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News Release

For immediate release

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BROAD COALITION OF 100 GROUPS URGES NYS TO MAKE LIPA A FULLY PUBLIC UTILITY

Supporters of Public Power Rally in Front of PSEG Offices

[Seaford, NY – September 11, 2023] At a rally in front of PSEG Long Island’s Seaford office building today, a broad coalition of groups released a [new sign-on letter](#) urging that outsourcing private management of the Long Island Power Authority to PSEG be ended and replaced with fully public management, as the [LIPA Commission](#) has recommended. A [new round of hearings](#) on the future of LIPA starts tomorrow, September 12.

Switching LIPA to full public power “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 sign-on letter argues. It calls on Governor Hochul and the NYS Legislature to implement the LIPA Commission’s “plan to end the LIPA’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. 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.”

The letter has been signed by [100 diverse groups](#) spanning community organizations, environmental groups, labor unions, businesses, chambers of commerce, Indigenous groups, faith groups, and many others. Several of their leaders spoke at today’s rally, which was organized by [Reimagine LIPA](#), a campaign of the [Long Island Progressive Coalition \(LIPC\)](#).

“Redundant management positions within PSEG and LIPA, as well as profits made by PSEG, amount to \$70 million per year,” said **Guy Jacob, delegate to Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter**. “Simplifying the present convoluted structure and eliminating corporate profits would allow these funds to be applied to a combination of lower rates, greater investment in renewable resources and energy efficiency and improved infrastructure. If we continue along the same failed path, we can reasonably expect the same results. We tried a private company model before LIPA and it too failed. It’s time for bold, insightful change, for our families, for our future.”

“This cobbled-together, failed experiment to create a unique ‘third party’ management system exists only on Long Island, and has cost Long Island ratepayers millions of dollars,” said **former LIPA board member and current Chairman of Action Long Island Sheldon R. Sackstein**. “It’s time for Governor Hochul, the State of New York, and all Long Island’s elected officials to step up on behalf of all Long Islanders, and lower their energy bills through the complete municipalization of the LIPA system.”

"Converting LIPA to a fully public power model directly supports our mission of creating a stronger local economy, ensuring greater participation in local affairs, and keeping dollars in our community," said **Edna White, President of Greater Gordon Heights Chamber of Commerce**. "It would result in an overall positive benefit for our members, with important financial benefits including lower rates, more accountability, and greater local control."

"Our union, a Local of the American Federation of Teachers, supports the roadmap to public power devised by the commission established by the State Legislature. Like public libraries, public schools, colleges, universities, and other public services, a public electrical power agency is open to public monitoring and input," said **John Hyland, retiree member of the Professional Staff Congress**. "Its priority is serving the people, not meeting the demands of Wall Street. Its vision and goal is stable, long-term effectiveness, not corporate quarterly bottom lines."

"The shift to public power is the only logical step toward more transparency and accountability in our power system," said **Farhana Huda Islam of Muslims for Progress**. "It's long overdue. It's about time we end this cumbersome system, return power back to Long Islanders, and lower our energy rates."

"Vulnerable populations such as formerly incarcerated women are consistently underserved by companies like PSEG," said **Serena Martin-Liguori, Executive Director of New Hour**. "Black and brown communities, where our members primarily live, are the last to be served when blackouts or natural disasters occur. It's crucial for our members that power becomes a public utility. Only then will we have the true ability to advocate for our communities and guarantee that access to these crucial services not be dictated by zip code or income bracket."

"Our climate is becoming dangerous for the next generation of New Yorkers," said **Joshua Chan, Chair of the D1 Youth Advisory Board**. "The intense heatwave last week stopped students across the state from playing outside. Weeks ago wildfires covered our air in toxic ash and smoke, hurting our most vulnerable communities. It's obvious that something needs to get done and the push to make the Long Island Power Authority fully public would continue New York's leadership in building a green and renewable future for all."

"We strongly support LIPA going fully public for the public good," said **Joseph Sackman with Long Island Activists**. "From Montauk to Far Rockaway, Long Islanders are facing economic hardships and an affordability crisis that makes living and thriving here harder and harder each year. With more frequent dangerous storms and an already outdated electric grid we can add uncertainty and risk to life and property as well. The right step toward economic stability and safety is transitioning LIPA to a fully public utility that will serve all residents of Long Island first. We will see lower rates, estimated savings between \$50 and \$70 million annually, more accountability on service and reliability, and greater local control."

"A broad, diverse coalition supports public power for LIPA," said **Lisa Tyson, LIPC's Executive Director**. "Everybody in our area knows what it's like to pay sky-high PSEG bills and reckon with the consequences of PSEG mismanagement, which is why such a wide range of groups -- community advocates, business, labor, environmental and climate groups, faith groups, youth groups, and many more -- support public power. Even beyond Long Island, our sign-on letter got signatures from groups in New York City and other parts of the state, because they understand what we're doing here and they want full public management for their regional utilities, too. Public power is a necessary fix for Long Island, and it's also a growing movement for economic and climate justice and community empowerment."

“As a coastal urban peninsula, Rockaway knows all too well the need for reliable, affordable energy that comes from environment-friendly sources. Hurricane Sandy left our peninsula entirely underwater and over 100 homes burned to the ground due to electrical fires. But even without a superstorm, our peninsula regularly sees flooding and power outages,” said **Jenna Tipaldo, President of Rockaway Women for Progress**. “We deserve a utility that can provide us with reliable and affordable energy that is from renewable sources rather than fossil fuels, which are contributing to climate change that will bring more frequent flooding, heatwaves, and more to our area. As LIPA is restructured, it is clear that a public power model gives us as ratepayers an opportunity to get some accountability and for the community to be involved in decision-making. This model can also help New York meet our climate goals while at the same time making sure all New Yorkers regardless of income can have reliable and affordable energy.”

“Our coalition of over 360 organizations across New York State, including 40 on Long Island, understand that unchecked corporate power jeopardizes a sustainable future,” said **Stephan Edel, Coalition Coordinator of NY Renews**. “Our members support democratic and public control of the energy sector to ensure private interests do not compromise the health and well-being of workers and our communities. Making LIPA fully public is in the interest of our members and vital to the transition to a 100% renewable energy economy.”

“The Public Power NY coalition is proud to stand by our partners organizing under the Reimagine LIPA banner as they fight to bring about a democratized and fully public Long Island Power Authority. For too long, LIPA has outsourced responsibility for the grid to private interests, with PSEG merely being the latest entity to place shareholder profits over the best interests of the public they are supposed to serve,” said **Charles Nieves from the Public Power NY Coalition**. “With our first major victory of getting the Build Public Renewables Act passed into law, we look forward to this next crucial victory in the long fight to fully bring about public power!”

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NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: The sign-on letter and signatories are [posted here](#). A recording of today’s rally will be posted shortly on [LIPC’s Instagram](#). Side interviews with speakers and organizers are available on request.