

September 11, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS Capitol Building
Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
President Pro Tempore and Majority Leader
New York State Senate
The Capitol, Room 330
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker
New York State Assembly
Legislative Office Building 932
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Governor Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Speaker Heastie:

We, the undersigned organizations, support the LIPA Commission's mission¹, as directed by the Legislature, and its plan to end the Long Island Power Authority's management contract with PSEG and transition over the next two years to what LIPA was intended to be: a fully public utility, under public control, serving the people of Long Island and the Rockaways.

We call on Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to embrace this endeavor by passing legislation to implement a fully public model for LIPA in the FY 24/25 NYS budget.

In doing so, we will help millions of people, save tens of millions of dollars, improve service, increase reliability, ensure more accountability and transparency, and speed the transition away from fossil fuels, all while maintaining the current unionized workforce.²

A LIPA that is fully responsible for the operation and maintenance of its electric grid would end decades of failure, first under National Grid and then under PSEG, an out-of-state, out-of-touch private corporation which is responsive to its stockholders and which has been dangerously unresponsive to the needs of its customers.

The current hybrid arrangement with PSEG LI, where a private corporation is contracted to manage a public utility, exists nowhere else in the nation. Decades of mismanagement has proven that this experiment has failed.

PSEG charges LIPA \$78 million a year for the services of just 19 PSEG employees, yet PSEG management has brought Long Island high monthly bills, poor performance, egregiously long outages and call wait times, and among the lowest customer satisfaction rates of any utility in the northeast.³

¹ nylipa.gov/

² nylipa.gov/storage/20230417_draft_report.pdf

³ www.jdpower.com/business/press-releases/2022-electric-utility-residential-customer-satisfaction-study

PSEG has been repeatedly called out, investigated, and/or sued for absenteeism, mismanagement, and negligence, including its failed response to Tropical Storm Isaias in 2020, which left thousands of households stranded without power for days on end. Most shamefully, PSEG has lied about its poor performance in a desperate attempt to cover up its failures.

Long Island and the Rockaways can do better with regional management of LIPA, where local communities make decisions instead of being on the receiving end of bad decisions from unaccountable PSEG managers. The switch would mean huge annual savings on management costs, lower rates, and greater public involvement and accountability. It would be an opportunity for those of us who use and pay for the system to have meaningful input into how it is run.

The plan provides for a smooth transition that includes maintaining the jobs, wages, benefits, and pensions of those who do the work of operating and maintaining the system. Many of them have transitioned between different operating service agreements prior to PSEG while preserving the relationship with their union, IBEW Local 1049.

Full public power is in the best interests of the region's ratepayers, communities, workers, and local businesses. We urge Governor Hochul and the NYS Legislature to support the LIPA Commission's plan to make it a fully public power utility and pass the legislation necessary to implement it as soon as possible.

Signed,

Groups based in or working in LIPA Service Territory (Long Island & The Rockaways)

Long Island Progressive Coalition

Ocean Park Tenants Association

Action Long Island

New York Communities for Change

Long Island Metro Business Action

District 1 Youth Advisory Board

Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter

NY Renews Coalition

Make the Road New York

Asian American Institute for Research and Engagement

The Greater Gordon Heights Chamber of Commerce

Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Environmental Justice Working Group

Rockaway Initiative for Sustainability and Equity (RISE)

New Hour for Women and Children LI

Muslims For Progress

Food & Water Watch

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

North Fork Environmental Council

The ReAL Edgemere Community Land Trust

Long Beach Latino Civic Association

S.T.R.O.N.G Youth, Inc.

Gender Equality New York, Inc.
Rockaway Women for Progress
Shinnecock Kelp Farmers
SEPA Mujer, Inc.
Transition Town Port Washington
Montaukett Indian Nation
Environmental Action Coalition
Middle Island Civic Association
Slow Food North Shore
Choice For All
UAW Region 9A
All Our Energy
Pax Christi Long Island
Long Island Activists
Social Justice Committee of the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock
Climate Reality Project, Long Island Chapter
Progressive East End Reformers (PEER)
Suffolk Progressives
ParentChild+Inc.
East End YIMBY
Suffolk County Democratic Socialists of America
South Country Peace Group, Inc.
Rockaway Revolution
Building Bridges Brookhaven
New York Progressive Action Network
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment
Public Issues Committee, LI Council of Churches
Brookhaven Landfill Action and Remediation Group
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action Long Island
Together We Will Long Island
Long Island Network for Change
Elmont Cultural Center
Green Party of Nassau County
Nassau Hiking & Outdoor Club
Nassau County Democratic Socialists of America
Donna's H.O.P.E Inc.
Coram Civic Association
Green Choices Consulting
HEAL Long Island
Green Glen Cove
Party for Socialism & Liberation Long Island
Daughters of Wisdom
iEat Green, LLC
The Ethical Humanist Society of LI

Supportive NYS Organizations (Outside LIPA Service Territory)

Citizen Action of New York
Mothers Out Front
New York City Environmental Justice Alliance
For The Many
PUSH Buffalo
Energy Democracy Alliance
New York Sustainable Business Council
Sunrise Movement NYC
Sane Energy Project
Alliance for a Green Economy
Bronx Climate Justice North
Capital Region Interfaith Creation Care Coalition
West Branch Conservation Association
Save the Pine Bush
Riverdale Park Community Group Sustainability
Western New York Drilling Defense
NYC Democratic Socialists of America
Citizens' Climate Lobby, Brooklyn
Metro Justice
Energy Allies
Jon Pope Construction
350 Brooklyn
New York Interfaith Power & Light
Green Education and Legal Fund
Nuclear Information and Resource Service
Syracuse Democratic Socialists of America
People's Climate Movement - NY
Church Women United in New York State
350 NYC
Rise and Resist
Fossil Free Tompkins
NYCD16 Indivisible
Indivisible Mohawk Valley
Metro New York Catholic Climate Movement
Big Reuse

Cc:

Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado
New York State Senate
New York State Assembly
Executive Energy, Environment, and Economic Development Staff