

STATEMENT FROM THE REIMAGINE LIPA CAMPAIGN ON THE NYS LEGISLATURE'S FAILURE TO PASS THE LIPA PUBLIC POWER ACT

As the 2024 New York State legislative session [ended](#), the [LIPA Public Power Act \(A.8894A\)](#), introduced into the NYS Assembly on January 26, 2024, remained bottled up in the Senate. Had it been enacted, it would have implemented the recommendation of the [Commission on the Future of the Long Island Power Authority](#) (LIPA Commission) to convert LIPA management to full public power, managed directly by the LIPA Board and Long Island's ratepayers and communities.

The failure of the Legislature to enact the bill is significant, because LIPA's current contract outsourcing the utility's management to PSEG expires next year. Without the enabling legislation to make the transition to fully public management, when PSEG's current contract is up LIPA will either have to renew it, or outsource its management to another private third party.

Ryan Madden, Climate and Energy Campaigns Director of the [Long Island Progressive Coalition](#), issued the following statement on behalf of the [Reimagine LIPA Campaign](#), a [broad coalition](#) of community organizations, environmental groups, labor unions, businesses, chambers of commerce, Indigenous groups, faith groups, and others who support fully public management of LIPA and who [asked the Governor and the Legislature](#) to enact enabling legislation:

"We need LIPA to fully manage our electric grid and operate it in the *public interest* instead of the private gain of PSEG shareholders. That's why the LIPA Public Power Act had such broad support. But a few politicians in Albany bottled up the bill to prevent it from getting voted on this year. Now they have run out the clock. That's in PSEG's interests, but not the public's."

"Bowling to PSEG lobbyists who lobbied hard against the bill, NYS Senator Kevin Thomas refused to introduce it in the Senate. He was entrusted with co-chairing the LIPA Commission, whose [report](#) found PSEG's performance unacceptable, and found public power to be the superior option. The Commission helped draft the bill, but Senator Thomas chose to scuttle it. That's a win for PSEG's lobbyists and shareholders, but it's a loss for Long Island ratepayers and communities. It puts PSEG's profits ahead of Long Island's and Rockaway's need for better management."

"But it won't ultimately derail the fight for public power, which goes on. Ever since the fiasco with PSEG power outages after Tropical Storm Isaias in 2020, the Reimagine LIPA campaign has worked to let LIPA finally live up to its promise of operating as a publicly owned utility and being fully accountable to its ratepayers. In a few short years, we secured the LIPA Commission, which developed the plan to bring about a fully public LIPA, and we attracted support of over 100 diverse organizations on Long Island and in the Rockaways, and across New York State."

“On the strength of this support, the LIPA Public Power Act was written and introduced in the Assembly. It would have ended the failed third-party private management model plaguing the utility, saved \$80 million each year, brought more local control to the appointment of the Board of Trustees, and established a Community Stakeholder Board so that LIPA management served the needs of Long Island and Rockaways ratepayers instead of selling them out to PSEG shareholders.”

“But the 2024 Legislative session ended without passing the bill, and LIPA is now in a worse place than before Isaias. The Department of Public Service’s latest audit found PSEG is not prepared for the next storm and is incapable of implementing New York’s landmark climate law. Governor Hochul’s failure to support the bill and her recent LIPA trustee appointments not only undermine public power - denying LIPA ratepayers accountability and relief from high electric bills - they also undermine her own stated climate goals.”

“Leaving LIPA’s management in the hands of PSEG is a recipe for more abysmal performance, more sky-high electric bills, and more obfuscation and lies excusing them. It means Long Island and Rockaway ratepayers’ money will go into shareholder dividends instead of storm preparedness, renewable energy, climate action, and resilient communities.”

“That’s unacceptable. So we will continue the campaign to pass the LIPA Public Power Act, to end the failed third-party management model, and achieve a fully public utility for LIPA ratepayers. Reimagine LIPA and Long Island and Rockaway communities are watching closely what our elected officials do next - whether they act to serve the public interest, or PSEG’s.”

“We would like to thank Assembly Member Fred Thiele for his years of tireless commitment and dedication to spearheading this effort for a fully public LIPA. We hope his successor and the rest of the Legislature carry on his legacy of fighting for ratepayers. We also want to acknowledge Senator James Sanders for putting ratepayers’ interests ahead of PSEG’s profits by standing up to advocate that there should be a Senate version of the bill to vote on. He was the lone Democratic Senator from the LIPA service territory to do so.”