

NY Nuclear Bailout

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Context

- There are four nuclear plants in New York (6 reactors)
Two unprofitable, one marginal, one profitable
- Energy policy made by PSC (Governor), not legislature
- Governor politically vulnerable on upstate jobs
- Recent slow progress toward our renewable energy and efficiency goals
- Governor decided to bail out the nukes before the process even started

Ginna



FitzPatrick



Nine Mile Point



How Exelon and the Governor exploited this context

- Worked closely with unions and local officials to build a narrative of impending disaster if nukes close
- Paid for a manipulative study that hyped up the job losses, costs to consumers, and environmental impacts of nuclear closures.
- Ran a sophisticated PR and Communication effort
- Divided the environmental movement, by deploying groups like Environmental Progress and Nuclear Matters, and by driving wedges between Big Greens and the grassroots and even between some grassroots



How we responded

- Published our own analysis, focused on cost savings and environmental benefits of replacing nukes with renewables and efficiency
- Filed technical comments
- Organized people to testify at hearings, organized people to submit written comments, organized phone calls to the Governor, organized organizational letters to the Governor
- Press conferences, letters to the editor, op-eds



Why they won round 1

- We were completely outmatched in resources
- We were unable to slow the process down much
- They kept the true costs hidden until the last minute
- We out organized them in terms of public participation, but they had more political influence
- The Governor secretly brokered a backroom deal, while we were largely focused on the PSC proceeding, lack of democracy
- There was a general perception that renewables aren't ready, they got away with framing this about climate change instead of a corporate bailout
- They used environmental groups as political cover and leveraged RPS to get them on board.



How we are fighting back now

- Well resourced campaign with organizing, communications, research, and lobbying
- Main messaging is cost to consumers, lack of transparency, and better alternatives
- Target is Cuomo
- Parallel legal effort



GOVERNOR CUOMO NYS CAPITOL BUILDING ALBANY NY 12224	ELECTRIC BILL
TO	The People of New York
DESCRIPTION	Rate hike on utility bills for nuclear plant bailout
TOTAL	\$7.6 billion

CUOMO TAX REJECTED

Looking forward

- Slowing the process down will give more time to do analysis and to build power
- Let's take a page from Exelon's book and commission some national research that can be easily applied to states
- Build a narrative about people hurt by nuclear subsidies
- Bolster positive renewable energy success stories
- Big Greens need to be moved away from providing political cover. (Have the conversation nationally so it will trickle down to the states?)
- Prepare to navigate the Right and the fossil fuel industry



Thank you!

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