

## Long Island Energy & Environment Roundtable

### Participating Organizations

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### Thank you

to the Rauch Foundation for helping to convene the Roundtable and for fostering collaborative efforts among not-for-profit organizations on Long Island.

## Policy Goals

**Expand Energy Efficiency Programs**—Governor Spitzer has set a statewide goal of a 15% reduction of electricity use over the projected growth anticipated by 2015. The most cost-effective way to achieve this goal and reduce the pollution and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions resulting from energy consumption is to improve the energy efficiency of homes and businesses. LIPA, Keyspan, local municipalities, NY State, and the Federal government should all adopt measures and expand programs for individuals and businesses to become more energy efficient, to also help Long Island become more affordable.

**Renewables**—LIPA should establish and monitor annual targets to ensure that we meet the state **Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)** of 25% renewable electric generation by 2013.

Wind power whether land-based or offshore should be part of L.I.'s renewable energy portfolio. With rigorous regulatory, environmental and public review to ensure it does not have significant negative environmental impacts, a wind park offshore Long Island can serve as a national model in offshore wind energy production, setting the stage for a new era of clean, sustainable energy generation to help protect our health, environment and quality of life.

**Repowering**—Long Island must prioritize repowering its old electric generation power plant infrastructure in order to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, particulates, and other pollutants that contaminate air and surface water bodies. All options and alternatives must be fully evaluated in order to recreate our electric generation system to be the most efficient and meet the highest environmental standards. This includes consideration of new plants in new locations or at or near existing sites with contracted shut-downs at existing facilities, as well as upgrading or replacing plants in existing locations.

**Municipal Leadership**—Long Island towns and counties should “lead by example” on energy issues by implementing conservation measures, efficiency upgrades, renewable energy, and smart growth policies to reduce vehicle-dependence. Long Island municipalities should upgrade their existing buildings, set a policy to make all new municipal buildings LEED certified, install renewable energy generation such as solar and wind at municipal facilities, and purchase fuel efficient and alternative fuel vehicles for their municipal fleets. Municipalities should also create incentives for residents to follow their example.

**Promote efficient vehicles and alternative fuels**—Vehicle use on Long Island is high. Local, state & federal governments should create or enhance financial incentives such as direct grants, rebates, or tax incentives that encourage individuals and business to choose the most efficient vehicles, and to convert to alternative fuel vehicles.

**Invest in Transportation Infrastructure**—To reduce emissions from automobiles and truck traffic, significant capital investments must be made to expand Long Island's transit infrastructure and bus services should be expanded and better coordinated with the LIRR. Shuttle buses will be needed to support proposed train service to bring riders to and from stations. Systems to increase reverse commuting, and improve the convenience of using the LIRR system should be put in place, and north-south rail connections between the existing east-west trail lines should be added. Efforts to build an inter-modal freight hub facility should be supported, provided the proposal is subject to environmental review.

**Promote Waste Stream Reduction and Management**—Using less “stuff” means using less energy, and recycling existing materials uses far less energy than creating products from virgin materials. Recycling programs should be encouraged and carried out to maximize the amount and number of items being recycled, including plastics, glass, metals, paper & cardboard, electronic waste, and household hazardous waste. Markets should be expanded for recycled materials to be made into useful end-products.

**Local Organic Farming and Lawn Care**—Organic farming requires less input of fossil fuels than “conventional” methods, which rely heavily on petroleum products, and organically maintained soil sequesters significantly more carbon than conventionally maintained soil. Local organic farms, organic landscapers, and programs to educate the public about organic methods of gardening and turf care should be promoted.

## Supported Legislation & Regulatory Initiatives

### Local

**Energy Star Homes:** All Long Island towns should amend their codes to require that new home construction meet Energy Star® standards.

**Cool Cities/Counties:** All Long Island towns should join the Cool Cities campaign (based on U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement), and Counties should join Cool Counties (80% reduction of greenhouse gases by 2050).

### State

**Climate Change Solutions for New York State:** The 10-state Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) establishes a “cap & trade” program, beginning in 2009, to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from power plants by 10% by 2019. Roundtable members have reservations about RGGI's efficacy at achieving emissions reductions under the model rule, and that the model rule allows nuclear power, large hydro and out-of-state energy imports. The

Roundtable supports the **Climate Change Solutions Program Act A7365 (Sweeney)/S5347 (Marcellino)**, and **Climate Change Solutions Fund Act A7366 (Gianaris)/S5371 (Marcellino)** that ensure the proceeds raised from the sale of carbon credits are invested in energy efficiency, renewable energy development, and programs that improve air and water quality. Proceeds from the sale of LI carbon credits should be returned directly to Long Island to local fund efficiency & renewables programs. The Roundtable also supports A7367 (Sweeney)/ S5427 (Marcellino) which establishes a **NY State Climate Change Task Force**.

**Energy Efficient Lighting Act:** A7944 (Sweeney)/ S5823 (Marcellino) This legislation requires that a general service incandescent bulbs shall not be sold in New York State after June 1, 2012. OR

**Lighting Efficiency Standards:** A.8641-B (Sweeney)/ S.6124 (Marcellino) (not currently same as) This bill

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## Recommendations to LIPA

- The renewal of the Clean Energy Initiative should be accelerated to begin on January 1, 2008, one year sooner than currently planned. The Clean Energy Initiative (CEI) should be substantially expanded (Efficiency Long Island), by setting the ten-year fund level at \$1 Billion.
- Form an informal partnership between LIPA and environmental groups to coordinate public education and outreach efforts to more effectively get the word out in mass mailings, web sites, etc., so that such coordination will enhance the effectiveness of the CEI advertisements.
- Expand the Solar Pioneers program to provide Net Metering for commercial solar, and raise the 10kilowatt cap on the rebates provided by LIPA and increase the capacity limit on systems eligible for net metering to 2 megawatts, in order to make larger commercial utilization of the program viable.
- Expand the solar program for local schools utilizing structural changes such as centralized procurement.
- Substantially redirect LIPA's advertisements, so that the vast majority of newspaper advertisements, etc., are devoted to promoting conservation, energy efficiency, and the CEI programs.
- Modify LIPA's current structure of organizing CEI (and other) programs primarily into two groups, residential and commercial. A third category should be created with staff dedicated to the governmental, places-of-worship, and not-for-profit sectors. Concerted efforts should be directed at establishing government buildings and schools as models for energy efficiency all across Long Island.
- Create a formal process where the Clean Energy Initiative budget and activities are reviewed publicly with stakeholder representatives. Provide opportunities to test and evaluate ideas for improving the reach of the CEI.

### Guest Speakers at Roundtable Meetings 2007

*January*

Dan Zaweski, LIPA V.P. of Energy Efficiency.

*February*

Assemblyman Marc Alessi

*March*

Congressman Steve Israel

*March*

Kevin Law, LIPA Chair

*May*

Michael White, Executive Director of the Long Island Regional Planning Board

*August*

Assemblyman Robert Sweeney  
Senator Carl Marcellino

## Legislation & Regulatory Initiatives, continued

would require the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), in consultation with the Public Service Commission and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority to set electrical energy consumption reduction targets for residential, commercial and outdoor lighting and would require the DEC Commissioner to establish a schedule of minimum energy efficiency standards for lighting.

**Net Metering:** A8690 (Englebright)/ Senate 5950-B (Wright) would allow commercial utility customers to benefit from net energy metering for solar, wind, fuel cell and farm waste electric generating systems. The Assembly bill increases the capacity limit on systems eligible for net metering to 2 megawatts, which we support (*Senate bill currently sets limit at 10kw*).

**Hybrid Vehicle Sales Tax exemption:** S3947-A (Skelos)/A7626 (Englebright) provides an exemption from state sales tax on the purchase of new and used hybrid vehicles, and other vehicles from Model Year 2008 and beyond that achieve a highway fuel economy estimate of 35 mpg or more, as certified by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The legislation also enables New York City and county governments to eliminate their local sales tax on hybrid and high mile-per-gallon vehicles.

**State Green Building Construction Act:** A2005 (Lupardo)/S5442 (Marcellino) will amend the NYS Energy Law to require all new construction and “substantial” renovation projects undertaken by any state agency must meet criteria set by DEC in consultation with NYSERDA and other agencies, “informed by” United States Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

**Dirty Diesel School Buses:** A8732 (Alessi) Diesel emissions contain particulates and carcinogens such as benzene. This bill requires owners of school and other buses to retrofit diesel operated vehicles with the capability of operating on a biodiesel blend, and requires school buses to operate on a biodiesel blend within 3 years; also establishes a biodiesel school bus grant to be administered by NYSERDA.

**Green Vehicle Bill:** A9003 would provide a consumer rebate on less polluting vehicles and create a consumer surcharge on more polluting vehicles. The program would be self-financing and encourages consumers to buy cleaner cars.

**Power Plant Siting Law:** The review and approval process for siting major electric generating facilities expired in December 2002. NY State should adopt an energy siting law that protects vulnerable communities, ensures resources for meaningful public participation, prohibits industrial development on conservation easement lands, requires a net reduction of on-site pollution, and advances cleaner, more efficient energy generation.

**The Bigger Better Bottle Bill:** A8044 (Sweeney)/S5443-A (Marcellino) The bill would amend the Environmental Conservation Law 27-1003(1) and the Finance Law to expand the definition of “beverage” in the state returnable container act (the original bottle bill) to include non-carbonated drinks other than milk, wine and liquor, and to direct the unclaimed deposit money derived from that program to the Environmental Preservation Fund. The measure also makes provisions for assistance for bottle collection efforts in large cities and raises the handling fee for retailers.

## Federal

**Federal Renewable Portfolio Standard:** H.R. 969 creates a National Renewable Electricity Standard (RPS) requiring utilities to generate or buy 20 percent clean, renewable energy by 2020. The Senate version calls for 15% renewables by 2020.

**Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards:** H.R. 6/S.1419 CAFE standards set the average fuel efficiency of all new cars sold in the U.S. CAFE has been at the same level for 15 years, despite the fact that automobiles emit a significant portion of greenhouse gases responsible for global warming. Congress should raise CAFE standards and end the exemption setting lower standards for SUVs.

**Increased Funding for Renewable Energy:** H.R. 2641 The Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water has approved increases in funding sought by Congressman Steve Israel for the Department of Energy’s Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy of almost \$632 million over the administration’s request.

**Nationwide Carbon Cap:** Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act S.309 (Sanders)/ Safe Climate Act H.R. 1590 (Waxman) Both bills would require US greenhouse gas emissions to gradually decrease to a final cap at 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 and sets California’s auto emission standard nationwide.

# Long Island Energy & Environment Roundtable 2007 Energy Agenda Priorities

## The Problems of Global Warming and Climate Change

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, an international panel of over 2500 climate scientists) and the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) have released a series of reports warning of the severe consequences of global warming, and have correlated warming with human activity (mainly burning fossil fuels).

In February 2007, an IPCC report found “unequivocal” evidence of global warming and predicted more than 5 degrees Fahrenheit of warming worldwide by 2100; a resultant sea level rise of 23 inches or more by 2100; and increased drought and flood frequency.<sup>1</sup> Climatologists advise that carbon dioxide emissions must be reduced by at least 70% to stabilize the climate.<sup>2</sup>

### L. I. faces several consequences from global warming

- Sea level rise and coastal flooding will have serious economic impacts as we attempt to protect low-lying properties and transportation infrastructure such as roads, airports, and train lines, and as insurance companies are restricting coverage for damage from weather-related events near the shore.
- Long Island is already seeing an alteration of species in our bays and estuaries, with the growing frequency of new warm water species, such as the invasive sea squirt, and reductions in colder water species such as lobsters, historically a part of the local fishing economy.<sup>3</sup>
- It is predicted that the New York climate may be more like that of South Carolina today by the end of this century if we do nothing to curb our greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>4</sup> 2006 was the warmest year on record for the United States.<sup>5</sup> Long Island is known for its vineyards and farms, but climate changes may have economic impacts on local winemaking and agriculture.
- Wind speeds of hurricanes, which become more intense as oceans warm, have increased about 50% in the past 50 years.<sup>6</sup> Meteorologists have warned that Long Island is due for a strong hurricane, possibly category 3, meaning wind speeds of 111-130 mph.

#### Footnotes:

1 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Climate Change 2007: the Physical Science Basis, Fourth Assessment Report, Summary for Policymakers

2 James Hansen, NASA’s chief climate scientist, Time Magazine 3/24/06

3 Evidence of invasive species increased by warmer water temperatures, www.seagrant.uconn.edu/INVID.HTM and http://www.nurc.uconn.edu/about/events/event0014/index.htm; impacts on lobster population, www.seagrant.uconn.edu/LOBFAQs.pdf

4 Union of Concerned Scientists, Climate Change in the U.S. Northeast: A Report of the Northeast Climate Impacts Assessment, October 2006.

5 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Climatic Data Center, www.noaa.gov/stories2007/s2772.htm

## Air pollution on Long Island

Burning fossil fuels for energy not only produces climate-altering greenhouse gases, but also air pollutants such as nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx) which form smog, and particulates. Air pollution monitors in Suffolk County indicate that it has the second worst ozone problem in the state.<sup>7</sup> At the end of 2004, Nassau and Suffolk were designated nonattainment areas for EPA’s health-based standards for fine particle pollution.<sup>8</sup> Asthmatics are at a greater risk from the effects of air pollution, and Long Island has a 7.9% rate of childhood asthma.<sup>9</sup>

The deposition of air pollutants also contaminates surface water bodies, thereby adversely impacting wildlife, habitat, and human consumption of certain fish and other aquatic life. Older power plants adversely impact aquatic life through the intake of water for cooling purposes and thermal pollution associated with cooling system effluent.

### Long Island should be a clean energy leader

Between 1998 and 2004, residential electricity consumption increased by over 20% on Long Island, and commercial and industrial electricity consumption increased by 13%. Residential natural gas consumption increased nearly 19%, and commercial and industrial natural gas consumption increased nearly 13%. Annually, Long Island homes consume 490.14 million gallons of heating oil; 396.77 million gallons of oil is consumed by commercial and industrial use and 403.29 million gallons is used to generate electricity. 2,152,344 registered vehicles consume 1,257.36 million gallons of oil.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the scientific consensus on global warming, and the increasing urgency of the issue, government is responding at a snail’s pace. Long Island is well suited to lead on energy issues. Long Islanders have a legacy of supporting environmental causes, and with high energy rates, support for addressing energy issues is strong. The LI Energy and Environment Roundtable supports the following policy initiatives as a call to action, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create a cleaner energy future for Long Island.

## Mission

The Long Island Energy & Environment Roundtable provides a forum for local and statewide environmental groups, working with decision-makers, to advance a unified agenda of regional policy initiatives that address global warming and transform Long Island into a leader in developing and adopting innovative solutions to the energy and climate crisis.

6 Kerry Emanuel, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences, web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2005/hurricanes.html

7 American Lung Association, State of the Air: 2006, April 2006 lungaction.org/reports/stateoftheair2006.html

8 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Clean Air Interstate Rule, www.epa.gov/CAIR/ny.html

9. Asthma Coalition of LI’s School Nurse Survey, 2002

10 Long Island Index, Rauch Foundation, 2006, p.48