



## 2.1 Million Jobs Depend on NY's Power Future



By Bob Seeger

Rising energy demand and capped in-state electricity production – is a nightmare scenario for New Yorkers' wallets. At slightly over 17 cents per kilowatt hour (17.16), New York State's electricity rates are third highest in the country.

With Article X, our power plant siting law now expired more than five years, New York is at a crossroads. We need to act quickly to avoid rising energy costs that can endanger the jobs of the working men and women of New York.

How important is the union workforce in The Empire State? In 2007, more than 2.1 million New York workers were represented by a union, equal to 25.2 percent of the entire workforce. These workers make up the bedrock of our economy, and they depend on reliable and affordable electricity to get the job done.

If we do not address the energy challenges we face now, the state's economy could find itself reeling if local employers pack up and move somewhere with cheaper energy costs. A decade long study of 20 states by Americans for Balanced Energy Choices directly linked employment shifts at the state and local levels to business energy costs. States with lower energy costs grew 25 percent faster and 60 percent more jobs were created.

The Bloomberg Administration is projecting the need to develop between 65 million – 70 million square feet of commercial and significant residential space to accommodate another one million residents by 2030. Given that it takes five years to site and build power plants, we must act now to create clean energy sources to power that positive economic growth.

Given growth projections, New York City will need more than 6,000 – 7,000 megawatts of new electricity supply within the next twenty years to meet its needs. Without an Article X law allowing the construction of new power generation, the cost of powering New York will climb significantly, until and unless we can add new base-load power supply to the grid.

Without a committed effort to create an affordable electricity supply to power a growing New York economy, we must all be concerned with the economic consequences to come.

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