



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR  
Darrel J. Aubertine

## Powering New York's Future

DARREL J. AUBERTINE September 21, 2009

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AUTHORITIES AND COMMISSIONS, ENERGY**  
| COMMITTEE: **ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**



### Hearings Bring Businesses & Public to the Table with Lawmakers to Reshape State's Energy and Economic Development Strategy

*Senate and Assembly Lead Public Discussions on the Future Use of Low Cost Power for State Economic Development Programs*

(BUFFALO)—Leaders from New York State's Senate and Assembly Committees overseeing our state's energy policy, its authorities, and our economy, opened discussions today on the future of energy incentive programs that have created and sustained jobs throughout the state.

As part of the Legislature's "Powering New York's Future" initiative, lawmakers have been discussing a long term approach to using low cost power to create and sustain jobs, and are now following through on a promise to take this process to the public through these hearings and roundtables. These committee chairs and colleagues from both houses and both political parties announced the initiative today before holding a roundtable with business leaders. The legislators will conduct the first hearing on the topic Wednesday.

Senators and members of the Assembly will conduct these hearings and hold more roundtable discussions to collect input from businesses, trade groups and the public that will help shape legislation and policy to best use the resources of the New York Power Authority. The goal is to keep hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers employed and provide much needed new jobs.

Senator Darrel J. Aubertine (D-Cape Vincent), Chair of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee said, "Today we are kicking off a statewide conversation about the future of economic development here in New York State and the best way to use low cost power to create and sustain good paying jobs for hard working New Yorkers. When we put together the extension on Power for Jobs, we promised to include business leaders in the discussion and create a long term plan for not only this program, but all economic development tools that use low cost power to preserve and create jobs. We need to build on the success we've had with these programs. The ideas, concerns and opinions we collect will help power New York's future to rebuild our economy."

Assemblyman Kevin Cahill (D-Ulster/Dutchess), Chair of the Assembly Energy Committee said, "Our low cost power programs have been instrumental in helping to create and protect hundreds of thousands of jobs throughout the state. Today marks the beginning of a process aimed at making sure these economic development initiatives continue to afford businesses the stability and continuity they need to make the serious investments necessary to create jobs here in New York. The Assembly is committed to moving ahead with discussions with all stakeholders about creating a viable, attractive long term low cost power program that will help keep our state competitive in the global economy."

Senator William T. Stachowski (D/C-Lake View), Chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Economic Development, and Small Businesses said, "There is enormous potential to save energy and create jobs that will directly stimulate the New York economy. With the input of the state's business community, these hearings will greatly assist our efforts to

continue developing ideas and incentives that will help us meet our energy needs, protect the environment and advance the technologies that will ultimately create many new jobs for New Yorkers.”

Senator Bill Perkins (D-Harlem), Chair of the Senate Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions said, “The Legislators’ “Powering New York’s Future” initiative is a vital part of the State’s Economic Stability program to create cost efficient energy sources and a workforce to manage them. It is only through the public participation process that we, the elected, are informed of the needs and concerns of the state’s residents.”

Assemblyman Richard Brodsky (D-Westchester), Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions said, “The needs of Western New York are an important factor as we look to solve New York's energy problems and promote real, meaningful economic development.”

Andrew J. Rudnick, president and CEO of the Buffalo Niagara Partnership said, “Low-cost power is a critical tool in the state’s economic development toolbox, but New York lacks a comprehensive energy policy that deals with issues such as production, delivery, reliability, cost and the regulatory environment in an integrated fashion. We appreciate the Senate and Assembly Energy Chairs joining with members of the WNY state delegation to hear directly from businesses about the state's energy programs—and how they can be improved to retain and yield more private sector investment in New York.”

The Senate and Assembly lawmakers met with the media at 3 p.m. today at the Buffalo-Niagara Partnership, 665 Main St., Suite 200, Buffalo, to discuss the hearings and emphasize their commitment to bringing businesses to the table in reshaping these economic development programs. The lawmakers then held a small roundtable discussion with local business leaders. The first hearing will be held 10 a.m. Wednesday in the Niagara Falls Town Hall, Room 116, 745 Main St.

Led by the Energy Committees in each house, lawmakers will hold a series of hearings and roundtable discussions across the state. These events are intended to better target and deliver program benefits, while examining the New York Power Authority’s (NYPA) stewardship of these vital economic development programs.

The legislators will listen to business leaders, including from companies in the programs and others not receiving benefits at this time, trade groups, advocates and the general public to better understand the value of these programs and consider new ideas to improve and reform these programs to retain existing jobs, attract new investment from new employers, and build new careers in New York. Input received in the hearings will be used along with legislative analysis of NYPA's performance, to craft a new long term low-cost power economic development program.

"It is important to include business leaders in roundtable discussions and public hearings. The result will only be positive- helping them expand and bring more jobs to this region in a time of economic uncertainty. Holding collective meetings like this is an important, proactive measure that will assist in keeping New York competitive in the global economy," said Assemblymember Dennis Gabryszak (D-Cheektowaga)

"The 'Powering New York's Future' initiative is helping New York become more energy- and cost-efficient by providing a platform for experts and legislators to explore low-cost power opportunities that benefit both our environment and our struggling economy," said Assemblywoman Francine DelMonte (D-Lewiston). "Developing clean, low-cost, energy-efficient power will make the cost of doing business more affordable for local businesses and help create much-needed jobs throughout the Niagara region."

"Manufacturers originally came to Niagara Falls for access to the Niagara River and the power it generates," DelMonte said. "We need to maintain access to vital power to existing industries and develop programs and policies that directs resources for economic development and job retention."

"The Power for Jobs/Economic Power programs are important tools that provide manufacturers with low-cost power, which makes them more competitive and helps retain and create good-paying jobs. To show that the state is committed to strengthening its manufacturing industries and job creation, the Legislature needs to reform these vital programs, making them permanent and allowing for long-term commitments of low cost power. This will give businesses a definitive time frame for receiving this important assistance and will help provide them with better ability to plan and implement capital improvements to ensure the long-term viability of manufacturing in New York State," Assemblyman Tom O'Mara (R,I,C-Big Flats).

“With the input we collect, we will be able to better suit these programs to attract vital new industries and retain jobs both Upstate and throughout New York’s communities,” Senator Aubertine concluded. “Businesses need the certainty of a long term solution and we intend to provide that peace of mind along with an open process where we will hear all points of view and power our state’s economic future.”