

Oct. 6, 2025

Dear Members of the New York State Energy Planning Board:

Thank you for this opportunity to offer comments about the draft State Energy Plan.

New York is at a crucial moment with respect to energy policy. The state today is near the midpoint between 2019, when the Legislature enacted the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), and 2030, when New York is supposed to get 70 percent of its electricity from renewable energy sources (up from less than 35 percent last year) and to have cut emissions by 40 percent from 1990 levels.

The CLCPA is failing on its own terms. The Board has indicated, in its Draft, that New York will not meet its 2030 goals (which were supposed to take 11 years) before 2036—that is, in *another* 11 years:

Under the current set of assumptions and the Climate Act GHG accounting methodology, Current Policies will hit 40 percent economywide emissions reduction in 2038, while Additional Action will hit 40 percent reduction in 2036. (*Summary for Policymakers*, p.24)

The 2030 targets have gone from being aspirational goals meant to spur transformational changes to a paralytic preventing private actors from reducing emissions.

Emissions remain higher than they should be because CLCPA required state officials, particularly DEC, to let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

A generation ago, state policy pushed older, less efficient plants into retirement by welcoming newer natural gas generators to compete in a well-structured wholesale market. It was a rare win for air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, affordability and reliability.

Since 2019, however, NYS has prevented older natural-gas power plants from being replaced or upgraded, since DEC has found such moves to be at odds with the state's climate goals. Besides increasing emissions, this has also affected grid reliability and left customers paying more.

Worst of all, there has in recent years been a performative element to New York state energy policy.

Governor Andrew Cuomo in 2017 promised to find “the most rapid, cost-effective, and responsible pathway to reach 100 percent renewable energy statewide.” NYSERDA, the state's energy agency, spent about \$1 million (2025 \$) on consultants, but no plan was ever published.

CLCPA was adopted using an emergency process to waive the Legislature's three-day waiting period, only for a month to pass before Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the law (alongside former Vice President Al Gore).

The last two major power-plant applications to come before DEC, for Danskammer Energy Center in Orange County and Astoria Gas Turbine Power, were rejected simultaneously on October 27, 2021—just in time for the governor’s top aides on energy policy to jet to the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow.

Updating the State Energy Plan is an opportunity for a dispassionate, fresh look at where things have been, where they are and where they are going. It is meant to provide a 360-degree view of policy and data of the energy landscape, which has been one of the most important factors in shaping the state’s economy.

Unfortunately, the Draft presented in July misses the mark, because it plainly was not designed to inform discussion. It was purpose-built to steer public discussion toward existing (albeit infeasible) goals, reinforcing the state’s policy preferences rather than objectively assessing the effects of those preferences. Among other things, it does not appear to meaningfully address the costs or effects of the state’s planned “cap and invest” program, which would increase fossil fuel and other prices.

Energy Law 6-104 among other things requires “Identification and analysis of emerging trends related to energy supply, price and demand, including trends related to the transportation sector.”

NYSERDA has produced considerable amounts of content, gaming out the impact of different state policies on various hypothetical households, as part of the latest planning process, but the Draft does not come close to meeting the statutory requirement. Most notably, it does not acknowledge, let alone address, the fact that average residential electricity rates rose 48 percent in New York between Q2 2019 and Q2 2025, almost twice inflation, according to US EIA.

The 2002 State Energy Plan, on the other hand, included 20-year annual forecasts for residential, commercial and industrial electricity rates.

New York State Residential Energy Prices Forecast in Real Dollars, 2000-2021

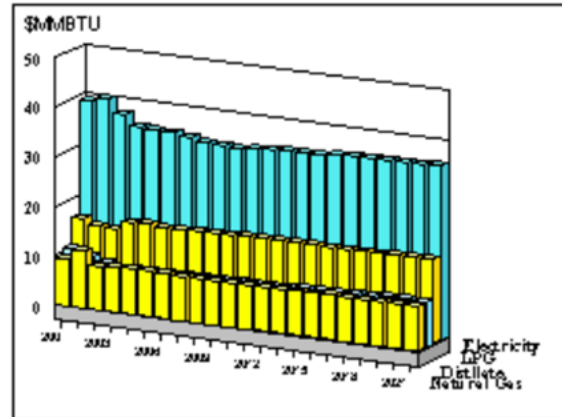


Table 2-2a (in physical units)(\$/2000)

Year	Natural Gas \$/dt	Distillate ¢/gal	Propane ¢/gal	Petroleum Products \$/BBL	Electricity ¢/kW
2000	9.59	152.56	140.09	59.66	13.37
2001	11.73	136.13	130.08	55.65	13.73
2002	9.79	125.44	128.10	48.43	12.80
2003	10.01	115.67	142.40	46.67	12.08
2004	10.12	116.27	143.99	46.90	12.06
2005	10.10	116.57	143.17	46.95	11.96
2006	9.96	116.51	143.46	46.96	11.73
2007	9.85	116.02	143.76	46.81	11.55
2008	9.77	116.13	144.05	46.86	11.44
2009	9.66	118.49	144.35	47.70	11.47
2010	9.55	119.93	145.57	48.26	11.56
2011	9.50	120.18	145.82	48.30	11.65
2012	9.44	120.64	146.78	48.45	11.69
2013	9.38	123.12	146.35	49.23	11.75
2014	9.32	126.23	146.62	50.27	11.75
2015	9.27	126.55	146.32	50.33	11.87
2016	9.21	126.82	146.03	50.37	11.95
2017	9.16	127.10	145.73	50.41	11.96
2018	9.15	127.37	146.00	50.48	11.99
2019	9.14	127.67	146.30	50.55	12.03
2020	9.14	127.94	146.58	50.61	12.04
2021	9.14	128.22	146.86	50.68	12.06
Total Growth	-4.71%	-15.96%	4.83%	-15.06%	-9.78%

Source: 2002 State Energy Plan

The closest the Draft appears to come to recognizing the 2019 to 2025 price surge is a pair of charts showing average annual rates for residential Con Edison (omitting 2024) and National Grid (“Retail Electricity Cost Trends,” *Electricity*, Table 2.4.3).

What's more, the Draft does nothing to explain the many state policy choices that contributed to this rise, including:

- increased mandatory purchases for Renewable Energy Credits;
- CLCPA-related transmission upgrades financed by ratepayers; and
- significant increases in the cost of Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative allowances.

The Draft's forecasts are even more disappointing. NYSERDA indicates ("Fuel Rates and Prices," *Energy Affordability Impacts Annex*) that it projected "average electric rate by region" from 2026 to 2031 (it is not clear what the analogous value would be for 2024, the last full year for which data are available).

This is, first of all, a near-meaningless metric, given how much residential, commercial and industrial rates differ.

NYSERDA notes that it used the rates for a single upstate utility (NYSEG), rather than an average using complete data, as a proxy for all of the upstate region, where it projects a 12.4 percent increase between 2026 and 2031.

Meanwhile, NYSERDA applied identical rate-escalation assumptions to both New York City and the downstate region (14 percent) over the same period.

Either way, NYSERDA indicates the average rate of growth over the past six years will fall by more than half—without any policy changes.

New York is in fact in various phases of implementing several policies (such as offshore wind RECs (ORECs) and storage mandates) that will increase rates, but the costs are not explicitly addressed by the Draft.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The forthcoming State Energy Plan should, at a minimum,

- explain the mechanisms responsible for residential electricity price increases over the past six years;
- accurately and completely forecast electricity rates over a reasonable time period;
- detail all known future cost increases necessitated by state policy; and
- discuss policy options for the Legislature and state officials to mitigate future rate increases.

Respectfully submitted,



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