

## Power Long Island's Future



By James Castellane

As we all know, Long Island is a great place to live, work and raise a family. We have a skilled workforce, effective labor leadership and all the amenities needed to ensure that our families enjoy the finest quality-of-life anywhere within the Empire State.

However, we also know that the cost of living in Nassau and Suffolk County continues to rise, and that high energy costs have directly impacted our ability to grow our regional economy through new jobs and new investment. Part of this lies in Long Island's limited and antiquated power generation system.

Passage of a new power plant siting statute would expedite the process for siting and constructing new, clean and efficient power generation stations that will create jobs, use less energy and stabilize electricity costs for consumers. The state legislature is currently working with the Governor's office to craft a new siting bill, and the fact remains that they cannot craft a new bill soon enough.

Recently, a wind energy project off Plum Island proposed by Deepwater Wind was dropped because of the lack of a state siting law. Rhode Island will now be the beneficiary of 800 new jobs and 1.3 million megawatts of annual electricity. This is simply unconscionable.

The Nassau Suffolk Building Trades, which represents 62,000 union members throughout Long Island, also endorsed a plan to construct a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facility some 23 miles from the Rockaway Peninsula. The new plant would provide 4 million man-hours of work for construction trades throughout the region while ensuring safe, secure access to this clean, crucial fuel source.

New York's families and businesses are using more and not less power at ever increasing rates. Our elected leaders need to take action and ensure a more affordable and reliable future for the sake of New York's economy.

*James Castellane is the President of the Nassau-Suffolk Building Trades Council with more than 35 years as a laborer, organizer and officer with the Heat & Frost Insulators Local 12 union.*

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The New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (New York AREA) is a diverse group of business, labor, environmental, and community leaders working together for clean, low-cost and reliable electricity solutions that foster prosperity and jobs for the Empire State.

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