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ENERGY EXPERTS: SIX YEARS AFTER 2003 BLACKOUT, MODEST PROGRESS, GREATER CHALLENGES

New York, NY/August 13, 2009 -- With the six year anniversary of the great New York blackout (August 14-15, 2003) approaching, energy experts from the New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (New York AREA) praised the improvements made to our energy transmission infrastructure while strongly reiterating the need for adequate supply to keep up with growing energy demands.

"While we clearly have a long way to go, there have been a number of important - and critical steps made," said **Dr. Matthew C. Cordaro**, Dean of the Dowling College Townsend School of Business and a former CEO of the Midwest ISO. "Utilities such as Con Edison are investing billions into a modernized energy infrastructure, and facilities such as Indian Point have already made major capital investments to further enhance the efficiency of their clean power. Additionally, President Obama's federal stimulus package will also lead to the development of a needed, modernized smart grid that will benefit all New Yorkers."

Six years ago, overgrown trees in Ohio fell on three transmission lines, sparking a chain reaction that shut down more than 100 power plants and caused massive power failures throughout the Northeast, Midwest and southern Canada. The blackout's cumulative economic impact has been estimated in excess of \$4 billion, with \$1 billion of that in New York City alone. Following the blackout and using the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) designated the Mid-Atlantic corridor as a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) intending to remedy the transmission constraints. Nonetheless, limited and congested transmission remains.

"Until New York's transmission infrastructure has been fully upgraded and additional baseload power added to the grid, our region remains at risk for a sustained power outage - particularly during prolonged summer heat waves," said **Arthur "Jerry" Kremer**, a former Chairman of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee and the author of New York's now expired Article X Power Plant Siting Law. "This is one of the many reasons why lawmakers in the Assembly and Senate should come together and support a revamped, comprehensive power plant siting law."

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The New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) issued a news release on May 21 that said during the next 10 years it “expects peak demand to increase by 0.68% annually, and overall energy use to grow by 0.59%.” These figures take into account New York’s State’s “vigorous” energy conservation efforts. Additionally, the New York City Department of Planning forecasts an additional one million new residents by 2030.

“Despite the best intentions of some, New Yorkers cannot meet our region’s growing demands simply through conservation, efficiencies and placing a solar panel on every home,” **Dr. Cordaro** continued. “Maintaining our region’s quality-of-life will require that New York continues to support clean, safe and reliable baseload power resources such as Indian Point, while supporting the continued development of alternative energy resources such as wind and geothermal to complement New York’s baseload power infrastructure.”

“As state leaders continue deliberations on a new state energy plan, I implore our officials to take a realistic – and balanced approach to safeguarding our energy future,” **Chairman Kremer** concluded. “We absolutely should invest in alternative and renewable energy, and also implement further incentives to encourage conservation and efficiencies from utilities and consumers alike. However, we must also continue to modernize our state’s aging electricity transmission, support our existing clean baseload power resources, and facilitate the construction of a new generation of clean, baseload power. Our leaders should not wait for the lights to go out again before deciding to act.”

About New York AREA: Founded in November 2003 shortly after the historic blackout, the New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (New York AREA) is a diverse group of more than 150 business, labor, and community groups whose mission and purpose is to ensure that New York has an ample and reliable electricity supply, and economic prosperity for years to come. New York AREA helps to educate policy makers, businesses, and the general public regarding the necessity and importance of safe, low-cost, and reliable electricity. Both Entergy, owner of Indian Point, and Con Edison are members of New York AREA. For additional information visit: www.area-alliance.org.