

Grid of the Future

Lessons from New York's
Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) Proceeding

Jessica Azulay, Alliance for a Green Economy
New York Energy Democracy Alliance

The Problem: Our Energy System is Killing Us

The corporations and regulatory agencies that control our system have little to no interest in solving the climate crisis or the economic crisis.



Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong, File



Credit: EPA



Credit: Amy Sussman/Corbis



Credit: Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson



A Solution: Energy Democracy

“Energy democracy means that community residents are innovators, planners, and decision-makers on how to use and create energy that is local and renewable.”

-Center for Social Inclusion

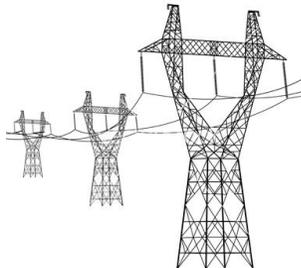


How can the GOTF lead to Energy Democracy?



Decentralized
ownership.
Less hierarchy.

Greater
customer choice
and control.



New rules for
utilities.



But only if it's designed that way...



New York Energy Democracy Alliance

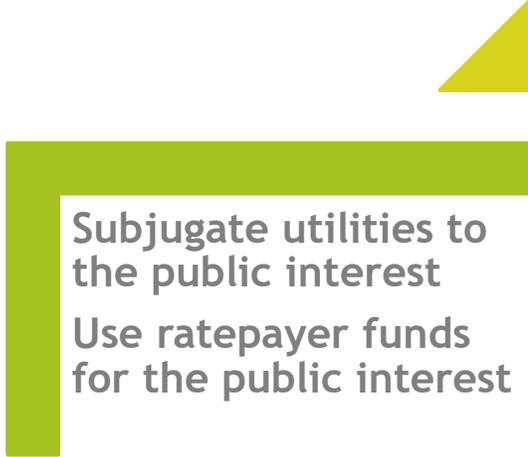
Energy Democracy Alliance advances a just and participatory transition to a resilient, localized, and democratically controlled clean energy economy in New York State. We envision a renewable energy system that is led by and prioritizes solutions for low- and moderate-income communities and communities of color who are most impacted by our current energy and economic system. We transform our communities' relationship to power through advocacy, organizing, job creation, coalition-building, policy research, and public education for an equitable, sustainable energy future.



Steps to Energy Democracy



Demand transparent, accountable, inclusive and democratic regulatory agencies



Subjugate utilities to the public interest
Use ratepayer funds for the public interest



Find and create ways for communities to take over the planning and ownership of the system themselves

Process Matters

- ▶ Understandable public information
- ▶ Public hearings
- ▶ Meaningful input
- ▶ Intervenor funds
- ▶ Publicly accountability institutions



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regulatory agencies

Policy Priorities

- ▶ Aggressive goals for renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- ▶ Subsidies and policies prioritizing low-income communities, communities of color, and local businesses.
- ▶ Progressive rates - Affordability.
- ▶ Utility incentives for meeting public policy goals and *penalties for failure*.
- ▶ Wage and hiring standards for projects receiving public/ratepayer money.

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Carve out space for local and shared ownership

- ▶ Break down ownership barriers
- ▶ Enable shared renewables
- ▶ Community Choice Aggregation



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What could possibly go wrong when you're overhauling the whole system?

- ▶ Utilities grapple for control and drag their feet
- ▶ Predatory lending and deceptive marketing
- ▶ Barriers for low-income customers
- ▶ Unequal distribution of benefits
- ▶ Dirty industry fights back



Some Successes

- ▶ Almost 20 hearings held in 2015
- ▶ More attention to low-income consumers
- ▶ Large scale renewables commitment
- ▶ Shared renewables approved, low income collaborative established
- ▶ Renewable energy mandates
- ▶ More to come...



Some organizing lessons

- Articulate a bold vision.
- Don't underestimate the public's ability to understand the complexity.
- Think beyond energy and the environment. Make connections to housing, jobs, etc.
- Create strong unifying principles.
- Grassroots pressure is key.
- Confront those in power when necessary and take your seat at the table.
- Build coalitions among groups with different strengths, constituencies and tactics.



Photos: Minister Erik McGregor

Thank you!

Contact Jessica Azulay:
jessica@agreenewyork.org

Energy Democracy Alliance website:
www.energydemocracyny.org