



## New Energy Policy Critical in 2008



By Arthur (Jerry) Kremer

Electricity is the blood that pulses through the veins of New York's economy, which is something the governor addressed in his 2008 State of the State speech. He pledged to increase production of local renewables and reduce electricity use by 15 percent by 2015, while offering a bill to fast-track the building of new power plants.

This comes on top of senior staff moves, adding Paul DeCotis, former Director for the NY State Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA), as his Deputy Secretary for Energy and Garry Brown, a former VP at the NY System Operator (NYISO) to be Chair of the Public Service Commission.

Even with these steps forward, the picture became cloudier due to vacancies at the helm of the Assembly Energy Committee, with Chair Paul D. Tonko leaving to become President & CEO of NYSERDA, and most recently Senator James Wright, longtime chair of the Senate Energy Committee, announcing his retirement.

According to NYISO, southeastern New York will need up to 2,000 megawatts (MW) of new electricity by as soon as 2012, assuming that Indian Point — which produces in excess of 2,000 MW — continues to operate. 2,000 MW is the equivalent of four to five typical sized natural gas power plants.

The reality is that due to the expiration of Article X on December 31, 2002 there are no new power plant projects in the pipeline. There has also not been a major transmission facility constructed since 1989. NIMBY activists are stopping any new generation and transmission projects, and are trying to close existing facilities, like Indian Point.

On January 31 the Westchester Business Alliance, a coalition of significant Hudson Valley leaders, released a study finding their region is facing an immediate energy crisis. Energy consumption is rising at 100-150 MW per year and by 2015 Westchester alone will consume 800 MW more than today's current use of 5,000 MW.

The Alliance says Westchester residents paid \$.20 per kilowatt hour in 2006, more than twice the national average and without a new supply, they find electric bills will jump 150% more, meaning lost jobs and tax revenues.

*Arthur (Jerry) Kremer is Chairman of New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance and a co-author the Article X Power Plant Siting Law. He served in the State Legislature for 23 years, 12 as Assembly Ways and Means Chair.*

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The New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (New York AREA) is a diverse group of business, labor, 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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