

Testimony of
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Chair Krueger, Chair Pretlow, Chair Barrett, Chair Parker, Chair Glick, Chair Hareckham and members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am Doreen Harris, President and CEO of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). As some of you may be aware, this year, NYSEDA is celebrating 50 years of dedicated service to the people of the great State of New York, having been formed to address the energy crisis of the 1970's. Over these years, I'm extremely proud of the ways in which we have worked the past 50 years to expand the State's economy by implementing our mission to advance clean energy while leveraging innovation and investments to improve the health, resiliency, and prosperity of New Yorkers and deliver benefits equitably to all.

NYSERDA is actively engaged in every Assembly and Senate district across the state. As an example of this commitment, in 2021 we established Regional Clean Energy Hubs in every economic development region of the state, including three Hubs in New York City. The Clean Energy Hubs are designed to provide clear and streamlined access and support to community members seeking access to NYSEDA, utility and other energy related services. I'm pleased to report that this program is continuing to grow with NYSEDA establishing 100 new partnerships through the Regional Clean Energy Hubs, which includes 20 municipalities and 80 community-based organizations across the State. The program has connected nearly 8,000 New Yorkers to clean energy services and participated in over 4,500 local community events since its inception.

Our collaboration with the legislature and your offices includes not only formal engagements such as today, but robust reporting to provide transparency across the full spectrum of: constituent services, promptly responding to inquiries about program information and results, project and funding updates, discussion of progress towards the State's goals, and of course many members of the legislature have engaged regularly in our stakeholder processes and have partnered with NYSEDA to arrange constituent meetings and other forms of engagement.

2024 is no exception, with NYSEDA maintaining a regular, collaborative, and active dialogue with the members and your staff. This includes:

- regular interactions with legislators and staff to discuss status of ongoing projects, technical issues, programmatic impacts, etc.;
- addressing individual constituent requests that are referred to our team;
- participating in formal hearings and committee meetings;
- coordinating and participating in roundtables, stakeholder groups or technical working groups; and
- many ribbon cuttings and announcements across the state. In fact, I dubbed 2024 the "Year of shovels," as we kicked off and highlighted our ongoing statewide projects and progress.

In total, NYSEDA actively participated in over 100 meetings and events with members of the Legislature in 2024, fulfilling our promise to serve as a trusted and credible resource for energy information, programs, and impactful investments benefiting New Yorkers.

Governor Hochul's commitment to grow New York's economy prioritizes affordability, sustained job growth, energy security and reliability. NYSERDA supports this commitment by making decisions based on facts and with a lens of achieving long-term outcomes while generating immediate benefits. As a guiding principle, NYSERDA's funding and programs are focused on creating new opportunities to save consumers money, grow businesses, and create family sustaining jobs throughout New York. We also deliver outcomes that protect the environment, improve public health, and strengthen the resiliency of our energy systems, communities, and homes.

To do this, we prioritize partnerships with the manufacturing, innovation and college and university sectors – ensuring that we actively support the next generation of solutions while building the clean energy workforce of the future. As a result, New York's clean energy activities have resulted in job growth outpacing that of the State economy as a whole, and it is expected to continue that trajectory into the future. And importantly, these are jobs that support the future global economy. It is that trajectory that NYSERDA is keenly focused on maintaining and accelerating through a suite of long-term sustainable actions.

One of the things I want to emphasize with you today is that NYSERDA executes on its mission with a commitment to transparency and accountability. Each year, NYSERDA files almost 250 reports with governmental and oversight entities, and the legislature, and publishes over 150 data sets for public access on OpenNY. We operate our programs under a robust quality assurance and quality control process to ensure that the projects we support are completed correctly, safely and provide benefits to New Yorkers. NYSERDA has a long-standing and nationally recognized program evaluation process, ensuring we are delivering on program outcomes. On our website, we offer information in 21 languages to ensure that all New Yorkers can easily and readily access programs that serve them.

NYSERDA reports are delivered to the legislature on a regular basis, and specifically beginning in 2016 in compliance with Public Authorities Law, section 1867, we provide a semi-annual report to the Assembly Ways and Means Chair, the Senate Finance Chair, and the Governor on NYSERDA revenues and expenditures, contracts, commitments, solicitations and activity by region. Consistent with our commitment to transparency, program activity and impacts are also reported to NYSERDA's Board of Directors, the Governor and legislature, filed with the Public Service Commission, and information is published on NYSERDA's website.

While we diligently plan for NYSERDA investments and outcomes, we are also continuously assessing external forces that may impact budgeted revenues and expenditures as well as program impacts. NYSERDA's protocols enforce the use of budgeting best practices, monitor actual expenditures and collections relative to budget, and use quality assurance mechanisms to verify project outcomes are achieved. Budgets, expenditures, and appropriate uses of funds are all subject to oversight by NYSERDA's Board of Directors and are annually assessed by independent auditors following governmental accounting standards.

As we continue our transition, I would like to highlight some key outcomes of the State's clean energy activities:

- The State's new Climate Act Dashboard was published this past fall, publishing data and progress to the goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act,
- Greenhouse gas emissions have decreased 42 million metric tons - a reduction of 10% of emissions from 1990 levels - which puts us at 26% of the way to the 2030 goal,
- NYSERDA's Clean Energy Fund portfolios are reporting that 36% of our local community-based clean energy investments are in disadvantaged communities,
- In October, the State achieved the Climate Act goal of six gigawatts of distributed solar energy, achieving this one year ahead of time, and
- Statewide, more than 136 TBTU of site-based energy savings has been recorded, accounting for approximately 75% of the Climate Act goal.

It is extremely important to recognize that we have accomplished all of this while New York operates one of the most reliable energy grids in the country. These achievements demonstrate our clean energy agenda is providing benefits to our residents, businesses, and economy. Governor Hochul is showing the world that New York's leadership in advancing a green economy is creating family sustaining new jobs while balancing consumer affordability with economic development, environmental protections, and equity.

As you know, much of our work requires consistent multi-year commitments to build market traction and consumer confidence, with the goal being consumer adoption without further intervention for these products and services. NYSERDA's budget reflects continued work on these initiatives often enabled by a mix of funding sources. While some initiatives may derive funds from multiple sources, and may include specific authorized uses, NYSERDA utilizes systems of internal controls as we engage in appropriate planning and implementation of measures to ensure we meet the requirements of the funding that the public entrusts us with. These controls include development and publication of Investment Plans or Operating Plans that provide visibility to the activities for which funds are being applied. Our work is informed by stakeholder engagement and market research, and our program progress is assessed through published annual program commitment and expenditure forecasts, and program performance is assessed on those forecasts.

For the 2025 fiscal year, NYSERDA's budget highlights included the following:

- \$405 million for Clean Energy Fund initiatives; \$610 million to maintain and grow zero-emission electricity under the Clean Energy Standard; and \$265 million for advancement of in-state solar energy through NY-Sun, all overseen by the PSC.
- RGGI allowances account for \$191 million, driven by a stakeholder process.
- State Budget Funding authorized or re-authorized for the EmPower+ program, port and supply chain infrastructure development, Environmental Bond Act allocations supporting clean transportation and schools, and the West Valley Demonstration Project.

- o This year's enacted State Budget also authorized \$28.7 million from gas and electric corporation assessments directed to research, development and demonstration activities, energy analysis, energy policy and planning, and the Fuel NY program.
- The balance of funding from other sources includes federal grants, which are strictly governed by the grant terms and regularly reported on to the awarding federal agency.

For the 2026 fiscal year, the Governor's proposed Executive Budget includes \$1 billion in new funding to support a more sustainable future, the single-largest climate investment in the history of the State budget. This funding will support important climate work including but not limited to decarbonizing and retrofitting buildings, creating and utilizing renewable energy, advancing clean transportation initiatives, building, repairing, and maintaining thermal energy networks, and designing and constructing green infrastructure.

NYSERDA's proposed 18-A funding includes a \$7 million increase, bringing the total to \$35.725 million. This funding will support our continued research and development work and energy planning. We are working across agencies to support the transition to clean energy, ensuring that New York State is attractive for new business and supports clean energy jobs. As an example, the Promote Opportunity with Electric Readiness for Underdeveloped Properties Fund (POWER-UP) program included in the Executive Budget would provide a commitment of \$300 million to fund the proactive development of electric capacity to create power-ready sites across the State.

As we look ahead, building the markets for renewable energy, energy storage, and clean transportation will provide new opportunities to fulfill the promise that investments in clean energy result in more jobs for New Yorkers. NYSERDA is advancing work toward the State's clean energy goals, which culminate in a zero-emission grid by 2040, including efforts to enable self-sustaining supply chains for the energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation sectors. This work includes efforts to support research and development of emerging technologies, helping to develop manufacturing and increase availability of clean energy products, and demonstrating new technology applications to prove their value to customers.

Growing our clean energy economy with family sustaining jobs is a significant benefit of our work. New York now supports more than 178,000 clean energy jobs across the State, with 2023 results showing the most significant year-over-year growth yet. And we stand to see hundreds of thousands of additional new jobs created in the coming years as we continue to advance our state's progress toward a clean energy future. As NYSERDA looks toward its next 50 years, we are thankful for our partnership with the New York State legislature to realize these positive outcomes on behalf of the New Yorkers we serve.

This concludes my opening remarks.