

# Legislature Can Make NYS More Competitive With No Cost to State Budget



By Lenny Caro

The recent spike in fuel prices has once again brought home the reality that energy is a significant cost that impacts everyone. For businesses, ensuring a reliable supply of energy with stable prices remains a top challenge as our region seeks to emerge from the recent economic downturn.

Businesses are heavily dependent on electronic technology. New York State already has the nation's third highest electricity rates, trailing only Connecticut and Hawaii. Adding to our competitive disadvantage in the battle for jobs is our aging energy infrastructure. There continues to be an over reliance on older, inefficient power plants and an energy delivery system that is largely antiquated.

Mayor Bloomberg's recent PlaNYC update outlined numerous ambitious objectives to improve New York City's environment, including ending the use of #4 and #6 heating oil in all city buildings, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by more than 30%, the increased use of hybrid vehicles, and creating solar power plants on top of sealed landfills to generate an additional 56 megawatts of power and cut the city's reliance on fossil fuel energy sources. PlaNYC also supports keeping Indian Point on-line to ensure stability in our electric grid.

Passing a new power plant siting law would be a significant step in the right direction towards creating new, well-paying jobs without any additional cost to the state's taxpayers. Attracting investors to fund critical updates to New York State's energy infrastructure by building new power plants and energy transmission lines would create thousands of well-paying jobs.

With new power plants and energy infrastructure up and running, the resulting jobs will be engines for local economies statewide. The ultimate benefit is more sources of affordable and reliable electricity, lowering rates and making New York State more competitive with the rest of the country.

*Lenny Caro is a member of the New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance and CEO of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce, representing over 600 Bronx employers. The Chamber promotes business and opportunity within the borough to enhance and stimulate the marketing of Bronx based employment, products and services.*

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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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