does NYSERDA? The Public

1 Service Commission?

2 Maybe -- it's not written in the CLCPA. So
3 we need NYPA to listen to the taxpayers and not
4 fall in line with the untested CLCPA legislation,
5 ensuring that the reliability of the grid and
6 ensuring a diverse energy portfolio that will keep
7 energy options affordable and access -- accessible
8 throughout New York State, like hydropower and
9 S&Rs. We need a realistic plan, not a mandated
10 ban. Thank you.

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Michelle.

12 Our next speaker is Jennifer Sarafin.
13 Jennifer.

14 JENNIFER SARAFIN: Okay. Can you hear me?

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can. Thank you.

16 JENNIFER SARAFIN: Hi. I am also not a big
17 fan of the wind energy. I followed the blade
18 breakage in Nantucket. I live in the community of
19 Long Beach. We were part of a group that fought
20 to keep the cables and the turbines out of our
21 community here in Long Beach, but now they are
22 putting a project in Brooklyn. And even though
23 the cable is not going to come from our community,
24 they're still putting it in our ocean.

25 So, we will be in the same position as

1 Nantucket if a blade breaks. It will wash up on
2 our beaches. We will have to close in the
3 summertime. Our businesses won't be able to
4 flourish. Our kids won't be able to swim in the
5 ocean. And then what? What will happen then?

6 And also, how will they mitigate it?
7 There's no plans. They redact all the documents.
8 We can't read them. This -- and -- and here's the
9 other problem: There is no reduction in climate
10 change. There's no reduction in the carbon
11 footprint. They're not reliable.

12 So, what is the point of this type of
13 energy? Why are they not focusing on hydrogen and
14 on nuclear if they want to help with renewable?
15 We -- and they're not going to ever get away from
16 fossil fuels. They still use buffer exide, so I
17 don't understand why they're pushing this type of
18 energy.

19 We all understand that we want to go
20 renewable, but they're really not getting away
21 from fossil fuels, so it's all a scam. It's just
22 a way to make more money. And everybody's getting
23 rich from it, but it's not helping anybody.

24 And then they go to the environmental
25 justice communities, and they say they're going to

1 do this, they're going to build a park, they're
2 going to give them a turkey, and they want to put
3 a battery plant in there, but they don't explain
4 to them the dangers of that if they catch fire and
5 how they're going to have to shelter in place.
6 And -- I just don't understand what the whole
7 reasoning for it is, if it's really not going to
8 change anything for a climate. Thank you.

9 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jennifer.

10 Our next speaker is Brenda Robinson.

11 Brenda.

12 I'm going to go back to Mark Heltzman.

13 Mark, are you on? Okay.

14 Our next speaker is Christopher Viciola.

15 Christopher.

16 Our next speaker is Jay Goodman. Jay.

17 JAY GOODMAN: Hi. Can you hear me?

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can, Jay.

19 JAY GOODMAN: Great. Thank you.

20 Good evening. I'm Jay Goodman, a partner
21 with a firm of Couch White LLP, and I'm here
22 representing Multiple Intervenors. Multiple
23 Intervenors is an association of 55 of the largest
24 energy consumers in New York State.

25 Many members of Multiple Intervenors

1 receive low-cost hydropower from the New York
2 Power Authority in the form of replacement power,
3 expansion power, and Recharge New York Power. In
4 exchange for their power allocations, participants
5 in those economic development programs commit to
6 maintaining jobs and make capital investments at
7 their facilities in New York.

8 The positive impact of the low-cost NYPA
9 hydropower on the economy of New York State cannot
10 be overstated. The recipients of NYPA hydropower,
11 such as MI members, provide tens of thousands of
12 family-sustaining jobs, many of which are union
13 jobs, and invest hundreds of millions of dollars
14 in their New York State facilities, including
15 technologies and equipment designed to continue
16 lowering their emissions.

17 NYPA economic development customers also
18 pay hundreds of millions of dollars in New York
19 State taxes. However, increasing cost burdens on
20 New York businesses are real, and continued upward
21 pressure on energy prices presents a tremendous
22 challenge. The current uncertainty due to the
23 changing regulatory landscape in New York is
24 already affecting decisions on future capital
25 investments on New York businesses, which will

1 result in the leakage of jobs and harmful
2 emissions to other states.

3 Against this backdrop, MI is not opposed to
4 NYPA playing an important role in the state's
5 pursuit of renewable energy goals as long as the
6 obligations imposed on NYPA are reasonable, as
7 determined by the NYPA Board of Trustees, and do
8 not interfere with NYPA's essential role as a
9 driver of economic development and protector of
10 jobs in New York.

11 NYPA must continue to provide low-cost,
12 reliable power to New York businesses, such as MI
13 members, in exchange for commitments from those
14 businesses to maintain family-sustaining jobs in
15 New York.

16 In the draft NYPA Renewable Strategic Plan,
17 NYPA recognizes that the costs for building
18 renewable energy projects cannot jeopardize its
19 essential role as an economic development engine
20 in New York. MI supports efforts to shield NYPA's
21 existing economic development customers from
22 adverse financial consequences associated with its
23 new role as a renewable developer.

24 In further developing and refining the
25 plan, we hope that NYPA continues to do everything

1 possible to maintain the competitive advantage of
2 low-cost hydropower that is critical to businesses
3 in New York State.

4 Multiple Intervenors appreciates the
5 opportunity to provide these comments and would be
6 willing to engage in any follow-up discussions.
7 Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jay.

9 Our next speaker is Gregory Harkenrider.
10 Gregory.

11 GREGORY HARKENRIDER: Good evening. Can
12 you hear me?

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

14 GREGORY HARKENRIDER: Good. I appreciate
15 it.

16 I'm affiliated with the group Stop Energy
17 Sprawl. I believe that the state's policy of
18 focusing on inconsistent, unreliable wind and
19 solar energy is badly mistaken. However, it is
20 the law, and that is not likely to change in the
21 immediate future.

22 So, I'm going to talk about something that
23 might actually happen in the immediate future, and
24 that is the use of eminent domain to
25 site-generating facilities. I'll always remember

1 the time in the mid-1990s, I was working for the
2 New York State DOT; I had the occasion to address
3 a group of Lithuanian transportation officials.
4 They had just become an independent country and
5 were organizing their transport ministry.

6 Things were going fine until I told them
7 that sometimes we have to use eminent domain to
8 acquire property that people do not want to sell
9 to us in order to build highways. They were
10 shocked. They described it as tyranny. I'm not
11 sure. They didn't speak English. That's the way
12 the interpreter translated it. That's the word he
13 used.

14 Here, they had just broken free from the
15 Soviet Union, and it was quite a shock to them to
16 find that what they thought was the exemplary of
17 freedom, America, was taking people's property.

18 And I -- I have to say that next to
19 incarcerating a person, taking their home or their
20 land is the worst thing that the government can do
21 to private citizens.

22 Now, I know the standard rejoinder is we
23 have no plans to use eminent domain for this
24 purpose, but I expect NYPA to be under more and
25 more pressure to do just that. It's -- it's in

1 the future and probably in the near future, sooner
2 rather than later. We've been moving step by step
3 to a more coercive environment. First, we had the
4 Build Public Renewals Act, which put NYPA in this
5 business. Last year, we had the RAPID Act, using
6 -- allowing the use of eminent domain for
7 transmission facilities.

8 So, I do see this as a danger going
9 forward. If we start using eminent domain for
10 generating facilities, we will have crossed the
11 Rubicon toward coercion and, as the Lithuanians
12 called it, tyranny.

13 NYPA has a good reputation of those who
14 know about it. Unfortunately, in the public
15 service, if you're good at what you do, nobody
16 will know you very well. Believe me, it's been
17 better for NYPA to be unknown than to be infamous.
18 Thank you.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Gregory.

20 Our next speaker is Mimi Bluestone. Mimi.

21 Our next speaker is Elaine Weir. Elaine.

22 ELAINE WEIR: Yes. Yes, I'm here.

23 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Hi, Elaine.

24 ELAINE WEIR: Hi. So, my daughter suffers
25 from asthma, so I'm very concerned about the

1 pollution. She can't even visit us in the summer
2 here because of the poor quality of air. So, we
3 really need to be on track to meet the goal of 70
4 percent of New York State electricity from -- from
5 renewable sources that creates clean air. Well,
6 it doesn't create -- it doesn't create dirty air.

7 We need the renewables so that we can stop
8 polluting with these fossil fuel plants,
9 especially these peaker plants that are especially
10 dirty. So, please, please, please create a plan
11 to close them, those peaker plants, as soon as
12 possible. And this will benefit everybody's
13 health. It's not just asthma; it's heart disease
14 and a whole -- a whole bunch of other things.

15 And -- and I just want to point out, please
16 do not develop any more of the nuclear energy
17 projects. Don't do any more of that. That is so
18 polluting. We have a big problem up there with
19 Indian Point, not knowing what to do with all this
20 polluted stuff that will have to stay there
21 forever.

22 The other thing is, I visited Scotland and
23 Norway, we are so behind in renewable energy.
24 Stop --we have relatives there, so in Scotland,
25 they brought -- they brought my husband and I to

1 the -- I forget the name of it, but it was outside
2 of Glasgow. Beautiful, beautiful wind turbines.
3 And Scotland has gotten to the point where 90 --
4 like over 90 percent of their electrical use is
5 from renewables. So it is possible. You have to
6 just keep working at it.

7 And they also -- when we were in Liverpool,
8 there were like beautiful, beautiful wind turbines
9 that we passed on the ferry headed to Liverpool --
10 well, actually, we're headed to the Isle of Man at
11 that point. But -- so, anyway, Scotland has it
12 with the wind turbines, I'll tell you that.

13 The other thing with Norway, you know, this
14 can be moved very fast. We were in Norway seven
15 or nine years ago, nobody had electric cars. We
16 went back this summer, they all have electric cars
17 except for one. So, it can move fast. So, it's
18 important that we -- we get our -- get our
19 electricity grid up -- up to speed.

20 And I guess that's about it. I only have
21 20 seconds left, so -- but thank you so much.
22 Please do the best you can and get as much
23 renewables up so that we have clean air, and I
24 don't have to spend more money on medical bills.
25 Thank you. Have a good day.

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Elaine.

2 Our next speaker is Denise Willard.

3 Denise. Denise Willard.

4 DENISE WILLARD: I think I'm working now.

5 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Hi, you are. Yes.

6 Thanks, Denise. Go ahead.

7 DENISE WILLARD: All right. My name is
8 Denise Willard. I would like to thank you for
9 allowing me the opportunity to share my comments
10 with you.

11 First, I want to make it clear that I
12 strongly oppose New York's energy plan. I also
13 oppose the loss of home rule and environmental
14 protections under 94-c and the RAPID Act in this
15 year's budget.

16 Instead of focusing on inefficient solar
17 panels and wind turbines that the private sector
18 can install on their own, if so desired, then NYPA
19 should do what it has historically done best by
20 working on reliable public projects from -- for
21 the common good, like nuclear energy, hydropower,
22 and utility and infrastructure.

23 Right now, in Western New York, where I
24 live, our energy is 91 percent green, thanks to
25 hydropower and Niagara Falls. Please be aware

1 that on August 2nd, 2024, New York State acquired
2 1,220 acres of land in the Town of Yorkshire on
3 the site of the former Bluemont Ski Resort for a
4 measly \$2.1 million. This acquisition adds the
5 first new state forest in the region since 1963.

6 Officials said the acquisition will
7 preserve open space and will establish the forest
8 for watershed protection, timber production, and
9 public recreation. With that statement -- with
10 the statement, Improving forest health is
11 essential for safeguarding water quality, habitat,
12 and opportunities for recreation and healthy,
13 well-managed forests. They're also an important
14 tool in New York's ongoing efforts to mitigate for
15 the -- for and adapt to climate change. Intermit-
16 -- Interim DEC Commissioner Sean Maher said,
17 Thanks to the dedication of DEC's conservation
18 partners, this historic acquisition will allow
19 residents and visitors in Northern Cattaraugus
20 County the opportunity to see firsthand the
21 development of a healthy and sustainable --
22 sustainably managed forest and the benefits it
23 provides in our environment and communities.

24 These statements, in my opinion, are
25 mind-blowing since approximately 11 minutes away,

1 there are plans to clear-cut approximately 1,550
2 acres of interior forest, and about 1,686 acres of
3 remaining unbroken forest would be fragmented into
4 access roads and electrical for the Alle-Catt Wind
5 Project.

6 Then, on September 28th, 2024, Governor
7 Hochul declared the mosquito-borne illness,
8 Eastern Equine Encephalitis, a public health
9 threat after the first confirmed case in the state
10 in nearly a decade, resulted in the death of a
11 resident in Ulster County, New York.

12 I'm not quite sure what Governor Hochul and
13 everyone else involved in the renewable energy
14 push expected to happen when you kill thousands of
15 pounds -- thousands of bats per year. You can't
16 have it both ways. You can't kill off bats with
17 miles and miles of industrial wind turbine blades,
18 a problem that New York State DEC has contributed
19 to by proving the destructive -- destruction of
20 the bats' habitat and then cry public health
21 threat when a person is diagnosed with a
22 mosquito-borne disease and then dies.

23 It has --

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Denise.

25 DENISE WILLARD: Okay. I'll send my rest

1 in.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you very much.

3 Our next speaker is Stephen Helmin.

4 Stephen?

5 STEPHEN HELMIN: Hi. Can you hear me?

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: We can. Go ahead,
7 Stephen.

8 STEPHEN HELMIN: Fantastic. Thank you.
9 Climate change is real. New York's response,
10 sadly, is not. Like the state's failed overall
11 plan, this draft renewables plan fails due to its
12 narrow focus on unreliable, intermittent wind and
13 solar-based systems and the required adjunct
14 insufficient and dangerous battery storage.

15 On one note, a renewables-based grid will
16 actually exacerbate the use of peaker plants and
17 instead of eliminating them. Land-based wind and
18 solar facilities are an object waste on land. One
19 would have to cover the entire island of Manhattan
20 from top to bottom with solar plants to generate
21 less than 1/20 of the power that New York City
22 requires.

23 Nuclear and hydropower can deliver that
24 much energy using a fraction of that area, and
25 NYPA knows how to make those. Across the state,

1 you would need 22 Manhattan Islands covered with
2 solar facilities to meet just the solar portion of
3 New York's goals. Most of this will be plunked
4 down on forest and farmland, destroying it.
5 That's the antithesis of the term renewable.

6 Sacrificing more and more of our
7 non-renewable farmland and coastline every year
8 for inefficient wind and solar isn't sustainable.
9 A New York festoon with wind and solar facilities,
10 dangerous battery storage, and thousands of miles
11 of new wiring because none of these projected
12 plants are near where the electricity is needed is
13 downright irresponsible.

14 NYPA can choose another plan. Yes, NYPA's
15 new authority highlights working with
16 ill-described renewables. However, NYPA retains
17 its authority to pursue efficient hydropower and
18 nuclear, all of which are carbon-free and should
19 be enjoined. These -- hydropower is defined as a
20 renewable. It's reliable, has a smaller
21 footprint, a longer facility life, and requires
22 less material per megawatt hour over that life.

23 NYPA is the leader in hydropower and would
24 check the reliability and the renewable boxes if
25 it looked to get more of them. Why aren't there

1 more hydro -- any hydropower or NYPA hydro
2 projects in the plan?

3 Further, NYPA operates the Canal
4 Commission. Instead of trying to save on popular
5 struggling private sector wind and solar projects,
6 NYPA could look at the hydro projects -- look at
7 hydro projects that could utilize the canal and
8 other waterways.

9 Such projects could deliver permanent
10 high-skilled operator jobs as opposed to temporary
11 construction jobs that could actually help rebuild
12 communities without wasting lands and coastline
13 and destroy a local ag and terms (inaudible) based
14 economies.

15 The draft plan is not ready for prime time,
16 and New York would not be well-served by its
17 implementation in its current form. Thank you.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Stephen.

19 Our next speaker is Joanne Eisinger.

20 Joanne.

21 JOANNE EISINGER: Can you hear me?

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

23 JOANNE EISINGER: Okay. Thank you very
24 much. And thank you for the opportunity to speak
25 tonight.

1 I would like to say that it is confusing --
2 confusing given the history and the background of
3 NYPA, how to switch to more favorable -- switch to
4 favor more intermittent and unreliable renewables
5 has occurred. Previously, NYPA has been the lead
6 in the development of hydropower and thoughtful
7 planning.

8 Hydropower continues to provide energy in
9 concert with the environment, not against it.
10 Hydropower is considered a renewable under New
11 York State's definition. And as I said, NYPA has
12 been the lead in hydropower.

13 I was unclear as to why there aren't any
14 hydropower projects listed in NYPA's initial
15 tranche of projects. And fast-forwarding to look
16 ahead, there are going to be decades of increased
17 technology and subsequent energy and electricity
18 needs to support it. The inclusion of both
19 hydropower and nuclear power as a source of
20 dependable, carbon-free energy electricity is
21 essential for New York State going forward.

22 Both hydropower and nuclear power have a
23 long history in New York State with providing
24 clean, reliable energy within a geographically
25 small footprint. Advancement in nuclear power

1 shows that it is not a stagnant technology, and
2 more stable and less reactive fuels such as
3 thorium are now being explored.

4 Throwing public money and resources at
5 intermittent generation not only jeopardizes
6 reliability and affordability, but it ensures that
7 New York State will remain dependent on fossil
8 fuels. New York State would be out of competition
9 for new businesses to relocate there, such as
10 manufacturing, technology, and the service sector,
11 if it cannot provide consistent on-demand energy
12 at reasonable cost to potential businesses.

13 I am unclear as to why NYPA chose to hold
14 public hearings in major communes -- why NYPA did
15 not choose to hold public hearings in major
16 communities it's targeting in its plan for 2025.
17 Please think that the renewables you are
18 advocating -- please don't think that the
19 renewables you are advocating are green.

20 Massive destruction of beautiful lands to
21 build turbines or solar facilities that work at
22 best 30 percent of the time requires excessive
23 transmission lines and increased battery storage
24 facilities.

25 Recycling the turbine blades, which is

1 fiberglass, is not consistently successful or
2 scalable. Use of solar panels that contain
3 hazardous materials that can leak when buried as
4 they are not recyclable, or during a fire with
5 local municipality -- municipalities not being
6 capable of dealing with fire panels or turbine
7 fires.

8 This has happened in New York State.
9 Remember Governor Hochul telling people, Don't go
10 outside.

11 For many years, New York State has
12 emphasized the true beauty of the state in various
13 marketing ads through the Department of Tourism.
14 And tourism and our use of our state system of
15 parks and the Adirondacks and the Catskills has
16 been -- has become a major economic boom. If you
17 take away all of this, whether it is near those
18 areas or en route to those areas, through the use
19 of this insane energy is small, it is going to
20 affect the tourism.

21 I don't buy a refrigerator, a car, or any
22 mechanical or electrical technology piece of
23 equipment or machinery that doesn't work 100
24 percent of the time. The renewables that you are
25 advocating, with the exception of hydro and

1 nuclear, work at best 30 percent of the time.

2 Why should NYPA or New Yorkers drink that
3 Kool-Aid?

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Joanne. Our
5 next speaker is Elizabeth Neadow. Elizabeth.

6 ELIZABETH NEADOW: Hello.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Hi, Elizabeth.

8 ELIZABETH NEADOW: Deputy Supervisor in the
9 Town of Heartland. A majority of our town's
10 people do not wish to have a large industrial
11 solar project in our backyard. I know many towns
12 are interested in housing such facilities, but we
13 are not. I feel we should have a say in what
14 happens in our neighborhood.

15 Large-scale wind and solar projects can be
16 harmful to small rural communities. They destroy
17 -- destroy forests and farmland, devalue our
18 historic and cultural site homes and businesses.
19 By removing farmland from effective production, I
20 ask that you please listen to these towns and
21 respect home rule.

22 There are many foreign companies wishing to
23 take part in the solar factories, I believe their
24 only interest in this huge government subsidies
25 that are being handed out by New York State. I

1 call to stop all free handouts to these companies
2 owned by foreign entities.

3 Western New York has long been a dumping
4 ground for government waste. We no longer wish to
5 be this wasteland. Solar and wind, in the end,
6 will be the destruction of our land. We are
7 concerned with the use of prime farmland in our
8 beautiful, fertile soils of Western New York.
9 There are so many other wastelands in New York
10 State, such as brownfields and polluted
11 throughways and mediums, to name a couple.

12 The dangerous battery storage systems are
13 undesirable in the light of the fires. These are
14 not safe. Our fire departments are small, and all
15 volunteers. We need to improve technology on such
16 systems before continuing.

17 Please look into a better, more reliable
18 sources of power, such as improving on the already
19 power plant in place, Niagara Falls Hydro Plant.
20 Thank you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Elizabeth.

22 Our next speaker is Jeff Schumann. Jeff.

23 JEFF SCHUMANN: Hello. Can you hear me?

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can, Jeff.

25 JEFF SCHUMANN: Thank you for this

1 opportunity. And I have to applaud your draft
2 plan, and I very much support what you're up to.
3 Others have mentioned that this 3.2 gigawatt goal
4 that you have is too low. I would say that if it
5 is economically feasible for NYPA to increase the
6 actual number of projects that they want to do in
7 this first go-around, as well as the total amount
8 of gigawatt. I would think that should be
9 something to be considered.

10 I would say, though, there should be --
11 that if they do that, there would be an emphasis
12 on downstate distributed energy resources and
13 energy storage.

14 Others have mentioned the use of nuclear
15 power. I'm quite pleased that there was no
16 mention of nuclear power in your draft, and it
17 should not be considered in future planning. As
18 we know, renewable energy -- this is a renewable
19 energy plan, and nuclear power is not considered
20 to be renewable energy.

21 I have two comments, though, that I did not
22 see addressed in the draft plan, and I believe it
23 should be taken into consideration: NYPA has 19
24 projects that have a nameplate capacity of over 25
25 megawatts. I'm assuming that these projects will

1 need to go through the ORES permitting process.

2 The question is: Is that true? And if so,
3 does your estimated completion dates for these
4 projects take into account the time that ORES will
5 need to permit these projects?

6 Of the other 21 smaller projects that are
7 listed, it has been sort of hinted at or mentioned
8 local laws and moratoriums may delay -- delay or
9 result in canceling some of these projects.

10 I think NYPA will need to continue to
11 engage local communities to address this, and
12 hopefully, it can do this successfully. Thank
13 you.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jeff.

15 Our next speaker is Gary Abraham. Gary.

16 GARY ABRAHAM: Good evening. Can you hear
17 me?

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can. Good
19 evening.

20 GARY ABRAHAM: Thank you.

21 My name is Gary Abraham. I'm an
22 environmental attorney. I'm based in Western New
23 York. I practice all over the state. And I've
24 represented community groups and municipalities in
25 large-scale renewable siting for about 15 years

1 before Article 10 and before the current laws on
2 siting renewables.

3 I'm struck by the fact that climate
4 activists who have spoken here have ceased to be
5 environmentalists. They seem to think that you
6 can unplug nuclear power plants and simply plug in
7 renewables to replace them. This reflects a
8 failure to understand how electricity works.

9 In reality, gas-fired backup power is
10 needed for all wind and solar installations. The
11 more renewables, the more gas is needed.
12 Renewables also require substantially more
13 minerals and metals, and the emissions of
14 extracting, processing, and transporting them than
15 other types of power.

16 Another big concern is the large land need
17 of renewables compared to other types of power and
18 what renewables do to the land. A window on this
19 problem was provided by the Alle-Catt Wind Energy
20 Project in Western New York, discussed this
21 evening by Ginger Schroeder and this morning by
22 Marshall North. One of the projects NYPA would
23 adopt, according to the draft Strategic Plan.

24 NYPA has not reached out to the host
25 communities for this project. The project was

1 approved by the State Study Board in 2020, but
2 construction has begun only on the non-electrical
3 portions of the project. The State Department of
4 Health testified during a hearing that project
5 noise, as modeled by the developer, would be a
6 significant public health risk. The State Siting
7 Board found that the project would kill between
8 480 and 515 birds annually, including six
9 threatened or endangered birds. Over the 30-year
10 life of the project, 41 bald eagles will be
11 killed. Between 26,000 and 39,500 bats will be
12 killed, including two threatened or endangered
13 species.

14 Of the 5,900 forested acres needed for the
15 project, the site looks a lot like the picture of
16 the Hudson Valley, I assume, on the page that
17 we're using for this meeting. Of the 5,900
18 forested acres needed for the project, 1,550 acres
19 would be clear-cut, and another 1,686 acres of
20 remaining unbroken forest would be fragmented with
21 access roads and electrical quarter paths.

22 The project's power would not reach
23 downstate because there are no un-congested
24 transmission routes to New York City.

25 Under -- NYPA is governed by the Public

1 Authorities Law under Section 1005.27(a) (b) in
2 developing renewable energy projects; NYPA must
3 minimize harm to wildlife, ecosystems, public
4 health, and public safety.

5 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Gary.

6 Our next speaker is Leonard Rodberg.
7 Leonard.

8 LEONARD RODBERG: Okay. Now you should be
9 able to hear me.

10 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can. Thank you.

11 LEONARD RODBERG: All right. I -- I taught
12 climate change at Queens College for 35 years.
13 I've been a supporter of solar and wind since the
14 1970s when we had the oil crisis, and people tried
15 to reduce the cost of electricity in their homes.

16 However, we face a climate change crisis,
17 and solar and wind don't make it in that context.
18 Studies by NYISO, the grid operator, by the team
19 at Cornell under Professor Anderson, and my own
20 studies, which I'll include in my written comments
21 to you, show we -- that the grid has to have what
22 we refer to as a dispatchable, emission-free
23 resource in order to function.

24 The state's current plan set up -- approved
25 by the Climate Action Council fails to provide

1 such a source. And in fact, if you look at the
2 available sources that can be dispatchable and
3 emission-free and as large as you need, which is
4 of the order of 30 gigawatts, which is about as
5 big as our fossil team -- fossil fuel today, that
6 nuclear is the only way to do it. That is,
7 nuclear is essential to a grid that's clean.

8 NYPA has experience in building and owning
9 nuclear plants, and its financing will be
10 essential to get nuclear off the ground in this
11 state because of the way the grid -- the -- our
12 deregulated grid works.

13 So, I strongly urge that NYISO -- that NYPA
14 retain its interest in nuclear and be ready to
15 work with the Governor and the other agencies of
16 the state in developing the -- the nuclear
17 blueprint that the governor has put -- that
18 NYSERDA, really, has put forward so that we can,
19 in fact, get the kind of grid that we need, which
20 is clean and reliable and nuclear.

21 Thank you very much.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Leonard.

23 Our next speaker is Kathleen Sullivan.

24 Kathleen.

25 KATHLEEN SULLIVAN: Did I unmute myself?

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can hear you.

2 Thanks, Kathleen.

3 KATHLEEN SULLIVAN: Hello, and thank you
4 for letting me talk tonight.

5 I want to say one thing: I work on Wall
6 Street in ESG, the Environmental, Social
7 Governance. What we tried to do to all of you was
8 to make sure that you would force your money into
9 ESGs because that's what we wanted you to do
10 because that's what the government wanted you to
11 do, was to say, Hey, we're putting money here,
12 then invest here.

13 Like JP Morgan -- I'm not saying I worked
14 for them -- but let's -- ESGs. Invest in ESGs.
15 So, here we go, offshore wind and everything. Did
16 we really do our basic investment in that? Did we
17 really do our kind of a -- where our -- where we
18 could say, this makes sense. And no, we just went
19 full fledge, where the money is.

20 I live in a place called Point Lookout, New
21 York. I've never seen a whale wash up. And all
22 of a sudden, there was offshore wind, and there's
23 sonar testing. They want to bring offshore wind
24 here. I lived here 54 years in Point Lookout.
25 Whales were washing up. You're telling me after

1 53 years of living here, all of a sudden the
2 wind -- and like they're saying, it's because of
3 ships? Our carbon footprint is 13.49 for the
4 United States. You want us to get to net zero.
5 You are forcing this down our throats to say we
6 must do renewables. Renewables would be when
7 they're actually clean and -- and green.

8 What you're doing to us is not green, and
9 it's not clean. I've seen so many things living
10 on in my barrier island, and it's not good. So I
11 -- I respectfully say, nobody's listening to us on
12 our barrier island. Nobody's -- the cancer cables
13 of what you're trying to do. You don't even know.
14 You're just forcing the -- the long one from the
15 Bronx. She -- she's getting free energy, on -- on
16 what?

17 The -- the end doesn't justify the means.
18 So one area is destroyed, so her area is back to
19 --

20 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Kathleen.

21 KATHLEEN SULLIVAN: Bye-bye.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Mary
23 Finneran. Mary.

24 MARY FINNERAN: Unmute. There we go.

25 Hi. My name is Mary Finneran. I'm

1 speaking for myself, and some of my colleagues
2 will agree with me on some things. Some of my
3 other colleagues will agree with me on others, and
4 some won't agree with me on any of it.

5 But regarding your renewables, there's
6 certain things I really want you to consider. In
7 France, they have mandated that every parking lot
8 over a certain size be -- have solar fields. It
9 would provide shade for the cars, and it would
10 stop going into greenfields. I appreciate it when
11 you spoke about using brownfields for solar. I
12 appreciate when you're using vacant lots for
13 solar.

14 Cutting down a lot of trees is counter to
15 carbon because trees are the greatest carbon sink
16 in. They -- they are the best. And to cut out
17 and to hurt the -- the canopy is another thing.
18 I'm totally -- I'm not against solar. I'm against
19 cutting trees. And that's me. I'm speaking for
20 myself.

21 So, but -- but honestly, look into France,
22 look into using the parking lots. We have
23 hundreds of acres, thousands, millions of acres of
24 parking lots.

25 Regarding another thing, I don't think you

1 mentioned geothermal. I don't know if geothermal
2 is used for power, and your power, but I think
3 it's something that you should look more into.

4 Regarding nuclear, I -- oh, hydrogen --
5 hydropower is what I think you really need to look
6 into. Niagara Falls works great. There is so
7 much power in the water, in the -- in the Hudson,
8 in the Mohawk, in the streams, that -- that really
9 should be researched, and hydropower is the best.

10 Regarding nuclear, not -- out. You cannot
11 use nuclear. We have not figured out what to do
12 for the waste. We don't have the time. We don't
13 have the money.

14 I was trained as a welder in the Cedar
15 program in the early '80s for Nine Mile. They
16 were looking for welders for that. I was doing
17 great on my test. The test -- I took 1,000 hours
18 of welding, and that's what you will need. You
19 will need to have these people well-trained.

20 I appreciate apprenticeship programs, but
21 in regard -- if you do go with nuclear, you cannot
22 be training welders on the job. They have to be
23 really well-certified -- has to be certified. I'm
24 a union member. I have been a union member all my
25 working life of different unions.

1 But regarding -- I want you to look into
2 hydro -- much more hydro than is being used. I
3 think that's our way to the future. Wind and
4 solar, they're okay. Just watch it. Thank you.

5 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Mary.

6 Our next speaker is David Bradley. David.

7 DAVID BRADLEY: Thank you for holding these
8 meetings. They've been quite illuminating, to say
9 the least.

10 I wanted to say that the proposed 3.5
11 gigawatt of capacity, which is something like half
12 a gigawatt on a delivered basis if it's all solar,
13 about 1.5 gigawatt delivered if it's all wind,
14 it's just too little for a total effort. It
15 should be the annual effort for the next several
16 years until we basically stop relying on
17 depletable natural gas or a total unsafe nuclear
18 (inaudible).

19 NYPA is a -- something that's really
20 unique. They have access to low-cost municipal
21 bond financing, which means they can borrow
22 identical amounts of money for projects such as
23 wind farms and solar arrays, approximately half
24 the interest rate that commercial developers face.
25 And this makes it renewable power generated by

1 NYPA-owned facilities would probably cost about
2 half the price to generate electricity that
3 private developers would do, and that's simply
4 because of the interest rate charged on these
5 project loans.

6 For local -- sorry -- in New York State,
7 private development has just proved themselves
8 inadequate to doing a decent job of delivering
9 renewables and also the jobs that should be
10 associated with them.

11 With regards to the intermittency of
12 renewables, there's a system called Bump Hydro,
13 (phonetic) of which there's two examples currently
14 being used in New York State and so on around New
15 York State.

16 Ultra dependable, and they can store
17 massive quantities of electrical energy, and they
18 can also use deferred hydro, especially in Lake
19 Ontario -- or -- Yes.

20 So, there's no problem with storing it, and
21 we have plenty of potential opportunities to place
22 renewable hydro storage systems if we need them.
23 We can also do batteries, but batteries are going
24 to be much more expensive than Pump Hydro because
25 they wear out about every 7-15 years. And unless

1 you're using sodium (inaudible) flow batteries,
2 they're inherently very dangerous in large
3 quantities because the lithium ones will short out
4 internally.

5 Generally, renewable deployment on a large
6 scale should be an invitation for lots of
7 business. There's at least 8,000 parts in a wind
8 turbine, and New York should be able to make some
9 parts of them, including concrete towers, which
10 would allow New York to use the right wind
11 turbines for New York State winds, which we call
12 low-wind-speed turbines, and not rely on vast wind
13 speed turbines with poor yields.

14 Anyway, thank you for allowing me to talk.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

16 Our next speaker is Evan Truskalo. Evan.

17 EVAN TRUSKALO: Can you hear me? Hold on.

18 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

19 EVAN TRUSKALO: Hi. My name -- my name is
20 Evan Truskalo. I am a student. I am a high
21 school student in New York City. I'm 18 years
22 old. And the main thing that -- that's really on
23 my mind right now when it comes to the climate
24 is -- so, for context, I grew up in Manhattan.
25 And the neighborhood I grew up in, it wasn't

1 honestly very clean.

2 I remember there were landfills. There
3 were -- smoke. There were factories. It was a
4 very industrial neighborhood. And I currently
5 suffer from pretty severe asthma. And I think
6 that those -- the dirty air of the city is the
7 cause of it.

8 But what's really my concern right now is
9 I'm starting to apply to college. I've actually
10 -- I actually have filled out applications. And
11 if I'm applying to CUNYs, which I do plan on
12 applying to, who's to say that some CUNY
13 building -- SUNY and CUNY buildings, some of which
14 are decades old, what if their energy -- their
15 energy infrastructure isn't -- isn't up to code?
16 Isn't up to standard? And what if my symptoms get
17 worse? That's -- that's something that concerns
18 me.

19 So, I do call to the New York Power
20 Authority to plead with them to try to modernize
21 those public buildings because those will affect
22 thousands, if not tens of thousands of people on
23 the local level.

24 And I understand it's not the most pressing
25 of concerns compared to the state level and other

1 matters, but it's something that it's -- it's
2 something that is on my list. That's it. It was
3 a pretty short testimony.

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Evan.

5 I'm going to go back to Mark Heltzman.

6 Okay. And then just an announcement for
7 everyone on the line tonight: This does conclude
8 our list of registered speakers.

9 We had a number of you who did register to
10 speak, and I recognize that people's schedules
11 change, but many who did not log in. And if
12 anyone is watching the public hearing through the
13 YouTube link or through the Zoom, and had tried to
14 speak, please check your email, check your spam
15 inbox as well for the link to log in.

16 We have reached the end of our list of
17 registered speakers. We will remain here and
18 checking that inbox, making sure the Zoom line is
19 open in case anyone is trying to speak and just
20 hasn't joined yet. Thank you.

21 (Brief recess.)

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Good evening, everyone.
23 Thanks for your patience. We have a few more
24 speakers. Thank you to those of you who signed up
25 this evening.

1 Next, we're going to hear from Joan
2 Matthews. Joan.

3 JOAN MATTHEWS: Hi. Can you hear me?

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can. Thanks,
5 Joan.

6 JOAN MATTHEWS: How's everyone? Good, I
7 hope.

8 So, I'm actually a resident of Long Island,
9 where they're proposing to put a 275-megawatt
10 lithium-ion battery storage in a densely, densely
11 populated area.

12 I'm also in the area where they're going to
13 be running three -- I think, 375-megawatt power
14 lines through one street, which are overloaded,
15 according to the Article 7 for the (inaudible)
16 gases, which people are safely supposed to be
17 exposed to.

18 I'm also in opposition of the turbine from
19 the south shore. So, I just want to raise a
20 couple of questions. I don't know whether people
21 are thinking about them. I've been doing a lot of
22 research on my own, and people really should get
23 out there and do a lot of research.

24 So, a couple of questions I have to think
25 about are -- one, food. Food sources. Okay. So

1 we have all these birds being killed as we're
2 brought up by, I think it was Gary. If we don't
3 have birds, we don't have food because the food --
4 the birds propagate seeds. They propagate a lot
5 of things, as well as take care of a lot of the
6 critters and pests that we don't want.

7 The second thing is bats. Bats are, again,
8 very important for the mosquito population; as we
9 are having more and more people, we get more and
10 more pests. So that's a big thing.

11 Fish. With the turbines -- the problem
12 with the turbines is they do warm the water around
13 them, as well as put out some nasty chemicals into
14 the water, and that affects the fish population.
15 Very interesting that a lady brought up before,
16 which is well documented, that the dolphins and
17 the beach stranding of whales, I've been here for
18 59 years, and I've never seen it my entire life
19 until they started doing the ultrasonic of the
20 ocean floors for that.

21 So again, a deaf dolphin, a deaf whale, is
22 going to be a dead one. Then you're affecting the
23 apex predators for the species of animals that are
24 in the whale- -- in the oceans. So then, if
25 you're going to leave them unchecked -- it's very

1 interesting; also, we had a lot of shark attacks
2 recently. So that's something to think about as
3 well.

4 Also, too, if you're poisoning fish in the
5 oceans, we're poisoning ourselves. Because, also,
6 too, the BPA that comes off of the turbines that's
7 embedded into the fiberglass goes into the ocean.
8 So, although we're trying to get it out of our
9 houses, we're going to be eating it.

10 Let's see -- again, with the turbines, the
11 warmth comes from the cables, the substations, as
12 well as the turbines themselves just operating.
13 I'm just trying to think. Sorry. I just got out
14 of work, and I just found out about the meeting.

15 Why aren't we looking at conservation of
16 energy? Nobody seems to be doing it. There's a
17 lot of stuff that could be turned off rather than
18 running 24/7. Also, two, I choose not to have an
19 electric car on purpose because it's way too
20 dangerous for my liking. And also, two, limited
21 distance.

22 How long does solar panels really last for?
23 What happens to them? Does anyone really think
24 about that? We send them to third-world
25 countries. We send them to Asia. And where we

1 have children and adults being exposed to the
2 toxins when they try to disassemble them.

3 So, again, not in our backyard, but what
4 happens if they end up in our landfills here?

5 Another question or a statement, if you
6 really want to look into it, the National
7 Oceanographic and Atmospheric allows deaths of
8 populations of whales and dolphins, as well as
9 other animals, to be able to go and look to see
10 whether or not turbines would be able to be placed
11 in the waters.

12 And again, that affects everything, apex
13 predators down. Why are we not addressing the
14 remainder of pollutants throughout the world, not
15 just us? Thank you for your time.

16 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Joan.

17 Our next speaker is Zariya Molino. Zariya.

18 ZARIYA MOLINO: Hello.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Hi.

20 ZARIYA MOLINO: Hi. I hope all is well.
21 My name is Zariya Molino. I'm from Curtis High
22 School in Staten Island.

23 I work in collaboration with Triage. I'm
24 here to speak on decarbonizing the community
25 campuses in New York State while highlighting the

1 issues of those who suffer from pollution, having
2 an effect on their health.

3 Decarbonizing the CUNY campuses in New York
4 State can become possible by adopting renewable
5 energy sources, improving energy efficiency, and
6 moving away from fossil fuels could also reduce
7 the local emissions and improve indoor and outdoor
8 air quality.

9 Decarbonizing the community campuses in New
10 York State is not only essential for fighting the
11 global environment challenges placed upon us, but
12 for shielding the health of people like me and my
13 brother who have asthma.

14 My premature brother suffers from
15 respiratory defects, and I can't help but to push
16 forth a better future for his well-being without
17 being concerned about his well-being being
18 affected by the global climate crisis at hand.

19 On high-smoke days, I witnessed my brother
20 being called up to the hospital yet again due to
21 the worsening air quality affecting his health.
22 Consistently being held as a reminder that air
23 pollution affects our well-being.

24 The last three Thanksgivings, my brother
25 has spent his time in the hospital for his asthma

1 and respiratory as he is yet another victim of
2 pollution to take its hold.

3 Making a clean energy transformation at
4 CUNY would create a healthier space for all
5 adults, including the ones dealing with
6 respiratory issues. It would allow students to
7 feel more comfortable walking around their
8 campuses, knowing that they wouldn't have to fear
9 potential health hazards. And that's all. Thank
10 you so much.

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Zariya.

12 Our next speaker is Christina Kramer.
13 Christina.

14 Okay. We're going to go over to Julia
15 Krist. Julia.

16 JULIA KRIST: Hi, can you hear me?

17 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can, Julia. Go
18 ahead.

19 JULIA KRIST: Okay. Great. Thanks so
20 much. Hi, everybody. And thank you for giving me
21 the opportunity to speak tonight.

22 I am an environmental engineer. I live in
23 New York City. And I would like to add a comment
24 tonight that this plan, while I appreciate the
25 effort and the planning that has gone into it, is

1 not ambitious enough for where we need to be to
2 meet our climate mandate.

3 I think that we need at least 15 gigawatts
4 of renewable energy by 2030. Currently, this plan
5 does not put us on track to meeting these
6 requirements. And as a young person who has
7 studied sustainability all my life in high school
8 and college, I've noticed that we're just not
9 ambitious enough. We're not trying hard enough.
10 We're affected -- affected by the climate crisis
11 here and now. We see it every day, whether that
12 be through the drought we're currently
13 experiencing, the extreme weather events that tax
14 our infrastructure, and our global food systems
15 and daily lives.

16 We're not prepared for what's coming, and
17 we're not taking decisive enough action as a
18 country. And New York State has the opportunity
19 to be a leader in the nation and globally on what
20 it means to actually take -- actually take
21 decisive climate action.

22 And I think we have a really unique
23 opportunity in that we can make this a public
24 energy source, and use our taxpayer dollars to
25 finance public energy, and not rely on these

1 industry parties, whether they be from the oil and
2 gas industry and they're now branching out into
3 renewable energy, or whether they be a newer
4 company who is more susceptible to price variation
5 and backing out of projects, like we've seen with
6 wind development off the coast because of
7 increased prices or terms and conditions that they
8 didn't expect.

9 But when we have the ability to use public
10 finances and say, this is what we are looking for;
11 this is what we want to see, we can actually get
12 it done effectively. And -- yeah. So, my big
13 takeaway is that we need to be pushing for 15
14 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030. This plan
15 needs to be more ambitious.

16 And also, yeah, I would comment and agree
17 about investing in nuclear power because while
18 renewables are great, they're not going to be the
19 only way that we get to a clean energy future, and
20 we need to invest in things like energy
21 efficiency, as well as others have commented
22 tonight.

23 So, thank you so much for taking my
24 comments and have a good night.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Julia.

1 Our final speaker is Kate Selden. Kate.

2 KATE SELDEN: Hi. Can you hear me?

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Yes, we can.

4 KATE SELDEN: Hi. Thanks so much for
5 having me.

6 My name is Kate Selden. I'm the Senior
7 Policy Director at Solar One. We're a nonprofit
8 that provides climate education, bringing
9 workforce training and solar tech (inaudible)
10 systems to make solar affordable and accessible to
11 New Yorkers.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
13 We are gravely concerned with the impact that
14 climate change is wreaking on communities across
15 the state and globally. But the incoming federal
16 administration that promises to undo much of the
17 progress our country has made is ever more
18 critical that New York State take a leadership
19 role in advancing an equitable instead (inaudible)
20 of renewable energy.

21 Unfortunately, we are falling behind.
22 Recent reports predict that New York will be at
23 least three years delayed -- sorry, my daughter --
24 in meeting the 70-percent renewable target if we
25 stick with the status quo.

1 But NYPA's expanded authority gives it the
2 potential to be a leader in New York's transition,
3 and we urge NYPA to embody that leadership by
4 laying out a more ambitious strategy and a pathway
5 to build 15 gigawatts of renewables by 2030,
6 accounting for realistic rates of attrition.

7 As facilitators of distributed solar
8 projects across New York City, though on a much
9 smaller scale, we acknowledge the challenges of
10 contracting a large portfolio of projects on a
11 short timeline. But this is supposed to be a
12 Strategic Plan, and an effective Strategic Plan
13 must include measurable and meaningful goals and
14 metrics for the years ahead with a detailed
15 strategy to achieve them.

16 As we have seen with our State's Climate
17 Act, without detailed strategies and metrics, our
18 agencies and authorities will not move at the
19 necessary pace to meet state targets.

20 For example, the draft plan explains why
21 NYPA is well suited to develop renewables on
22 publicly-owned land, and we agree. Yet, as of
23 now, only 6 percent of listed projects are cited
24 on public land.

25 The plan should include full viability

1 assessments with total potential capacity on all
2 public land and other sites, outlining the steps
3 that is needed to move those projects forward.

4 The plan also states the challenges of
5 receiving the federal investment tax credit
6 through direct pay, which is complicated to be
7 sure, but this is a historic opportunity where
8 finally, federal incentives are accessible to
9 tax-exempt entities like NYPA, sometimes worth up
10 to half the cost of the project.

11 We have worked with motivated small
12 nonprofit affordable housing developers with far
13 fewer resources who have found creative ways to
14 cancel renewable projects out, and we urge NYPA to
15 rise to the occasion and do the same.

16 In short, we want to see NYPA focus on
17 innovative strategies to get 15 gigawatts built.
18 Where there are financial policy and regulatory
19 interventions needed to accelerate this build-out,
20 we want to see those solutions and the plan so we
21 can all work together to make it happen.

22 The second point I want to make is about
23 workforce development funding. We are glad to see
24 NYPA distribute funds to programs that offer
25 wrap-around services to trainees and hope to see

1 more of this. We also want to emphasize the
2 importance of a job placement component in
3 programs.

4 We ask that NYPA continue to fund programs
5 that work not only to train workers but also
6 mandate employer commitments that result in job
7 placements. We support scaling up existing union
8 apprenticeship programs and linking trainees to
9 renewable projects with local higher provisions.

10 We encourage NYPA to institute transparent
11 tracking and metrics to ensure workforce programs
12 are effective. We are all depending on NYPA to
13 show us a path forward that fosters hope and trust
14 in the communities that are losing homes to fires,
15 and inundated with floods, and have been choking
16 on fossil fuel pollution for decades.

17 And we urge NYPA to deliver a truly
18 Strategic Plan for 15 gigawatts of renewables, one
19 that puts New York back on track to meet its
20 targets and leads the nation in a just transition.
21 Thank you so much.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you all for joining
23 us tonight. Thank you to the speakers who shared
24 your feedback with us openly and directly through
25 this forum. Thank you also to those who already

1 submitted written comments.

2 If anyone has additional comments, please
3 remember that you can still submit them on our
4 website or email it directly to
5 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov by December the
6 9th.

7 Have a good evening, everyone, and thank
8 you again.

9 (Thereupon, this meeting was concluded.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
certify that I was authorized to and did report the
foregoing proceedings, and that the transcript is a true
and correct transcription of my notes of the proceedings.

Dated November 27th, 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

1001 Crooked Hill Road

Brentwood, NY 11717

November 25, 2024

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

(Session 1 of 2.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Daniella Piper, Chief Innovation Officer

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

ON BEHALF OF NYPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee Laurie Wheelock

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1 DANIELLA PIPER: Good afternoon. Welcome.
2 So, if you could take your seats. Thank you.

3 All right. Again, welcome, and good
4 afternoon. My name is Daniella Piper. I'm the
5 Chief Innovation Officer at the New York Power
6 Authority. I lead the organization's efforts to
7 exploit emerging technology and novel ways of
8 working to drive the performance and growth of our
9 organization.

10 We're here today because NYPA issued its
11 draft Renewable Strategic Plan on October 8th, and
12 we scheduled 12 public hearings across the state
13 to solicit input from interested parties regarding
14 this draft plan.

15 If someone you know is unable to attend
16 today's session in person, please let them know
17 that NYPA is accepting written comments online
18 through December 9th.

19 We'll begin with a brief video about the
20 New York Power Authority, which will be followed
21 by an overview of NYPA's expanded authority and
22 the draft Strategic Plan.

23 But primarily, my colleagues and I are here
24 to hear from you. So, after these presentations,
25 we will invite those who signed up to give a

1 public comment, which will be transcribed and
2 entered into the public record.

3 We'll begin with a short video to provide
4 an overview of the New York Power Authority so you
5 can get to know us better.

6 (The video played as follows:

7 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
8 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
9 the solution for New York State and its residents,
10 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
11 opportunities.

12 Through customer partnerships, energy
13 solutions, and the responsible supply of
14 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
15 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
16 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

17 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
18 serving customers in local and state governments,
19 industry, large and small businesses, and
20 nonprofit organizations.

21 The power for these customers is equal to
22 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
23 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
24 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
25 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent

1 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
2 hydropower.

3 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
4 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
5 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
6 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
7 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

8 As we bring power to customers, we also
9 actively ensure people from our host communities
10 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
11 from our clean energy economy.

12 We work on projects across the state to
13 increase energy efficiency, improve
14 infrastructure, and support economic development.

15 Our hydropower projects support more than
16 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
17 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
18 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
19 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
20 the communities we serve.

21 Our economic and community focus extends to
22 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
23 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
24 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
25 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New

1 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
2 revitalizing the canals for the economic and
3 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
4 from around the world.

5 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
6 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
7 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
8 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
9 years to come.

10 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
11 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
12 energy deployment and support other state
13 priorities. This expanded authority will
14 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
15 New York State, support expanded workforce
16 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
17 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
18 Energy Access and Community Help Program to
19 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
20 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned
21 utilities.

22 Additionally, we will lead the state's
23 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
24 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
25 production at our small natural gas power plants

1 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
2 certain reliability and environmental conditions
3 are met.

4 We are also developing action plans to
5 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
6 carbon-emitting facilities.

7 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
8 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
9 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
10 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
11 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
12 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
13 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
14 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

15 (End of video.)

16 DANIELLA PIPER: So, as NYPA builds, owns,
17 and operates new renewable projects, we need to
18 have a grid that is free of congestion, one that
19 allows power to flow to every corner of the state.
20 That is why NYPA is pursuing the most ambitious
21 transformation of New York's electric grid in more
22 than 40 years. And the state is implementing new
23 procedures to ensure transmission can be sited,
24 connected, and built.

25 NYPA owns a third of the state's

1 high-voltage transmission, and we continue to make
2 improvements to build a more flexible 21st-century
3 electric grid with significantly greater access to
4 a mix of carbon-free energy resources.

5 We also know that a modernized grid will be
6 much more resilient. That's all part of the work
7 that we're doing today in support of the projects
8 of tomorrow.

9 In the past two years, NYPA has engaged in
10 a variety of public engagement pathways to inform
11 the foundation for building new resources as
12 authorized by the 2023-2024 Enacted State Budget.
13 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to build
14 renewables subject to a Strategic Plan, which must
15 be approved by its trustees following a public
16 comment period and at least three public hearings.

17 This is our 11th public hearing in New York
18 State, and we'll have one this afternoon. We
19 prioritized holding these hearings because we felt
20 it was important to have more hearings in more
21 places to hear from more of you.

22 Like we did with our 2023 and 2024
23 conferral process, we welcome public engagement
24 and feedback as we shape our Strategic Plan to
25 build more renewables in New York State.

1 I know many of you came today to speak
2 about the plan. At this point, I will turn it
3 over to Vennela Yadhati to give a brief overview
4 of the draft Strategic Plan.

5 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Daniella.

6 I'm going to be walking and talking if
7 that's all right. I need to keep up the step
8 count, as I always say.

9 Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for
10 being here. I'm Vennela Yadhati. I'm the Vice
11 President for NYPA Renewables, leading this effort
12 to build more renewable generation and energy
13 storage products across the state.

14 We're in the middle of what can be called
15 one of the most significant eras of NYPA's 93-year
16 history. Last May, as a part of the 2023-'24
17 Enacted State Budget, lawmakers entrusted NYPA
18 with expanded authority, new capabilities and
19 responsibilities, or new opportunities to further
20 serve New Yorkers in the clean energy space.

21 Let me explain: First, the expanded
22 authority allows NYPA to get the ability to build,
23 own, and operate new renewable generation and
24 energy storage projects like solar, wind, and
25 battery energy storage systems to support the

1 state achieve its bold goals outlined in the
2 Climate Act.

3 My team at NYPA has identified a first
4 tranche of 40 such projects spread across every
5 region of the state. And while the state budget
6 did not require us to have any specific threshold
7 in its draft Strategic Plan, these 40 projects
8 represent a total capacity exceeding 3.5
9 gigawatts.

10 Now, how much is 3.5 gigawatts? The same
11 as 10 percent of the electric load for all of New
12 York City. I know that doesn't sound like much,
13 right? But to put it in perspective, it is what
14 it takes to power the whole cities of Zurich,
15 Helsinki, or Reykjavik, and Iceland, or, local
16 examples, Boulder, Colorado, Reno, Nevada, or
17 Austin, Texas.

18 And these 40 projects are just the
19 beginning of our commitment to expand our
20 portfolio of delivering clean, reliable energy to
21 every corner of New York.

22 Right now, we're in the process of doing
23 full due diligence on each project to determine
24 whether or not they are the best fit for New
25 Yorkers. We want to ensure these projects truly

1 benefit our communities and, therefore, belong in
2 NYPA's renewable energy portfolio.

3 Our main goal is to leverage NYPA's
4 resources to maximize renewable energy deployment
5 in New York. We also want to explore meaningful
6 partnerships to support the state's equitable and
7 efficient transition to a clean energy future.

8 This first tranche of projects includes a
9 mix of greenfield -- NYPA's own greenfield
10 projects that we are self-developing and
11 co-developed initiatives, where we will partner
12 with the private sector to combine our
13 complementary skills and strengths to jointly
14 develop, construct, and own and operate these
15 projects together.

16 This first tranche also includes a variety
17 of products, both large scale, which is the
18 predominant portion, reflecting today's market
19 conditions of renewables in New York State, and
20 smaller, distributed generation scale community
21 solar projects where they're built actually in
22 communities -- in local communities, where the
23 communities can actually touch and feel and know
24 the impact and understand the impact directly from
25 that.

1 It also includes a variety of technologies.
2 As you can see from that, we have solar PV,
3 land-based wind, and battery energy storage
4 systems. And it includes a variety of site
5 conditions and locations.

6 Half of our own greenfield portfolio
7 includes projects that repurpose former landfills,
8 brownfields, and closed correctional facilities
9 for advancing renewable generation. You know,
10 turning the brown into the green, or as one of my
11 colleagues put it, turning brownfields into bright
12 fields.

13 My point is we're collaborating with our
14 sister agencies and NYPA's customers, including
15 local governments, to identify more such siting
16 opportunities because NYPA cannot do this alone.

17 A few other examples include projects that
18 we've done in New York City, partnering with the
19 city themselves, at several public schools on
20 their rooftops, the JFK Airport Community Solar
21 Project that we're building at their long-term
22 parking lot and, of course, we've been working
23 with this very own college campus here to identify
24 more opportunities and the opportune time as well
25 for deploying such products.

1 So far, we've pre-qualified a stable of
2 more than 85 developers and investors that can
3 collaborate with us to build this initial tranche
4 and future ones. NYPA's role and goal is not to
5 crowd out the private sector but to work together,
6 leveraging our strengths to build more renewables
7 and help the state achieve its clean energy goals.

8 By maintaining majority ownership and
9 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch our
10 finances further and accelerate the transition to
11 a clean energy future.

12 As we described in the draft Strategic
13 Plan, NYPA has not received any state funding to
14 build new renewable generation projects. Instead,
15 we're self-funding these efforts along with our
16 other critical commitments, including such as new
17 transmission development and growing the clean
18 energy workforce, all entirely through NYPA's own
19 revenues.

20 There have been a lot of questions about
21 the size of the first tranche of projects. To put
22 it in perspective again, financing 15 gigawatts of
23 energy would be roughly about \$30 billion, the
24 same as paying for four new LaGuardia Airports all
25 at once. That's a lot of capital. So, we're

1 working with industry partners, we continue to
2 talk to the state and federal government, and we
3 continue to look for new partners to build even
4 more in our future tranches.

5 Given these constraints, a balanced
6 approach is essential to bring new renewable
7 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
8 offer the highest returns. This helps ensure we
9 can reduce the impact for ratepayers and maximize
10 the impact of every dollar we spend.

11 And there is more to come. This is only
12 the first tranche in the first Strategic Plan
13 we've published. In a way, this plan itself is
14 renewable, a plan we will regularly update as we
15 add more projects for consideration by the public
16 and NYPA's Board of Trustees, some of whom are
17 here today.

18 As part of preparing this draft plan was
19 making sure NYPA had the right tools and staffed
20 right to support it. This includes having the
21 expertise to make sure the proposed project meets
22 technical, economic, environmental and, more
23 importantly, environmental justice needs of the
24 state.

25 In the past 18 months, we have established

1 a new business line and new business structures
2 and filled key personnel roles, like my team, many
3 of whom are here as well with us today.

4 We've obtained approval from our Board of
5 Trustees to form a renewable subsidiary and an
6 initial capital allocation of \$100 million for
7 developing and garnering other necessary resources
8 to advance this first tranche of projects.

9 We continue to source and solicit
10 additional project opportunities to append to our
11 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue
12 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
13 as we expand and grow our pipeline of future
14 tranches of these projects.

15 And again, these projects aren't being
16 built in a silo. They're part of a holistic
17 approach to renewable development that supports
18 reliability, environmental justice, workforce
19 development, and affordability.

20 How are we doing that? You see, the
21 2023-'24 Enacted State Budget also gave NYPA the
22 ability to establish the Renewable Energy Access
23 and Community Help. We -- in government, we love
24 our acronyms, our REACH program.

25 In summary, the REACH program allows NYPA

1 to use a portion of the revenues that are
2 generated from new renewable energy projects to
3 benefit low- or moderate-income households within
4 disadvantaged communities through electric utility
5 bill credits.

6 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
7 Service Commission has formally accepted our
8 application to create the REACH program. Once our
9 projects are online and are generating revenues,
10 and NYPA gathers funds from other available
11 sources, money will be available to flow to
12 low-income New Yorkers through the process set
13 forth by the PSC order.

14 While REACH is still under development, it
15 will follow the same process as the Energy
16 Affordability Program and the Statewide Solar for
17 All Program through bill credits.

18 NYPA -- I know I dropped my papers; that
19 was not part of the plan, but NYPA will also
20 invest up to \$25 million annually in workforce
21 development in collaboration with the New York
22 State Department of Labor to create jobs and
23 provide workforce training for people who want to
24 work in the clean energy industry.

25 Through this partnership, we have already

1 awarded \$12.5 million this fiscal year in funding
2 for workforce development opportunities for New
3 Yorkers across the state, like the Say Yes Buffalo
4 Youth Apprenticeship Program and the Renaissance
5 Technical Institute in New York City, and several
6 others from disadvantaged communities across the
7 state to pursue good-paying clean energy careers.
8 It's not just about creating good-paying clean
9 energy jobs but to turn them into careers.

10 And with regard to the workforce on these
11 proposed projects, NYPA will require each and
12 every renewable generating project in our
13 portfolio to be built with union labor.

14 I'll say that again: Every single project
15 in our pipeline must have a project labor
16 agreement, and we will require all contractors and
17 subcontractors associated with the project work to
18 utilize apprenticeship agreements. So, those
19 learning on this first tranche of projects can be
20 seasoned veterans for NYPA's future renewable
21 projects.

22 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
23 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at its
24 small natural gas power plants in New York City
25 and Long Island by 2030, as long as reliability

1 and environmental conditions are met.

2 The plan to do so is required by May of
3 next year, and we are in conversations with the
4 NYISO, actively exploring strategies to meet this
5 commitment while considering the grid reliability
6 and their quality impacts, including the potential
7 for deploying battery storage at some of these
8 sites.

9 We're in discussion with several developers
10 about energy storage and other electrical
11 infrastructure to transform these sites while also
12 preserving the grid reliability.

13 I know I just shared a long list of actions
14 NYPA has taken and continues to take. As a
15 reminder, the draft of our plan is on our website
16 at NYPA.gov/renewables.

17 I implore all of you to read through it if
18 you haven't already done so because I helped write
19 it.

20 Again, thank you for taking the time and
21 taking the time to come here and to learn more,
22 but also to provide your important feedback and
23 comments about the plan.

24 Back to you, Daniela.

25 DANIELLA PIPER: Thank you, Vennela.

1 With that, I will remind everyone that the
2 law requires NYPA to solicit public comments and
3 hold a minimum of three public hearings in
4 regionally diverse parts of the state on the draft
5 Strategic Plan that Vennela just described.

6 Our timekeeper, Lindsay Kryzak, will call
7 on everyone who signed up to speak tonight --
8 well, today, we're not at night yet -- this
9 afternoon.

10 And our speakers -- I'm rushing it. Our
11 speakers will be given three minutes to deliver a
12 public comment for the record.

13 If anyone needs a translator, please alert
14 the NYPA staff at the sign-in table. We recognize
15 some of you may have longer comments than others
16 if you run out of time, you can submit your full
17 comment on our website or email it directly to
18 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. There are also QR
19 codes on the sign-in tables to make it even easier
20 to submit your comments.

21 The feedback that you give tonight will be
22 transcribed and compiled with the written
23 comments, which must be considered and
24 incorporated into the final Strategic Plan and be
25 published on NYPA's website and submitted to the

1 Governor and the legislature by January 31st,
2 2025.

3 So, thank you again for joining us. I will
4 now turn the program over to our timekeeper,
5 Lindsay.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thanks, Daniella.

7 Before I begin, please note that NYPA is
8 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
9 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or
10 required by applicable law, regulation, or order.
11 And it may be made available in whole or in part
12 in the public record in accordance with the
13 agency's rules.

14 Each member of the public will be given
15 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.
16 Please use the aisle on the left side to get to
17 the mic. And those of you who are seated on that
18 aisle, please just remember folks will be walking
19 back and forth.

20 Additional comments can be shared via our
21 website or via email directly to
22 strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

23 Our first speaker today is Assembly Member
24 Chuck Levine. Assembly Member.

25 CHUCK LEVINE: Good -- good afternoon. And

1 I have the great honor and privilege of
2 representing the Northeast Nassau County in the
3 state legislature. I want to recognize NYPA for
4 its ambitious Strategic Plan for renewable energy
5 and its leadership in addressing this most
6 intensely critical challenge.

7 As the generator of one-fourth of all of
8 our state's electricity, NYPA has established
9 itself as a trusted leader from Niagara Falls to
10 Massena, where, incidentally, one of my
11 grandfathers once lived for a short period of time
12 and all the way down to Long Island.

13 NYPA's generation facilities are not only
14 the foundation of innovation but also the
15 foundation of our state's electric delivery
16 system.

17 Now, let me focus on our region: Long
18 Island sits at a crossroads in the climate crisis.
19 As -- as the heating of our earth intensifies, our
20 vulnerability to hurricanes, floods, and even
21 wildfires increases. Addressing these imminent
22 dangers requires nothing less than decisive
23 action. We must bring new, clean, renewable
24 energy sources online, minimize carbon -- carbon
25 emissions, and work to reverse the harmful effects

1 of climate change.

2 A persistent issue in our state is the
3 disparity between our Upstate and Downstate
4 electric grids. While Upstate benefits from
5 predominantly clean energy, Downstate, including
6 Long Island, still relies heavily on fossil fuels.
7 I encourage NYPA to prioritize renewable energy
8 projects in our Downstate regions, and I support
9 its plan to phase out its peaker plant operations.

10 Reducing carbon emissions across the state
11 is absolutely necessary to improving air quality
12 and fostering healthier communities. NYPA's
13 emphasis on a just clean energy transition is
14 commendable. The commitment to invest up to \$25
15 million annually in workforce development
16 demonstrates leadership in ensuring our workers
17 are re-skilled and up-skilled for clean energy
18 jobs.

19 This funding will also help to provide
20 supportive services like transportation and
21 childcare, addressing key barriers to workforce
22 participation, especially in a region like Long
23 Island, where the living costs are truly, truly
24 expensive.

25 I thank NYPA for providing funding to local

1 workforce development organizations like United
2 Way of Long Island, and I encourage you to
3 consider other Long Island organizations to
4 partner with as well.

5 Long Island is at the epicenter of the
6 clean energy transition, and local partnerships
7 will enhance the plan's impact.

8 I recognize NYPA's efforts over the past
9 year and a half to both expand staff, as you were
10 short-staffed, we know that, and to identify a
11 multitude of projects.

12 The 3.5 gigawatt target represents an
13 essential step forward. I encourage NYPA to adopt
14 a balanced approach and to continue to leverage
15 diverse energy sources to ensure reliability,
16 resiliency, and the ability to meet our growing
17 energy demand.

18 As New Yorkers -- and I think it's
19 important to reflect on the fact, just very
20 briefly. NYPA was founded by then-governor
21 Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1931. Roosevelt
22 looked ahead to the future to the best extent he
23 could. We have to do the same.

24 As New Yorkers, we all share the
25 responsibility of advancing our state's clean

1 energy goals. NYPA's Strategic Plan sets the
2 stage for this progress while ensuring that our
3 communities and our workers benefit.

4 I thank NYPA for its efforts and urge
5 continued collaboration to achieve our shared
6 goals. And I thank you for letting me share my
7 thoughts. Thank you very much.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Assembly
9 Member.

10 Our next speaker is Derek O'Connor. Derek.

11 DEREK O'CONNOR: Thank you. My name is
12 Derek O'Connor. I'm the Workforce Development
13 Manager at Stony Brook University's Office of
14 Economic Development.

15 I commend NYPA for setting the \$25 million
16 investment in workforce development going forward.
17 Just to go over some of the innovative projects
18 that NYPA has spearheaded alongside Stony Brook
19 has included the up-skilling and re-skilling of
20 transmission workers for Long Island's workforce
21 needs.

22 As the utility workforce ages out at a
23 rapid rate, some estimates anywhere between 10 to
24 20, sometimes even reports saying 40 percent,
25 combined with increased electrification goals for

1 New York State, the need for the next generation
2 of energy workforce is more imperative than ever.
3 So, what NYPA has been able to do, working with
4 Stony Brook, has been providing transmission
5 awareness to BOCES students who are in trade
6 electrical programs, getting them aware of what
7 our future careers will be as more utilities
8 become more electrified.

9 At the same time, the NYPA Environmental
10 Justice Office has been essential in providing
11 wraparound services to underserved K-12
12 populations, not just in transmission awareness
13 but in all clean energy education.

14 And then, most importantly, NYPA has taken
15 offshore wind professional development programming
16 and broken it down for underserved populations
17 right here in Brentwood. Within the last two
18 years, Stony Brook and NYPA together have trained
19 1,000 fifth-graders in what offshore wind is going
20 to be, how to model and simulate what an offshore
21 wind turbine will be to make them aware of those
22 careers that will be coming, and being abundant
23 here on Long Island in the next 5 to 10 years.

24 So, what NYPA has been able to do, and I
25 look forward to being part of the \$25 million

1 workforce program coming forward, is to continue
2 working on programs like this, scaling them to
3 meet the needs and make sure that the next
4 generation of the utility workforce is ready for
5 the careers that are going to be here on Long
6 Island. Thank you.

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Derek.

8 Our next speaker is Margaret Piedmonte.
9 Margaret.

10 MARGARET PIEDMONTE: I realized I need one
11 of these from my office; people will pay
12 attention.

13 Good afternoon, everyone. I am -- on
14 behalf of Amcor Flexibles North America, formerly
15 known as Bemis. I would like to thank you for the
16 opportunity to speak with you regarding our past
17 and hopefully a long relationship with the New
18 York Power Authority.

19 Amcor is a label manufacturer located in
20 Edgewood, New York, with an annual sales of about
21 100 million and 101 employees. We have been a
22 customer of NYPA for a relatively short period of
23 time. In that time, our energy costs have
24 moderated, and we are in a situation that we can
25 better predict with relative certainty our energy

1 costs for the next year.

2 This has been one of the tantamount
3 principles of New York State's legislation, along
4 with lower energy costs, which started the
5 Recharge New York program in 2012.

6 Predictable energy costs assist us greatly
7 because contracts with our clients are at a fixed
8 cost. The additional benefit of lower costs
9 allows us to bid on these contracts with a
10 competitive cost. Since we compete nationwide,
11 being able to compete with out-of-state companies
12 is a major concern for all of us.

13 There's nothing that Amcor enjoys more than
14 the predictability that it allows to continue --
15 us to provide a stable employment for our
16 employees.

17 Amcor has established ambitious GHG
18 emissions reduction targets that are aligned with
19 the latest climate science, aiming to limit global
20 temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

21 Half of our NYPA energy supply is sourced
22 from its hydropower plants and clean, renewable,
23 sustainable power. Current renewable energy
24 supply and the creation of affordable new supplies
25 are important to achieve our targets. Thus,

1 NYPA's newly established authority to build clean,
2 renewable energy sources throughout New York State
3 is commendable, and we fully support its purpose
4 and benefits to the future generations of Long
5 Islanders. Thank you.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Margaret.

7 Our next speaker is Melissa Parrott.

8 Melissa.

9 MELISSA PARROTT: Good afternoon. My name
10 is Melissa Parrott. I am the Executive Director
11 of Renewable Energy, Long Island, and the Director
12 of Students for Climate Action.

13 I want to commend NYPA, the New York Power
14 Authority, for its forward-thinking draft of its
15 Renewable Strategic Plan and its leadership in
16 tackling one of the biggest challenges of our
17 time, the climate crisis.

18 Temperatures are rising and we are
19 experiencing more occurrences of extreme weather
20 events, especially here on Long Island. The
21 challenge we're facing is how to decrease our
22 carbon emissions and bring online new renewable
23 energy sources, all while ensuring a just
24 transition and benefits for local communities, and
25 NYPA's plan does just that.

1 NYPA's efforts to expand renewable energy
2 and pursue 3.5 gigawatts of renewable energy is an
3 admirable target. I will continue to advocate
4 even more renewable energy projects across the
5 state until we meet the New York State's renewable
6 energy goals, and this plan is a very necessary
7 first step for that.

8 The plan includes a balanced approach that
9 leverages different energy sources, such as solar,
10 wind, and, of course, battery storage, which is
11 very needed here to ensure reliability and
12 resiliency.

13 I want to encourage NYPA to consider more
14 projects on Downstate regions like Long Island, as
15 the assemblyman also echoed, where we believe
16 large-scale solar can provide a benefit for
17 communities, especially if sited on underutilized
18 public buildings or brownfields.

19 I also support NYPA's plan to provide
20 benefits to our communities through the REACH
21 program and the incredible workforce development
22 opportunities.

23 We all share the responsibility of
24 advancing our state's clean energy goals. I offer
25 my organization as a resource and partner for NYPA

1 as you continue to pursue additional projects in
2 the region. And I thank NYPA for its efforts and
3 urge continued collaboration. Thank you.

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Melissa.

5 Our next speaker is Fred Harrison. Fred.

6 FRED HARRISON: Yes, my name is Fred
7 Harrison. I live in Merrick. I'm submitting more
8 extensive comments.

9 The decisions NYPA makes in the next months
10 will be incredibly important. As the consequences
11 of the elections sink in, it becomes clear that
12 the plan on the table is already outdated.

13 The incoming Trump Administration requires
14 that we change how we think about and plan for a
15 renewable energy transition. The good news is
16 that in New York, we're uniquely positioned in the
17 nation to deal with the obstacles that are in
18 front of us. We have NYPA. 49 other states may
19 have public power systems, but nowhere else is
20 there anything like NYPA. NYPA has been called
21 New York's hidden jewel. It's our secret weapon.

22 NYPA can be the leader in providing
23 low-cost renewable energy, whether in the form of
24 utility-scale solar, offshore or onshore wind, or
25 battery storage. It's imperative that NYPA step

1 up, and the current Renewable Strategic Plan does
2 not do that and fails Long Island.

3 The service territory of Long Island Power
4 Authority covers almost 3 million people, with a
5 costly energy system largely dependent on fossil
6 fuels. NYPA's rates are the second-highest in the
7 state. Although NYPA serves 15 percent of New
8 York's population, Only 5 percent of NYPA's 40
9 projects will be dedicated to renewable energy
10 needs on Long Island.

11 That is not adequate. And if fairness and
12 proportionality apply, there will be many more
13 projects scheduled for Long Island. And I frankly
14 don't know what happened, whether or not it was a
15 problem in the conferral process; whatever the
16 problem was, something went wrong, and it needs to
17 be addressed.

18 The Strategic Plan stresses the importance
19 of ensuring NYPA has an adequate revenue stream
20 for its new work. Well, with a firm customer
21 base, there could be no better partner for NYPA
22 than NYPA. It's confounding to me that the
23 sections on operating and commercialization
24 options and commercialization models made no
25 mention of this winning strategy and synergy. I

1 don't understand why that didn't happen.

2 NYPA should be thinking big and bold. I
3 dare say, on the scale of the Niagara project.
4 NYPA successfully harnessed the water power of
5 Upstate New York; it can certainly harness the
6 energy of the sun and wind.

7 NYPA's forte is the transmission and
8 distribution to its ratepayers. NYPA's forte is
9 its financial strength and project management
10 skills. A partnership between the two would be
11 the perfect antidote to the stranglehold energy
12 giants have placed on renewable energy. I urge
13 NYPA to get to work. Thank you.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Fred.

15 Our next speaker is Michael Cervini.
16 Michael.

17 MICHAEL CERVINI: Good afternoon. My name
18 is Mike Cervini. I'm the Energy Manager at
19 Farmingdale State College.

20 Sustainability -- thank you.
21 Sustainability is a core principle at Farmingdale,
22 and we've made significant strides in our efforts
23 to reduce our carbon footprint over the last few
24 years.

25 As a state entity, we're also required to

1 comply with the Climate Act and Executive Order
2 22. The Climate Act set ambitious greenhouse gas
3 production goals for 2030 and 2050, and Executive
4 Order 22 requires us to use 100 percent renewable
5 electricity by 2030.

6 NYPA has been a great partner in helping us
7 plan and implement projects to meet our
8 sustainability goals. I've been working with
9 NYPA's solar energy team over the last two years,
10 and they have been very helpful. They performed a
11 feasibility study to determine if our solar
12 project would be practical. They included a
13 technical and economic analysis for the proposed
14 project.

15 NYPA also provided detailed, pre-vetted
16 contract documents, which we'll be using in our
17 RFP. They worked with us to tailor those
18 documents to meet our specific requirements and
19 outline various options for bidders to develop
20 their own solutions.

21 NYPA will continue to support Farmingdale
22 State College through the bid process and into
23 construction. By working with NYPA, not only can
24 we rely on their expertise, we also have the peace
25 of mind of knowing that they're -- all of their

1 bidders on the project have been pre-approved.

2 I believe the plan that NYPA has developed
3 outlines an efficient and responsible path toward
4 a clean energy future. I'm confident that NYPA's
5 expanded role in the development of renewable
6 energy projects will help New York State reach its
7 sustainability goals. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Mike.

9 Our next speaker is Ron Leonard. Ron.

10 RON LEONARD: Thanks for giving me the
11 opportunity to speak.

12 First, I want to say we're all on the same
13 side of the table. We want to make this work. We
14 want to achieve the goal of 100 percent renewable
15 energy. And I can tell you a little bit of the
16 history of all that stuff because I've been in the
17 business of renewable energy for the last 50
18 years. Yes, I'm that old.

19 And in terms of that scenario, in terms of
20 that progress that I've seen personally, we've
21 gone a long way. And what I'm warning about in my
22 speech is that we may be making a bad turn with
23 NYPA stepping aside of its original goals, which
24 was to cut back on the abuses of municipal -- of
25 multiple power producers, basically monopoly

1 producers around the United States, with Sam
2 Ansell, and creating this thing called Utility
3 Trust, which basically ripped off stock owners.

4 So, the -- the goal that I'm trying to get
5 you to focus in on is this core belief that we can
6 cooperate and make this work. The working
7 relationship, I want to give my own personal
8 history to give you a -- a sense of this: I
9 started a business in 1976 called BESICORP, which
10 is the first-ever solar company to go public in
11 New York State in 1981.

12 We then formed a company called BESICORP,
13 which was responsible for putting 2 gigawatts of
14 power plants in New York State, including the most
15 recent Caithness power plant in Long Island. We
16 were behind the power stack of funds for that
17 plant. And lastly, a company called Sunrise, in
18 1992, we started that from nothing and became the
19 largest solar distributor in the United States.

20 So, I have a history of this. We have a
21 history of understanding how things move forward.
22 For example, Farmingdale, my friend Kevin Kramer
23 was the one who installed the first-ever solar
24 system on a CUNY School in the state of New York.
25 He was also the first one ever to install a one

1 megawatt system on roofs that was right here in
2 Long Island.

3 And Governor Pataki happened to come out
4 here to Long Island in the late '90s to hook up
5 the first-ever net metering system in Greenport,
6 New York.

7 So, these things really have a -- a home in
8 my heart because I've personally seen it. Now,
9 what I want to warn about is, basically, what I
10 see you guys taking a left-hand turn into maybe
11 something that will stall the progress that's been
12 made. We -- a lot of progress nicely in
13 installing 6 gigawatts of solar on the New York
14 grid. And obviously, I can see on your map, you
15 would like to install 40 more projects, but
16 they're all Upstate.

17 This is not the way to move the agenda
18 forward. We need more renewables in the load
19 pocket that's from the Hudson River Valley down to
20 Long Island. And we need to do this quickly
21 because -- well, frankly, time's up. We see that
22 in the next administration.

23 So, the bill itself that we're sort of
24 working on has a checkered history. The -- it was
25 introduced and failed to pass in two consecutive

1 sessions. The lady who really sponsored this,
2 pushed this along, Sarahana; I really want to
3 thank her for doing that, really sees the inequity
4 of the system that we have right now, which is
5 monopoly utilities, controlling power, and
6 sticking it to the ratepayers.

7 And she's not the only one that saw this.
8 There was this guy that I knew, his name is Cuomo
9 -- Andrew, specifically, who said very
10 prophetically before he left office, that I'm as
11 serious as a heart attack. And that seriousness
12 had to do with converting the abuses of monopoly
13 power into public power. And I think we can join
14 together and make that happen. Thank you.

15 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Ron.

16 Our next speaker is Ryan Madden. Ryan.

17 RYAN MADDEN: Good afternoon. My name is
18 Ryan Madden. I'm with the Long Island Progressive
19 Coalition. We are part of the statewide campaign
20 to get NYPA to expand its authority that we're
21 speaking about today.

22 By proposing only 3.5 gigawatts of
23 renewables, NYPA leadership is not meeting the
24 moment while flubbing its requirements to fill the
25 gaps to meet our climate law. It doesn't have to

1 be this way.

2 NYPA must build at least 15 gigawatts of
3 renewables by 2030 to ensure that we meet our
4 climate mandates, lower utility bills for those
5 who need it most, create 25,000 green union jobs,
6 and to close highly polluting peaker plants on the
7 timeline required by the law.

8 Here on Long Island, this was referenced
9 before: Although the Long Island Power Authority
10 serves 15 percent of New York's population, only 5
11 percent of NYPA's proposed projects will be
12 dedicated to renewable energy here to battery
13 storage facilities, which are welcomed and needed,
14 but more renewables should be proposed.

15 Over 90,000 low- to moderate-income
16 households on Long Island are considered energy
17 burden. More NYPA projects should be looked at
18 for the region so that the REACH program is
19 available to more ratepayers here.

20 NYPA should look to increase the number of
21 projects it develops in partnership with LIPA,
22 which also has the authority to build renewables.
23 Despite having the highest rates of residential
24 solar adoption in New York State, there's
25 currently untapped potential for mass-distributed

1 solar on Long Island that NYPA's Strategic Plan
2 should take into account through public-public
3 partnerships with LIPA.

4 The Long Island Solar Roadmap, a multi-year
5 process which involved dozens of stakeholders,
6 identifies low-impact sites for commercial and
7 utility-scale solar arrays, demonstrating that
8 Long Island has enough low-impact sites, large
9 rooftops, parking lots, and previously disturbed
10 lands for locating nearly 19.5 gigawatts of solar
11 without impacting forests, wetlands, and other
12 ecologically important areas. That's enough solar
13 energy capacity to power 4.8 million homes per
14 year.

15 NYPA should look at co-ownership
16 opportunities with LIPA to develop projects on
17 sites identified through the roadmap, which
18 provides prime opportunities for LIPA to step in,
19 especially as it makes targeted facility upgrades
20 to expand a hosting capacity where the utility
21 projects significant growth in DER penetration.

22 Beyond solar, NYPA's Strategic Plan should
23 fully account for LIPA's need to utilize its
24 existing authority to build public renewables.
25 LIPA's 2023 Integrated Resource Plan states that

1 it plans to meet the state's clean energy goals at
2 the lowest cost possible by using all its tools
3 available but does not seriously explore its
4 ability to build its own renewables.

5 The viability of publicly-owned renewable
6 energy infrastructure by LIPA, from offshore wind
7 to solar to thermal energy networks to battery
8 storage, must be thoroughly explored. NYPA should
9 play a role through this Strategic Plan to realize
10 these opportunities with LIPA.

11 Finally, as calls are being made to
12 decarbonize CUNY campuses, Long Island colleges
13 and universities should follow suit with support
14 from NYPA to do so. Currently, less than 6
15 percent of the proposed capacity in the Strategic
16 Plan is to be sited on public land or
17 institutions, which would benefit from
18 decarbonization through NYPA renewables, thermal
19 energy networks, and related retrofits.

20 Public entities on Long Island, such as
21 Nassau Community College, Suffolk Community
22 College, SUNY Old Westbury, and SUNY Farmingdale,
23 should be looked at for renewable energy projects.
24 Thanks for the opportunity to comment. We are
25 submitting our full remarks in writing.

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Ryan.

2 Our next speaker is Matty Arisich. Matty.

3 MATTY ARISICH: Good afternoon. Thank you
4 very much for giving me the opportunity to speak.

5 My name is Matthew Arisich. I represent
6 65,000 skilled trade workers on Long Island.

7 Look, I applaud the position where the
8 Power Authority is going with this. Those that
9 come up to the microphone to say that it's not
10 enough power, etcetera, they're not taking into
11 account that there are other factors such as the
12 offshore wind, other developers, other solars,
13 etcetera.

14 This is all about the position of working
15 together. And if anybody also believes that going
16 forward, you know, they have to build more and
17 more and more, something you have to consider is
18 that there's a supply chain, and you can't get the
19 material. So what you do is you would over
20 promise and nothing to deliver.

21 Look, we understand the concept of working
22 together. The building trade is looking forward
23 to working with everybody so that we have not only
24 workforce development programs but we can expand
25 the opportunities for those that are in low-income

1 communities to make sure that we can get those
2 positions for those jobs to come into apprentice
3 programs. But they're not really jobs; they're
4 careers because they're actually lifetime careers.

5 I'm one of those people that actually
6 benefited from this. I'll tell you why: I stand
7 here with 106 years of heritage. That's three
8 generations of building in construction. Most of
9 the time it was in the utility industry. Those
10 are the opportunities to provide us for a
11 long-term career.

12 Now, if you're looking also making sure
13 that we are stable and can actually promote jobs
14 here on Long Island, one of the things you have to
15 consider is if they're looking to go ahead and put
16 3.5 gigawatts of power in the wintertime, that's
17 how much power Long Island uses. And in the
18 summertime, it's about 5.5 gigawatts of power.

19 So, overall, we're doing the right thing,
20 and you're doing it at a pace which is acceptable,
21 and you can maintain that kind of growth. If
22 you're looking for growth, the idea is you want to
23 attract more people to come into this industry.
24 You want to attract more people to come into all
25 sorts of industries.

1 I'll reference something that was only
2 three years ago: 53 percent of the people that
3 were in Nassau County that were college educated,
4 which were bachelor's degree or higher, were
5 unemployed or unemployed in their field. A little
6 lower in Suffolk County. Today, those numbers are
7 changing because we're driving people into the
8 industry. You're watching that Long Island is
9 actually getting such a growth that we're probably
10 the fastest-growing sector of the state.

11 Look, we have almost \$96 billion worth of
12 economic activity coming over the next eight
13 years, and even more, if they go to the Scoping
14 Plan, which goes to 20 gigawatts. So, for that,
15 we should all be grateful that we're creating
16 those opportunities. And it's not just for people
17 like me, which is cotton-top white guys, what I'm
18 telling you is, it's to go into communities and
19 making sure that those that want the careers can
20 have them. Thank you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you.

22 Our next speaker is Grant Newburger.
23 Grant.

24 GRANT NEWBURGER: Thank you so much. Grant
25 Newburger, also on behalf of the Nassau Suffolk

1 Building Trades. We have the proud distinction of
2 representing 36 different unions in the
3 construction industry here on Long Island.

4 So, first, let me commend NYPA for their
5 commitment to build a union because it's really
6 how we provide a -- a pathway to the middle class
7 for Long Islanders here without the need for a
8 college degree.

9 Besides being able to say I agree with
10 everything Matty said, I just want to say on
11 behalf of the perspective of a Long Islander still
12 in his 20s, you know, looking to set roots and
13 start a family here on Long Island, we are a
14 coastal community. We are an island. And without
15 this plan, we wouldn't be able to hit the state's
16 renewable energy goals, and we wouldn't be able to
17 hit the goals that we have as a state to maintain
18 the environment we have here on Long Island.

19 And so, I just will keep it short and sweet
20 and say that I'm proud to commend the
21 comprehensive plan for us today. Thank you.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Grant.

23 Our next speaker is Stuart Richner.

24 Stuart.

25 STUART RICHNER: Good afternoon. My name

1 is Stuart Richner. I am the CEO of Richner
2 Communications and Herald Community Media, a
3 publishing, marketing, and printing business based
4 in Garden City.

5 For approximately the past 10 years, we've
6 been fortunate to participate in the New York
7 Power Authority's Recharge Program. This
8 initiative has provided us with stable and
9 affordable energy rates, which have been
10 instrumental in our ability to grow and succeed in
11 an increasingly challenging manufacturing
12 environment.

13 Recharge New York has done more than just
14 reduce our energy costs. It has allowed us to
15 plan confidently for the future, invest in capital
16 improvements, and effectively compete with
17 out-of-state competitors. Most importantly, it
18 has helped us maintain and grow our workforce here
19 on Long Island, where we employ over 100 people.

20 In my experience, the NYPA team is more
21 than just a low-cost energy provider; they are
22 true partners. They've offered expert guidance
23 and support. It's the kind a customer-focused
24 approach that gives me confidence in NYPA's
25 ability to take on even greater challenges like

1 their new Renewable Strategic Plan.

2 This plan represents a bold and necessary
3 step toward addressing one of the most crucial
4 issues of our time: The need for affordable,
5 reliable, and climate-friendly energy. By
6 prudently developing renewable energy products
7 across the state, NYPA will not only work towards
8 achieving New York's climate goals but also
9 provide economic and social benefits for
10 businesses and communities alike.

11 While the Recharge New York program and the
12 renewable -- renewables plan are -- are distinct
13 initiatives, I see a shared thread. That is,
14 NYPA's dedication to supporting businesses and
15 communities through energy innovation. Programs
16 like Recharge New York have shown what's possible
17 when we invest in smart energy solutions, and I
18 believe the renewables -- renewables Strategic
19 Plan will build on that success in transformative
20 ways.

21 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
22 today. I look forward to seeing NYPA lead the way
23 in creating a cleaner, more sustainable, and more
24 affordable energy future for New York. Thank you.

25 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Stuart.

1 Our next speaker is Juan Martinez. Juan.

2 JUAN MARTINEZ: Good afternoon. I won't
3 take up all three minutes, but my name is Juan
4 Martinez. I would like to first recognize NYPA's
5 team and leadership for this presentation.

6 As a longtime resident of Long Island -- I
7 should say of Brentwood, I've lived here for 34
8 years of my life. And also, the business
9 development manager for Ozkar Services, which is a
10 Hispanic-owned technology company that's been in
11 business here for 17 years.

12 Sorry.

13 I am here in full support of NYPA and what
14 you guys are doing. We have a relationship with
15 NYPA. We're one of their suppliers for technology
16 services, and we are also a small business in
17 their mentor partnership program.

18 My brother has been struggling for 17 years
19 to try to really do it by himself here in Long
20 Island, and until three years ago that -- I met
21 NYPA. I met them in Massena. And I've seen a lot
22 of their facilities. Niagara Falls, Massena --
23 I'm sorry, I'm shaking just because I'm
24 passionate. But I've seen their facilities, and
25 this team is amazing in giving people the

1 opportunity and businesses to grow.

2 They have taken a chance on us, and they've
3 partnered us with CDW, which is a leading,
4 prominent technology company, and through them, we
5 have scaled -- our company has scaled over here.
6 A lot of our business is in New York City and New
7 York State. And I commend you guys for coming
8 over here to Long Island and to Brentwood, to my
9 hometown, to really make a difference because I
10 think that you can, right?

11 But -- and this is not negative. All
12 right. It's just reality. I hope -- and I know
13 that you guys will continue on your commitment for
14 developing local suppliers here on Long Island,
15 all right, for companies like my brother's who
16 look like us, all right, who have never had a
17 chance to work in an energy sector in their life,
18 right, but that they coached us. They taught us.
19 Right.

20 I hope that you can give that opportunity
21 to others. And I hope that I can partner with and
22 give technology companies that opportunity.

23 The other thing is, I hope that you can
24 continue to develop programs such as the NPP
25 program right here in Long Island just to do more

1 outreach. All right. Maybe look at organizations
2 like Hastra SM, (phonetic) who was one of the
3 organizations that started helping my brother's
4 business scale, right, in New York City, in New
5 York State.

6 The other thing is, I know you have a lot
7 of projects coming over here, 40 projects. That's
8 amazing. And I know that you're going to deliver
9 with it. I know you're very big on collaboration
10 and -- and teamwork, and partnerships. But I hope
11 that with that, the requirements are still in
12 those contracts because it is tough. All right.
13 Having requirements in those contracts to give
14 minority-women business, veteran-owned businesses
15 an opportunity is something that you have to
16 continue to push over here because it's been
17 difficult. Hence, why you always see me Upstate
18 and everywhere. Right?

19 The other thing I just want to mention is
20 just to continue outreach programs like this. All
21 right. Make the community aware. All right?

22 I think that you guys are doing a fabulous
23 job. Continue it as you guys push along with this
24 plan. And then with workforce development, just
25 not only focus on colleges, but focus on your

1 higher education, your middle schools, and your --
2 your high schools. Right now, we're working with
3 our local high school in Smithtown, working with
4 them with their STEM and robotic projects, where
5 I'm a mentor. I'm not a technology guy. I'm a
6 mentor, but I'm helping them do a business plan on
7 fundraising for the robotics champion -- a
8 robotics event that's coming next year that I hope
9 that, you know, we can take part in it together.

10 But that -- that's all I have to say. I'm
11 here in support, and I thank you all for
12 everything you're doing and thank you for allowing
13 me this time.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Juan.

15 This concludes our list of speakers as of
16 right now. If anyone in this room would like to
17 speak, please head up to the back of the room to
18 our sign-in table so we can record your name. And
19 we will remain in the room in case additional
20 speakers come up. Thank you.

21 (Brief recess.)

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Jerome
23 Bost. Jerome.

24 JEROME BOST: Hello. Good afternoon.
25 Thank you so much for your time today.

1 My name is Jerome Bost. I am the Director
2 of Government Affairs and Communications for IBEW
3 Local 1049, where we represent the interests of
4 over 4,000 members in the utility sector here in
5 Long Island.

6 Our business manager, Pat Guidice,
7 apologized he couldn't be here. He also serves as
8 Chair of the IBEW Utility Council, which
9 represents the interests of 20,000 members here.

10 Pat asked me to read a prepared statement
11 here for you today: We have carefully reviewed
12 the draft plan, which lays out a vision for
13 expanding renewable energy in New York State. The
14 goals are providing affordable, reliable, and
15 emissions-free electricity are committal but are
16 critical considerations that must be addressed,
17 particularly regarding union jobs and workforce
18 development.

19 First, while the transition to renewable
20 energy is necessary, we must ensure that the
21 workers in traditional energy sectors, many of
22 whom are union members, are not left behind. The
23 plan should prioritize retaining and re-skilling
24 the workers, especially those in the fossil
25 industries, to ensure they are first in line for

1 new renewable energy jobs.

2 Additionally, we're concerned about the
3 potential displacement of union jobs. The plan
4 must ensure that renewable energy projects are
5 carried out under union contracts with fair wages,
6 benefits, and conditions for workers.

7 We urge the New York State Power Authority
8 to include labor standards in these projects and
9 protect collective bargaining rights. Safety and
10 training are paramount as we move forward toward
11 renewable energy. We must ensure that the workers
12 are properly trained, stringent safety protocols
13 are in place, especially as we work with new
14 technologies and change in challenging
15 environments.

16 Finally, the plan should address workforce
17 training development, ensuring that existing
18 utility workers have access to the skills needed
19 for the new energy landscape. We also seek
20 clarification on why certain trainings, programs
21 funded by NYPA, the Department of Labor, are
22 student workers who would be most qualified for
23 renewable energy jobs.

24 I want to thank you for your time today.
25 Jerome Bost, IBEW Local 1049, on behalf of Pat

1 Guidice, the Business Manager.

2 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Jerome.

3 This still concludes our list of speakers.
4 Again, if others come, we will remain in the room
5 so we can hear from them. Thank you.

6 (Brief recess.)

7 LINDSAY KRYZAK: That concludes this
8 session. Thank you very much.

9 (Thereupon, the 1:00 to 3:00 session
10 concluded.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
certify that I was authorized to and did report the
foregoing proceedings, and that the transcript is a true
and correct transcription of my notes of the proceedings.

Dated November 28th, 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

PUBLIC MEETING

1001 CROOKED HILL ROAD

BRENTWOOD, NY 11717

November 25, 2024

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

(Session 2 of 2.)

ON BEHALF OF NYPA:

Daniella Piper, Chief Innovation Officer

Vennela Yadhati, VP of Renewable Energy Development

Lindsay Kryzak, VP of Corporate Communications

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1 DANIELLA PIPER: Good evening. My name is
2 Daniella Piper, and I'm the Chief Innovation
3 Officer at the New York Power Authority. I lead
4 the organization's efforts to explore emerging
5 technologies and novel ways of working to drive
6 the performance in both of our organizations and
7 support our customers with decarbonization.

8 We're here because NYPA issued its draft
9 Renewable Strategic Plan on October 8th and
10 scheduled 12 public hearings across the state to
11 solicit input from interested parties regarding
12 this draft plan.

13 If someone you know is unable to attend
14 today's session in person, please let them know
15 NYPA is accepting written comments online through
16 December 9th.

17 We will begin with a brief video about the
18 New York Power Authority, which will be followed
19 by an overview of NYPA's expanded authority and
20 draft Strategic Plan.

21 Primarily, my colleagues and I are here to
22 hear from you today. So, after those
23 presentations, we'll invite those who signed up to
24 give a public comment, which will be transcribed
25 and entered into the public record. So, we'll

1 begin now with a short video to provide an
2 overview of NYPA so you can get to know us a bit
3 better.

4 (Video played as follows:

5 SPEAKER: For more than 90 years, the New
6 York Power Authority has been an essential part of
7 the solution for New York State and its residents,
8 providing clean, renewable energy and economic
9 opportunities.

10 Through customer partnerships, energy
11 solutions, and the responsible supply of
12 affordable, clean, and reliable electricity, NYPA
13 is leading the way to a carbon-free, economically
14 vibrant future for New Yorkers.

15 Today, NYPA has more than 2,000 employees
16 serving customers in local and state governments,
17 industry, large and small businesses, and
18 nonprofit organizations.

19 The power for these customers is equal to
20 approximately 15 percent of the total electricity
21 needs of the state. On the whole, NYPA Generation
22 serves nearly 25 percent of the state's power from
23 17 generating facilities, and more than 80 percent
24 of that electricity comes from clean, renewable
25 hydropower.

1 NYPA also helps bring that power to you.
2 We deliver electricity where it's needed most over
3 more than 1500 circuit miles of transmission
4 lines. That's one-third of New York State's
5 transmission system owned and operated by NYPA.

6 As we bring power to customers, we also
7 actively ensure people from our host communities
8 have an opportunity to participate in and benefit
9 from our clean energy economy.

10 We work on projects across the state to
11 increase energy efficiency, improve
12 infrastructure, and support economic development.

13 Our hydropower projects support more than
14 440,000 jobs. We are committed to building and
15 maintaining a diverse and equitable workforce,
16 increasing our engagement with diverse suppliers,
17 and expanding our environmental justice efforts in
18 the communities we serve.

19 Our economic and community focus extends to
20 the New York State Canal Corporation, which became
21 a NYPA subsidiary in 2017. A historic landmark
22 and an economic engine for more than 26,000 jobs.
23 The canal system spans 524 miles of Upstate New
24 York. And together, NYPA and Canals are
25 revitalizing the canals for the economic and

1 recreational benefit of New Yorkers and visitors
2 from around the world.

3 Our efforts to create a clean energy future
4 for New York are gaining speed. We are looking
5 ahead to how we can meet the state's ambitious
6 decarbonization goals and energy needs in the
7 years to come.

8 In 2023, the New York State Legislature
9 gave NYPA expanded authority to advance renewable
10 energy deployment and support other state
11 priorities. This expanded authority will
12 accelerate the development of renewable energy in
13 New York State, support expanded workforce
14 training for jobs in the renewable energy sector,
15 and provide for the creation of the Renewable
16 Energy Access and Community Help Program to
17 provide bill credits for low and moderate-income
18 ratepayers served by New York's investor-owned
19 utilities.

20 Additionally, we will lead the state's
21 effort to decarbonize our electric grid by
22 eliminating fossil fuel-based electricity
23 production at our small natural gas power plants
24 in New York City and Long Island by 2030 as
25 certain reliability and environmental conditions

1 are met.

2 We are also developing action plans to
3 decarbonize 15 of the state's highest
4 carbon-emitting facilities.

5 NYPA is proud to serve as the steward of
6 some of the state's most precious natural assets.
7 We are equally honored that the state looks to us
8 for experienced leadership, innovation, and
9 inspiration. And we are ready. Ready to embrace
10 the exciting potential of our expanded authority
11 and ready to ensure we meet our far-reaching goals
12 for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

13 (End of video.)

14 DANIELLA PIPER: So, NYPA builds, owns, and
15 operates new renewable projects; we need to have
16 an electric grid that all of them can connect to,
17 one that is free from congestion and one that
18 allows renewables across the state to connect to
19 the grid. And that's why NYPA is pursuing the
20 most ambitious transformation of York's electric
21 grid in more than 40 years. And the state is
22 implementing new procedures to ensure transmission
23 can be sited, connected, and built.

24 NYPA owns a third of the state's
25 high-voltage transmission, and we continue to make

1 major improvements to build a more flexible
2 21st-century electric grid with significantly
3 greater access to a mix of carbon-free energy
4 resources.

5 We also know that a modernized grid will be
6 much more resilient, and that's all part of the
7 work that we're doing today to support the
8 projects of tomorrow.

9 In the past two years, NYPA has engaged in
10 a variety of public engagement pathways to inform
11 the foundation for building new renewable
12 resources, as authorized by the 2023-2024 Enacted
13 State Budget.

14 The budget authorized and directed NYPA to
15 build renewables subject to a Strategic Plan,
16 which must be approved by its trustees following a
17 public comment period of at least three public
18 hearings.

19 So, this is the 12th public hearing in New
20 York State this evening. We prioritized holding
21 these hearings because we felt it was important to
22 have more hearings in more places to hear from
23 more of you.

24 So, like we did with our 2023 and 2024
25 conferral processes, we welcome public engagement

1 and feedback as we shape our Strategic Plan to
2 build more renewables in New York State.

3 I know many of you came to speak about the
4 plan. At this point, I'll turn it over to -- the
5 program over to Vennela Yadhati to give a brief
6 overview of the draft Strategic Plan.

7 VENNELA YADHATI: Thank you, Daniella.

8 I'm going to step out and walk and talk.
9 Good evening, everyone. I'm Vennela Yadhati. I'm
10 the Vice President for NYPA Renewables, leading
11 this effort to build new renewable generation
12 projects and energy storage projects across the
13 state.

14 We're in the middle of what could be called
15 one of the most significant eras of NYPA's 93-year
16 history. Last May, as part of the 2023-'24
17 Enacted State Budget, lawmakers entrusted NYPA
18 with new expanded authority, new responsibilities,
19 new capabilities or, more importantly, new
20 opportunities to NYPA to further serve New Yorkers
21 in the clean energy space.

22 Let me explain: First, the expanded
23 authority gives NYPA the ability to develop,
24 build, own, and operate renewable generation
25 projects such as solar PV, wind, and battery

1 energy storage systems across the state to help
2 the state achieve its bold goals outlined in the
3 Climate Act.

4 My team at NYPA has identified the first
5 tranche of 40 such projects spread across every
6 region of the state. And while the state budget
7 did not specify any specific threshold for NYPA to
8 meet, this first tranche of 40 projects represents
9 a total capacity exceeding 3.5 gigawatts.

10 Now, how much is 3.5 gigawatts? It's about
11 10 percent of New York City's electric load. I
12 know that doesn't seem like much, but when you put
13 it in perspective, that's equal to power the whole
14 cities -- in Europe, if you think, like Reykjavik
15 or Helsinki, or locally talking about Boulder,
16 Colorado -- I was going to say Colder, Colorado,
17 but -- yeah, it's 6 o'clock in the evening.
18 Boulder, Colorado, Reno, Nevada, or Austin, Texas.

19 And these 40 projects are just the
20 beginning of our commitment to expand our
21 portfolio, delivering clean, reliable power to
22 every corner of New York.

23 Right now, we're in the process of doing
24 full due diligence on each project to determine
25 whether or not they are the best fit for New

1 Yorkers. We want to pursue those projects truly
2 benefit our communities and, therefore, belong in
3 NYPA's renewable energy portfolio. Our main goal
4 is to leverage NYPA's resources to maximize
5 renewable energy deployment in New York.

6 We also we also want to explore meaningful
7 partnerships to support the state's equitable and
8 efficient transition to a clean energy future.
9 This first tranche of projects includes a mix of
10 NYPA's own greenfield project opportunities that
11 we're self-developing and co-developed initiatives
12 where we will be partnering with the private
13 sector to combine our complementary skills and
14 strengths to jointly develop, construct, own, and
15 operate these projects together.

16 It also includes a variety of sizes of
17 projects, both large scale, which is the
18 predominant portion of it, reflecting the state of
19 the renewables market in New York State right now,
20 and small distributors scale projects, especially
21 those that are community-based and community solar
22 projects.

23 It includes a variety of technologies as
24 well: Solar PV, land-based wind, and battery
25 energy storage systems, and a variety of locations

1 and site conditions. Half of our own greenfield
2 portfolio is actually sited on locations that --
3 repurpose former landfills, brownfields, and
4 closed correctional facilities for advancing
5 renewable generation. You know, brown is the new
6 green, or turning brownfields into bright fields,
7 as one of my colleagues put it.

8 My point is we're collaborating with our
9 sister agencies and NYPA's customers, including
10 local governments, to identify more such exciting
11 opportunities, because we cannot do this alone.

12 A couple of examples -- in fact, actually,
13 even on a personal note, while my entire career in
14 the clean energy space, my entry into New York
15 State market happened because of Long Island. The
16 first solar PV project is a 20-megawatt project
17 not too far from here in a town called Riverhead,
18 and I was part of the development team in a former
19 role with a former company, but this is my entry.
20 So, we continue to look for more opportunities,
21 including on Long Island for developing these
22 projects.

23 So far, we have pre-qualified a stable of
24 more than 85 developers and investors that can
25 collaborate with us to build this initial tranche

1 and future ones. NYPA's role and goal is not to
2 crowd out the private sector but to work together,
3 leveraging our strengths to build more renewables
4 and help the state achieve its clean energy goals.

5 By maintaining majority ownership and
6 partnering strategically, NYPA can stretch out
7 finances further and accelerate the transition to
8 clean energy.

9 As we described in our draft Strategic
10 Plan, NYPA has not received any state funding to
11 build new renewable generation projects. Instead,
12 we're self-funding these efforts, along with other
13 critical commitments that we have to the CLCPA,
14 such as new transmission development and growing
15 the clean energy workforce, all entirely through
16 NYPA's own revenues.

17 There have been a lot of questions about
18 the size of this first tranche of projects.
19 Again, to put it in perspective, financing 15
20 gigawatts of energy or renewable energy would be
21 roughly about \$30 billion, the same as paying for
22 four new LaGuardia airports all at once, including
23 construction -- congestion that causes around the
24 traffic. No, just kidding.

25 That's a lot of capital, right? So, we are

1 working with industry partners. We continue to
2 talk to the state and federal government, and we
3 continue to look for new partners to build even
4 more future tranches.

5 Given these constraints, a balanced
6 approach is essential to bring more renewable
7 capacity online while prioritizing projects that
8 offer the highest returns. That helps ensure we
9 can reduce costs for ratepayers and maximize the
10 impact of every dollar we spend.

11 And there is more to come. This is only
12 the first tranche in the first Strategic Plan we
13 have published. In a way, the plan itself is
14 renewable. That is, a plan we will regularly
15 update as we add more projects for consideration
16 by the public and NYPA's Board of Trustees.

17 Part of preparing to release this draft
18 plan was making sure NYPA had the right tools and
19 is also staffed right to support it. This
20 includes having the expertise to make sure the
21 proposed projects meet technical, economic,
22 environmental and, more importantly, the
23 environmental justice needs of the state.

24 In the past 18 months, we have established
25 a new business line and new business structures

1 and filled key personnel roles, like my team, many
2 of whom are here today. We have obtained approval
3 from our Board of Trustees to form a new renewable
4 subsidiary, and we also received approval for an
5 initial capital allocation of \$100 million for
6 developing and garnering other necessary resources
7 to advance this first tranche of projects.

8 We continue to source and solicit
9 additional project opportunities to append to our
10 pipeline. I'm confident that NYPA will continue
11 to identify the same level of meaningful projects
12 as we expand and grow our pipeline of future
13 tranches of projects.

14 And these projects are not being built in a
15 silo. They're part of a holistic approach to
16 renewable development that supports environmental
17 justice, workforce development, and affordability.

18 How are we doing that? You see, the
19 2023-'24 Enacted State Budget also gave NYPA the
20 ability to establish the Renewable Energy Access
21 and Community Help, or in short, the REACH
22 program.

23 The REACH program allows NYPA to use a
24 portion of the revenues generated from these new
25 renewable energy projects to benefit low- or

1 moderate-income households within disadvantaged
2 communities through electric utility bill credits.

3 Since releasing our draft plan, the Public
4 Service Commission has formally accepted NYPA's
5 application to create the program. Once our
6 projects are online and are generating revenue,
7 and NYPA gathers funds from other available
8 sources, money will be available to flow to
9 low-income New Yorkers through the process set
10 forth by the PSC order.

11 While REACH is still under development, the
12 program will appear as automatic bill credits
13 alongside the Energy Affordability Program and the
14 Statewide Solar for All utility credits.

15 NYPA will also invest up to \$25 million
16 annually in collaboration with the New York State
17 Department of Labor to create jobs and provide
18 workforce training for people who want to work in
19 the clean energy industry.

20 Through this partnership, we have already
21 awarded \$12.5 million this fiscal year in funding
22 for workforce opportunities for New Yorkers across
23 the state. Like I say, it's Buffalo Youth
24 Apprenticeship Program and the Renaissance
25 Technical Institute in New York City, and several

1 others from disadvantaged communities across the
2 state to pursue good-paying clean energy careers.
3 Not just jobs, but careers.

4 And with regard to the workforce on these
5 proposed projects, NYPA will require each and
6 every renewable energy-generating project in our
7 portfolio to be built with union labor.

8 I'm going to say it again: Every single
9 project in NYPA's portfolio must have a project
10 labor agreement. And we will require all
11 contractors and subcontractors associated with the
12 project work to utilize apprenticeship agreements.
13 So, those learning on this first tranche of
14 projects can be seasoned veterans for our future
15 tranches of projects.

16 The new law also requires NYPA to develop a
17 plan to end fossil fuel-based generation at its
18 small natural gas power plants in New York City
19 and Long Island by 2030, as long as reliability
20 and environmental conditions are met.

21 The plan to do so is required by May of
22 next year, and we, with the New York Independent
23 System Operator, are actively exploring strategies
24 to make this commitment while considering grid
25 reliability and air quality impacts, including the

1 potential for deploying battery energy storage
2 systems at some of these sites.

3 We're in discussions with several
4 developers about energy storage and other
5 electrical infrastructure opportunities and
6 solutions to transform these sites while also
7 preserving the site grid reliability.

8 I know I just shared a long list of actions
9 that we have taken and we continue to take as part
10 of the new expanded authority. As a reminder, the
11 draft Strategic Plan is on our website,
12 NYPA.gov/renewables. If you haven't already read
13 it, I do encourage and implore all of you to read
14 it because those that actually wrote the plan are
15 in this very room, and we care about hearing from
16 you.

17 Thank you again for taking the time to come
18 here to learn more and also to give us your
19 comments and feedback. Thank you. Back to you,
20 Daniella.

21 DANIELLA PIPER: Thank you, Vennela.

22 So, with that, I will remind everyone that
23 the law requires NYPA to solicit public comment
24 and hold a minimum of three public hearings in
25 regionally diverse parts of the state on the draft

1 Strategic Plan that Vennela just described.

2 Our timekeeper, Lindsay Kryzak, will call
3 on everyone who signed up to speak tonight, and
4 our speakers will be given three minutes to
5 deliver a public comment for the record. If
6 anyone needs a translator, please alert the NYPA
7 staff at the sign-in table.

8 We recognize that some of you may have
9 longer comments than others, and if you run out of
10 time, you can submit your full comment on our
11 website or email it directly to
12 strategicplancomments@NYPA.gov. There are also QR
13 codes on the sign-in tables to make it even easier
14 to submit your comments.

15 The feedback you give tonight will be
16 transcribed and compiled with the written
17 comments, which must be considered and
18 incorporated into the final Strategic Plan and be
19 published on NYPA's website and submitted to the
20 Governor and the legislature by January 31st,
21 2025.

22 So, thank you again for joining us. I will
23 now turn the program over to our timekeeper.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Daniella.
25 Before we begin, please note that NYPA is

1 transcribing this event, which may be maintained,
2 used, and disclosed to the extent authorized or
3 required by applicable law, regulation, or order.
4 And it may be made available in whole or in part
5 in the public record in accordance with the
6 agency's rules.

7 Each member of the public will be given
8 three minutes to address NYPA leadership today.
9 Please use the microphone to your left and those
10 of you who are seated on the aisle, if you
11 wouldn't mind keeping that clear.

12 Additional comments can be shared via our
13 website or through email. Again, that email
14 address is strategicplancomments@nypa.gov.

15 Our first speaker this evening is Adrienne
16 Esposito. Adrienne?

17 ADRIENNE ESPOSITO: I don't think I was the
18 first speaker.

19 Good evening, NYPA and members of the
20 community. My name is Adriana Esposito. I'm the
21 Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the
22 Environment.

23 We -- thank you to NYPA for crafting a plan
24 that will create 40 different projects throughout
25 the state of New York in various different

1 regions, hopefully generating approximately 3,500
2 megawatts or 3.5 gigawatts of renewable clean
3 energy here in New York State.

4 We liked your plan. We do have some things
5 to add to it. The first thing we would like to
6 say is we're very excited about the battery
7 storage facility being located at the Brentwood
8 site. This is a great example of creating a
9 renewable energy project that will close down an
10 old, antiquated peaker power plant.

11 As you know, that peaker power plant will
12 -- generates about 47 megawatts of power, but it
13 also generates approximately -- I don't have my
14 glasses on, but the numbers are 32,000 tons of
15 carbon dioxide each year, as well as 2.5 tons of
16 nitrogen oxide each year.

17 So, that peaker plant will be replaced with
18 zero emissions. That will benefit the community
19 right here in Brentwood and also in Suffolk
20 County. You may or may not know that Suffolk
21 County each year, unfortunately, receives a grade
22 of F on the American Lungs Report card for air
23 quality. So, the more we reduce our emissions,
24 the easier we can breathe and the cleaner air we
25 will have.

1 One of the things that we did notice about
2 the plan is that although you talk about setting a
3 goal of closing down the peaker power plants by
4 the year 2030, there's no actionable items or
5 timelines associated with that plan. So, we would
6 urge that the next plan that NYPA produces, we
7 would like to see actionable items and timelines
8 that close and replace each of those power -- each
9 of those peaker power plants with clean, renewable
10 energy.

11 The other thing is, as you assess the cost
12 of each of the 40 projects, we would urge you to
13 include the cost of doing nothing because it's not
14 just doing battery or offshore wind or solar or
15 doing nothing, it's doing those or staying
16 addicted to fossil fuels, which has a very, very
17 high cost, especially here on Long Island.

18 And the last thing, because I'm running out
19 of time, is that I want to reassure you that the
20 vast majority of Long Island strongly understands
21 climate change. We see the impacts. We're living
22 with the impacts. And we're paying for the
23 impacts. So, we need to transition to cleaner,
24 safer fuel sources.

25 In your presentation on the film there, you

1 said you're going to lead New York in
2 decarbonizing for New York, but you only have one
3 project here on Long Island, and it's not a very
4 big one. So, we're urging you not to forget Long
5 Island in your decarbonization program and to
6 continue the good work that you're doing around
7 the state, but include us. We need help. We're
8 at the frontlines. We need to see the transition
9 to offshore wind, battery storage, renewable
10 energy, and solar power as well. Thank you.

11 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Adrienne.

12 Our next speaker is Kevin Aug. Kevin.

13 KEVIN AUG: Thank you for getting my last
14 name right. It tends to be something that's not
15 that well done.

16 Good evening, everyone. I'm standing
17 before you today, as a deeply concerned as
18 citizen. I'm here to address the urgent need for
19 NYPA to embrace a bolder vision for our energy
20 future. We face a climate crisis that intensifies
21 with each passing day. There is an 80 percent
22 likelihood that the annual average global
23 temperature will temporarily exceed the
24 1.5-degrees celsius above pre-industrial levels at
25 least once -- one of every of the -- the next five

1 years, according to a new report from the World
2 Meteorological Organization.

3 Other reports from the WMO state -- this
4 month state that in 2024, it is likely that the
5 average of 1.55 degrees Celsius hotter than the
6 later 1800s, for the first time for a full year
7 average, will pass the 1.5 level. Several
8 one-month intervals, we have also surpassed this
9 level in recent years. Yet, in these critical
10 moments, NYPA's leadership proposes just 3.5
11 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030. This is
12 simply unacceptable.

13 I understand that there are costs involved,
14 but we're literally burning alive. And we are on
15 the verge of a new government administration that
16 is -- tends to be opposed to these kinds of
17 things, so these actions are required now.

18 I would remind everyone of NYPA's proud
19 history, founded by FDR to revolutionize our
20 energy system for the public good. NYPA has the
21 tools and the mandate to lead the way. The Build
22 Public Renewables Act empowers NYPA to build clean
23 energy infrastructure we desperately need. But
24 instead of seizing on the opportunity, NYPA's CEO,
25 Justin Driscoll, proposes a plan that abandons New

1 Yorkers to climate chaos. The plan, by NYPA's own
2 admission, will likely fall short of even meeting
3 its goals.

4 This is not the leadership we deserve. We
5 need NYPA to reclaim its legacy and embrace a bold
6 vision of public power for the 21st century. We
7 demand a plan that builds on at least 16 gigawatts
8 of renewables by 2030. The current plan falls
9 drastically short of the CLCPA's mandate of 70
10 percent renewable energy by 2030.

11 We are on track for just 44 percent, which
12 is acknowledged in your 2024 control report. This
13 is a failure of leadership and the trail of legal
14 obligations. We also need to focus on more
15 solutions in the Long Island area. Only five
16 percent of NYPA's 40 proposed projects will be
17 dedicated to renewable energy needs on Long
18 Island.

19 Two projects are for battery storage --
20 battery energy storage solution facilities, which
21 are facing significant opposition from public and
22 private entities on Long Island.

23 Now, I don't want to be just all doom and
24 gloom. I would like to pivot to something
25 positive that NYPA is doing: The allocation of

1 \$25 million for workforce training. They help
2 educate current and next generation workers with
3 green technologies, and help New York -- prepare
4 New York to welcome the transition to renewable
5 energy, and position New York State as a leader in
6 that space.

7 Taking this dedication to education to your
8 everyday citizen would also do wonders to get the
9 public buy-in for the transition to renewable
10 energy and dispel some of the myths that are
11 perpetuated due to a lack of knowledge that seems
12 prevalent in the state.

13 I want to close by saying that I'm
14 optimistic that NYPA -- that New York State and
15 NYPA will be able to make the changes needed to
16 help meet climate goals and to ensure a future for
17 my children and everyone else's children. Thank
18 you for your time.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Kevin.

20 Our next speaker is Amanda Burns. Amanda.

21 AMANDA BURNS: All right. So, this one's
22 going to be a little bit more personal because you
23 guys all have the data. You guys all have the
24 numbers.

25 So, yeah, my name is Amanda. I grew up in

1 California, and I've been on the East Coast for 20
2 years. I do my best to keep my footprint small
3 because we are only temporary guardians of this
4 world, and I was taught to always leave a place
5 better than you left it.

6 I graduated in 2008, stepping out of the
7 nest just in time to have the rug pulled out from
8 under me with a financial crash. I was fortunate
9 enough to have a support structure when my family
10 lost so much. And then it came -- then came Irene
11 and then Sandy, and I was able, and fortunate
12 enough that I was able, to pass on the kindness
13 when each disaster struck.

14 We can't afford to keep deferring
15 responsibility. My peers have been resilient, but
16 we are far from thriving. This constant upheaval
17 is what people thought living with California
18 earthquakes and wildfires was like. Now the
19 wildfires are here, and so are the earthquakes and
20 the tornadoes, but -- now you have flooding and
21 saltwater intrusion to boot.

22 I put my life on the line to keep it to
23 work, to make decorative things for private jets.
24 So important. But I ride an electric bike. And
25 you can imagine my dismay to find out that that's

1 still harming people because that power ultimately
2 comes from that peaker plant. Yeah. And I passed
3 a guy yesterday. He did not make it to work on
4 time. That is a systemic issue. He will never
5 make it to work, ever. He got hit by a car. That
6 is -- it's all connected. And it's very difficult
7 for the little person to do everything.

8 Sorry. Yeah. So, it's very dismaying to
9 find that this draft Strategic Plan isn't likely
10 to change the direction enough. We need to get to
11 the 15. We're fighting to survive. I'm still
12 making daily sacrifices, trying to do better for
13 the world, and we gave you the resources and --
14 that we could desperately use ourselves and the
15 ability -- the authority to do the right thing and
16 to get us back on track.

17 So, it feels -- that feels like -- I want
18 to ask, why isn't that enough? Why are we giving
19 energy discounts to enormous corporations like
20 Amazon who is extracting more from our community
21 than we are getting -- than we are getting in
22 return? Doesn't that send -- send the wrong
23 message?

24 So, I just want to really think about stuff
25 like that bring that into the math. If they paid

1 what they should pay, is that -- is that going to
2 help? So, thank you.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Amanda.

4 Our next speaker is CJ. And I'm so sorry
5 we didn't get your last name. CJ.

6 CJ: So, New York is the 12th largest
7 global economy with 0.4 percent greenhouse gasses.
8 They've done a great job, and we should do better.
9 But this rush to development with these renewable
10 promises that cause significant risk to
11 communities and put our health and safety at risk,
12 you need to pause, and you need to consider health
13 and safety. Let's wait before it's too late
14 because what you're proposing from cradle to grave
15 has dire environmental consequences.

16 Look at what's going on in the Congo. Look
17 at the salt mining and hard rock mining for
18 lithium. Look at what's happening in Tibet for
19 nickel. Let's look at the -- the battery energy
20 storage systems that go on fire. 250 megawatts,
21 or Mesa, over two weeks of evacuations, toxic
22 fumes. On Long Island, we have sole-source
23 aquifers. We can't afford to put the health and
24 safety of residents at risk. We're in densely
25 populated communities.

1 These projects do not belong in residential
2 communities. Homes should not be surrounded by
3 your Propel Project with houses being surrounded
4 on three and four sides by cables that are
5 emitting high voltage EMFs.

6 It needs to stop, and you need to engage
7 the community. I'm tired of hearing about the
8 lobbyists, the private equity firms, and the oil
9 companies who back all of these projects from
10 cradle to grave. These are not environmental, and
11 they are not clean. And residents need to be
12 notified. This 500-foot roll that you're doing
13 does not notify residents.

14 VENNELA YADHATI: You put Propel members
15 into the community, they tell us the three cables
16 cancel each other out. They say they're not for
17 offshore wind. They file an Article 7 that
18 clearly says they're the transmission lines for
19 offshore wind.

20 You're playing games with residents.
21 You're not being true. You're being disingenuous.
22 Residents need a voice, not lobbyists, not big
23 corporations, residents. Our homes should not be
24 made unsafe. We all live in our homes, and when
25 you tell me that -- to compare the cables to a

1 blow dryer -- I'm sorry, I don't sit in front of
2 my blow dryer or my microwave 24 hours a day,
3 seven days a week. But you're perfectly fine in
4 surrounding our homes with this 24 hours a day,
5 seven days a week, let alone the cost of it all.

6 We pay \$36 per megawatt hour now. Now
7 we're going to pay \$155 for wind. The \$2.3
8 billion for the cables, plus the battery storage
9 when they're going to buy cheap in the night and
10 send to us in multiples when we need energy.

11 We're going to be priced out of New York.
12 You had -- and I still had the Potomac report;
13 they said not to move with the Propel Project.
14 Let's wait before it's too late. Let's pause for
15 a good cause. Resident health and safety. We're
16 not just dots on a map. We're human lives, and we
17 don't want to be part of this experiment.

18 You listen to Matera; it's an experiment.
19 You listen to Channel 12 News; it's a global
20 experiment on our shores. Stop it.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, CJ.

22 This concludes our list of registered
23 speakers thus far. If anyone in the room would
24 like to speak and has not signed up, please see
25 our team in the back so we can get your name. We

1 will remain in the room in case additional
2 speakers join us. Thank you.

3 (Brief recess.)

4 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Julia
5 Damiano. Julia.

6 JULIA DAMIANO: My name Julia Damiano. And
7 I'm a Long Island resident, and also with the New
8 York League of Conservation Voters.

9 I would like to express my strong support
10 for NYPA's draft renewable energy plan. This plan
11 -- this plan sets an important framework for
12 transitioning to clean, reliable, and sustainable
13 energy for the state.

14 I also want to commend you guys for
15 accelerating the deployment of renewable energy
16 and contributing to New York's bold climate goals
17 under the Climate Leadership and Protection Act.

18 The proposed -- the proposed initiatives
19 and projects to scale up renewable energy sources,
20 specifically the transmission and battery storage,
21 are a critical step forward in addressing the
22 climate crisis, creating good jobs that are union
23 and well-paying, and fostering a green economy.

24 This is exceptionally important as
25 transmission projects that are being suggested,

1 like Propel, are not new or untested. New York's
2 energy infrastructure is not sufficient for our
3 growing energy needs, and the electrical grid is
4 aging and is unprepared for the projected 50 to 90
5 percent increase in the energy demand -- energy
6 demand over the next 20 years.

7 Transmission projects such as Propel are
8 essential for energy delivery and grid
9 modernization. The technology behind these
10 transmission lines, like I said, is not new and
11 has been being used throughout the nation.
12 Currently, lines -- miles of these lines have been
13 safely operating for decades in New York,
14 including highly densely populated areas like the
15 city.

16 The project will also not drive up energy
17 costs as it will stabilize and potentially lower
18 prices by allowing us to increase the sustainable
19 supply -- sorry -- supply of renewable energy and
20 reduce grid congestion.

21 It has (inaudible) dissociated renewable
22 energy, such as offshore wind as well, can be
23 locked in pricing-wise for 20 years, shielding
24 consumers from price volatility and fossil fuel --
25 the price changes, the more volatility.

1 I, again, want to express my deep gratitude
2 to you guys for planning all of this. And battery
3 storage, in particular, is extremely important for
4 allowing us to continue having a sustainable and
5 reliable grid as more and more disastrous climate
6 change events come in.

7 These once-a-generation storms that I
8 personally have -- should have only seen one or
9 two in my lifetime so far, but now at age 27,
10 growing up across Long Island, I've seen countless
11 hurricanes come through that have flooded my yard,
12 leaving me without power.

13 Hurricane Sandy, I don't know how many of
14 you guys remember or can relate to this, but I
15 didn't have power until Thanksgiving. I was doing
16 my high school homework by candlelight, and that
17 is nothing that anybody should ever have to
18 experience.

19 These projects are safe to address the rate
20 of fires, only 0.002 percent, which is much, much
21 lower than the risk that we are seeing with other
22 technologies for a lot of these projects,
23 especially nuclear.

24 I want to thank you all again for your time
25 to let me speak, and I really encourage you to

1 continue this effort and do more to help us meet
2 our sustainability goals.

3 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Julia.

4 Our next speaker is Juan Martinez. Juan.

5 JUAN MARTINEZ: Hello.

6 Good evening. How are you? My name is
7 Juan Martinez. I am a local resident of Long
8 Island. I've been here for over 34 years. I'm
9 also a -- my brother is a business owner for a
10 Hispanic-owned technology company. And I have to
11 just applaud you guys, NYPA, you know, for being a
12 leader and really pushing forward renewable
13 energy, and just transforming -- you know, just
14 transforming how everything -- transforming
15 everything across the board.

16 I can speak and say that NYPA has really
17 engaged the community, especially from a small
18 business side of it, how they've helped us grow.
19 I hope that you guys continue to reach out to the
20 community and small businesses to work on some of
21 these renewable projects that you have going on
22 over the area because I think that this is what's
23 going to help us grow because as you all know that
24 small businesses are the backbone of an economy
25 over here.

1 And while I agree that as a resident of
2 Long Island, right, with these projects coming
3 over here, that there are some concerns, I think
4 that this is where we need to really speak with
5 our senators and get more involved as a community.
6 You know, we need to partner with you guys and
7 really start working -- I've met with Monica
8 Martinez in the past and spoken to her about how
9 hard it is working as a small business.

10 And these are concerns that we need to
11 bring to her now. If there are concerns, you
12 know, with the power lines and everything else,
13 bring it to her. Let them advocate for us. We're
14 putting these people in power. Right? Let them
15 speak for us.

16 So, I don't think that this -- you know, is
17 the time to come with you guys in a negative way.
18 I think it's more of how do we partner? How do we
19 start collaborating and really making an impact
20 for our communities over here? Thank you.

21 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Juan.

22 Again, this now concludes our list of
23 speakers thus far. We'll remain in this room in
24 case additional folks come. Thank you.

25 (Brief recess.)

1 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thanks, everyone, for your
2 patience. We do have a few additional speakers.

3 Our next speaker tonight is Christina
4 Karma. Christina.

5 CHRISTINA KRAMER: Kramer.

6 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Oh, my gosh. This
7 happened again. I'm so sorry, folks. We had
8 someone with a similar last name at a different
9 hearing, and it was written down wrong, so we
10 missed the R, and so it's the same last name. I
11 apologize. Christina.

12 CHRISTINA KRAMER: Okay. Do I go? Hi.
13 Good evening. My name is Christina Kramer. I am
14 the President of Protect Our Coast, Long Island,
15 New York. We are a group of 5500 members and
16 counting.

17 I oppose New York Power Authority's
18 proposed energy plans. We need a diverse,
19 reliable portfolio that does not rely on
20 intermittent energy sources. Vineyard said they
21 have hundreds of letters of support for their
22 project, as does League of Conservation and other
23 lobbyists in the room.

24 Well, East Coast taxpayers have over a half
25 million signatures against the turbines and all of

1 its infrastructure. There may be a few misguided
2 environmentalists speaking, but don't be fooled by
3 the paid lobbyist performers and their
4 fearmongering literature.

5 Millions of dollars have been spent on
6 environmental organizations that were standing in
7 the way for their silence and/or support. And
8 let's be clear: This power upgrade is indeed the
9 infrastructure for the over 2,000 wind turbines
10 slated to destroy the Long Island Coast.

11 I'm all for renewables, but what
12 constitutes a renewable energy source? Does a
13 renewable energy source have an oil spill response
14 plan? Does a renewable energy source dump
15 thousands of tons of fiberglass and PFAS into our
16 ocean that destroys the food chain, and shuts down
17 our beaches?

18 Does a renewable energy source dump
19 thousands of gallons of heated ocean water with
20 chemicals in our ocean every single day? And will
21 the renewable energy resource dump thousands of
22 tons of PFAS in the ocean when the turbine's blade
23 breaks?

24 And it's not a matter of if; it's a matter
25 of when. Before everyone goes crazy thinking this

1 is misinformation, I urge you to read the
2 environmental impact statements from BOEM,
3 Offshore Wind Developers, and the Environmental
4 Protection Agency.

5 Doing all of this will prevent us from
6 using fossil fuels; well, the one-percenters are
7 buying carbon credits -- carbon credits to be able
8 to fly in their private jets. That alone should
9 tell you this is not about saving the planet.
10 Protect Our Coast paid for a professional
11 cost-benefit analysis since NYSERDA or our
12 governor could not answer what these green
13 projects will cost ratepayers.

14 The analysis proved that we will be paying
15 times higher rates for energy. New York State is
16 creating an unstable grid by imposing mandates
17 with electric vehicles and electric heat pumps.
18 Both items are largely unaffordable for average
19 folks and will saddle residents with high energy
20 bills for the rest of their lives.

21 I encourage you all to do your research.
22 We've had so many climate emergencies, which none
23 have come true yet. But with each invented
24 emergency, you know what did come true? More
25 regulations and enormous tax hikes. New York

1 State energy mandates are forcing us into a
2 solution that will make foreign entities richer.
3 Almost all the wind turbine corporations are
4 foreign-owned petroleum and oil companies.

5 I'm going to just close up because I see my
6 time is up. Our school district has invested and
7 updated school bus infrastructure for natural gas,
8 and the governor wants us now to go to electric.
9 Electric batteries will deplete in the cold. They
10 have -- we have a higher water table. Salt,
11 water, and electric are a dangerous mix. Our
12 children will not be your collateral damage.
13 Thank you for your time.

14 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Christine. Our
15 next speaker is Michelle Leo. Michelle.

16 MICHELLE LEO: Hi. Good evening.

17 I oppose NYPA's proposed energy plan of
18 battery storage, and high voltage cables, and
19 solar. Thousands, including myself and other Long
20 Island residents, have been fighting Empire Wind's
21 -- cable -- Empire Wind to cable. We won for the
22 time being because Equinor they withdraw their
23 application.

24 Yet, Governor Hochul's RAPID Act, removing
25 a home rule, goes into effect next year and could

1 put our health and safety at risk by imposing
2 high-voltage EMF cables and substations
3 surrounding our homes in our densely populated
4 communities. Equinor has zero data on how their
5 cables and substation will affect our residential
6 health and safety, let alone property values.
7 Equinor verbatim said, we're new at this. We're
8 from Norway. We've never done this before. We
9 don't want to be monitored after the fact.

10 I oppose the removal of home rule. Local
11 municipalities need to have final authorization
12 over what happens in their communities.
13 Legislation is moving way too fast past safety
14 regulations. In Vineyards, Winds, Environmental
15 Impact Statements, it states, Turbines will have
16 no positive effect on global warming. There's
17 also no cumulative study that shows battery
18 storage can produce more electricity than it uses.

19 It is a right of all New York State
20 ratepayers to have cost-effective, equitable,
21 reliable energy. Governor Hochul's own budget
22 director stated, the governor is uneasy about what
23 this clean energy will cost ratepayers. NYSERDA
24 and Governor Hochul's answer is the New York State
25 Energy Affordability program, which is not

1 financially equitable. Before we put the cart
2 before the horse, I'm urging NYPA to listen to the
3 Comptroller and business council to require
4 cumulative engineering safety and financial
5 analysis on the CLCPA mandates and not follow
6 untested legislation.

7 The Comptroller confirmed that the Public
8 Service Commission and NYSERDA are using old data
9 and miscalculations.

10 Where is the all-in cost-benefit analysis
11 for these renewable projects? We are already
12 witnessing New York State electric grid and gas
13 and national grid customers being forced to smart
14 meters and increased rates. Why? Because our
15 utilities are investing in offshore winds.

16 NYPA should be doing what they've done in
17 the past, working with safe, reliable energy
18 projects like hydro and nuclear. Hydropower is
19 renewable. I'm constantly told and berated by
20 legislators who are endorsed by PACS that these
21 projects for the greater good. There is no good
22 when you're imposing harm on some for the benefit
23 of others. Thank you.

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Michelle.

25 Our next speaker is Kathleen Sullivan.

1 Kathleen.

2 KATHLEEN SULLIVAN: Good evening. My name
3 is Kathleen Sullivan. I've been a resident of
4 Point Lookout in Long Beach for 54 years. I also
5 work on Wall Street as a business risk project
6 manager.

7 I vehemently oppose New York's energy plan
8 as it currently stands. Policies like 94.C and
9 this year's budget strip communities of home rule
10 and environmental protections while forcing them
11 to host industrial energy projects without fair
12 tax assessments.

13 Additionally, using eminent domain to
14 impose your energy infrastructure is wrong and
15 unconstitutional. The current energy plan places
16 a crushing financial burden on ratepayers, with
17 over a million already in arrears.

18 Offshore wind is four times more expensive
19 than current wholesale electricity, and solar and
20 wind power cannot sustain large economies as
21 evidenced by California with their rolling
22 blackouts in Germany.

23 NYPA should prioritize engineering and
24 fiscal analysis to ensure the CLCPA and Scoping
25 Plan don't jeopardize our grid and our reliability

1 or harm our taxpayers. Instead of competing with
2 private developers on solar and wind projects,
3 NYPA should focus on its strengths in hydropower
4 and explore nuclear energy for a reliable, clean
5 grid.

6 Lobbyists, who are in this room, and
7 corporations are driving this agenda, but the
8 financial inequality of the Climate Leaderships
9 and the Community Protection Act, CLCPA, is
10 unacceptable.

11 Hydropower is renewable under the New
12 York's own definitions. It is absent from your
13 future plans. Why? Why? We need a balanced,
14 realistic energy plan that doesn't rely on the
15 mandate or force costly EV adoptions on residents.
16 From my personal experience working on Wall
17 Street, the ESGs were built up by J.P. Morgan, who
18 I work for, and also UBA, and forced on clients.
19 Why was Tesla kicked out of those so-called ESGs?
20 Is this political?

21 It is totally a big money grab. Also, from
22 living in Long Beach and Point Lookout for 54
23 years that my grandfather built up, our home is
24 unsustainable for those cancer cables coming
25 through our towns. We had a sinkhole. Did you do

1 any of these sustainable studies on personal
2 areas? No, you did not.

3 So, I would like to say, frequently, during
4 the sonar testing, I've never seen a whale die.
5 But in 2023, I saw many. Growing up in the sand,
6 in the water. Keep it real. Get out of our
7 waters. Keep it unindustrialized. Thank you.

8 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Kathleen.

9 This concludes our list of speakers thus
10 far, and we'll remain in the room in case
11 additional speakers arrive. Thank you.

12 (Brief recess.)

13 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Hey, everyone. We do have
14 an additional speaker. If you guys wouldn't mind
15 taking your seats. Thank you. Okay.

16 Thanks, everyone. Our next speaker is Joan
17 Matthews. Joan.

18 JOAN MATTHEWS: Hi. I just want to say
19 thank you for the opportunity to speak again on
20 the topic, as I spoke the other night about the
21 moratoriums of the battery storage facilities
22 currently proposed for our area, meaning in
23 Glenwood Landing, as well as the high voltage
24 power lines.

25 So, I'm speaking on behalf of myself as

1 well as others that cannot come tonight, and not
2 on behalf -- on behalf of the companies who have
3 financial gain and use paid lobbyists to push
4 their agendas despite the health and safety risks
5 of the residents who are targeted to house the
6 best facilities and the power lines connected to
7 them.

8 I'm not opposed to green energy, however,
9 but not at the detrimental and lifelong current
10 unknown cost of humans, domestic animals, and
11 wildlife, which may also affect the food that we
12 ingest, as well as the propagation for fertilizing
13 future food.

14 Health and safety in comparison to the very
15 limited benefit, especially those in the immediate
16 surrounding, which is I, and surrounding areas
17 greater than 500 feet that the companies speak
18 about, the smoke is going to go past 500 feet if a
19 (inaudible) goes up.

20 The risk of contamination of both drinking
21 water and aquifers below it, which on Long Island,
22 we have limited water. We're already in trouble.
23 And also the waterways across from where they're
24 proposing the best, as well as the cables, too.
25 They finally cleaned up that area, and now it's

1 potential problems for the future. We've had
2 known flooding in the past with rising waters, and
3 that may potentially be a problem.

4 What are the long-term study effects?
5 Because we don't have any currently. And it's
6 also a three-part project, which is the -- the
7 wind, the cables, as well as the batteries.

8 What happens with the fallout -- the
9 physical fallout from these fires if the battery
10 goes on -- on fire? These are densely packed
11 areas with adults as well as kids, as well as
12 everything else.

13 How do we even begin to clean this up?
14 Who's going to help us? The hazard to air quality
15 of those residents in the event of a fire, but
16 more importantly to the volunteer fire department
17 because Long Island is a volunteer fire
18 departments. They have to try to contain these
19 fires, which may not allow people -- they may not
20 go that day. My dad's a fireman; he may not want
21 to go. His spouse may not want him to go.

22 There's also -- let me see, what about the
23 people who may flood the emergency rooms in the
24 hospitals due to respiratory issues due to the
25 fires? That's a problem also as well.

1 We live on a very congested Long Island,
2 which is getting worse and worse. How are we
3 going to actually even -- eventually, evacuate the
4 area?

5 The other thing, too, is your houses are
6 not air tight, especially the ones in Glenwood.
7 They've been around since the 1920s or before. So
8 also, too, why does Long Island have to be the
9 bearer of the energy?

10 It's not even really for us. It's only 20
11 percent, if we're lucky, of four hours of power.
12 What is that really going to do? The other thing,
13 too, is we don't want to become (inaudible), 9/11
14 fallout, which was safe, as well as Erin
15 Brockovich, or Dark Orders. It's not worth their
16 time to show up to our community meetings, meet in
17 Jupiter or -- or Propel, but they feel it's fine
18 to just go ahead and put this in. Thank you.

19 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Joan.

20 This concludes our list of speakers thus
21 far, and we will remain in the room in case other
22 speakers arrive. Thank you.

23 (Brief recess.)

24 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Our next speaker is Ryan
25 Stanton. Ryan.

1 RYAN STANTON: Could we go?

2 All right. On behalf of the Long Island
3 Federation of Labor, representing 250,000 union
4 members and their families across Nassau and
5 Suffolk County, we appreciate the opportunity to
6 comment on the New York Power Authority's draft
7 Strategic Plan.

8 I want to commend NYPA for its commitment
9 to advancing a cleaner, brighter energy future
10 under the Build Public Renewables Act. A critical
11 element to successful implementation is that NYPA
12 live up to and hold development partners
13 accountable to the prevailing wage, labor piece --
14 and project labor agreement standards outlined in
15 the law.

16 These measures are essential to ensuring
17 economic sustainability and environmental
18 sustainability. We know that fair treatment of
19 New York's working families are the foundation of
20 New York's renewable energy future.

21 As NYPA's energy portfolio grows and
22 evolves, the training, retraining, and up-skilling
23 of utility and construction workers must remain at
24 the forefront of the authority's mission.
25 Workforce development is essential to ensuring a

1 just transition for workers whose roles will be
2 affected by changes in our energy infrastructure.
3 Investing in the skills of displaced workers will
4 not only support the individuals and families
5 impacted but will also strengthen New York's clean
6 energy economy.

7 And lastly, we urge NYPA to prioritize
8 local and regional stakeholder engagement in both
9 the strategic planning and the conferral
10 processes, including labor organizations,
11 community leaders, and other key stakeholders,
12 ensure that decisions reflect the needs and
13 perspectives of all New Yorkers, especially those
14 most directly affected by this transition.

15 After reviewing the conferral process
16 outlined in the appendices, it's clearly improved
17 year over year. We hope you'll consider this
18 feedback and continue that trend, and we look
19 forward to the opportunity to work with NYPA to
20 create a sustainable and equitable energy future.
21 That's it.

22 LINDSAY KRYZAK: Thank you, Ryan.

23 This concludes our list of speakers thus
24 far, and we will remain in the room in case
25 additional speakers arrive. Thank you.

1 (Brief recess.)

2 DANIELLA PIPER: This concludes our list of
3 speakers. I want to thank you all again for your
4 feedback and for coming tonight.

5 If anyone has additional comments, you can
6 submit them on our website or email them directly
7 to strategicplancomments@nypa.gov. And we have QR
8 codes on the tables as you're walking out, you can
9 also submit your comments via the QR code.

10 So, get home safe, and a very happy
11 Thanksgiving to all of you. Thank you again.

12 (The meeting concluded.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer,
certify that I was authorized to and did report the
foregoing proceedings, and that the transcript is a true
and correct transcription of my notes of the proceedings.

Dated November 28th, 2024.

/s/ Jackie Mentecky

Jackie Mentecky, Court Stenographer