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**Testimony of New York State Senator Brad Hoylman
to the New York State Public Service Commission
Regarding the Reforming the Energy Vision Proceeding**

October 27, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) regarding the Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) initiative. I am the State Senator representing New York's 27th Senate District, which includes the neighborhoods of Clinton/Hell's Kitchen, Chelsea, Times Square, Greenwich Village, Midtown/East Midtown, the East Village, Columbus Circle, the Lower East Side, and the Upper West Side. I also serve as the ranking member of the New York State Senate Environmental Conservation Committee.

The REV initiative establishes an important set of goals for moving New York State away from environmental harms caused by nonrenewable energy sources and towards cleaner and more affordable energy alternatives. REV establishes new public utility models and market mechanisms that enable investments in clean energy solutions. These investments will reduce negative impacts on human and environmental health while also promoting the development of clean energy businesses and jobs in New York State. I commend the PSC for its dedication to this important process.

REV underscores the need for a codified Climate Action Plan in New York State. New York adopted a Climate Action Plan during the Paterson administration that sets forth a goal of reducing our state's fossil fuel use 80% by the year 2050, targeted to 1990 levels. Unfortunately, there is no legal backing to ensure the plan is implemented, thus making it susceptible to inaction and changes in future administrations. Other states have codified their state Climate Action Plans into law. California, for example, has surged ahead of New York in its clean energy achievements, and in light of extraordinary progress has actually amended its clean energy goals to be more aggressive. A codified Climate Action Plan will give us a clear and achievable road map towards our

environmental and energy goals, with the necessary benchmarks, enforcement mechanisms, and accountability to understand whether or not we are on track to meet our goals.

The Climate Action Plan's commitments were further bolstered by the "Under 2 MOU" that Governor Cuomo recently signed, reaffirming New York State's pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 40% by 2030 and 80% by 2050. Such targets encourage New York to work towards addressing both the causes and the devastating impacts of global climate change.

The REV initiative speaks to the important role that the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) has played in decreasing harmful fossil fuel emissions. Working with our neighboring states, New York has helped build the nation's first successful carbon trading market. As noted in the 2015 State Energy Plan, RGGI has resulted in significant reductions to pollution levels, created thousands of jobs across the state, and saved tens of millions of dollars in utility costs for New York families. New York should build on that success by ensuring that funding derived from RGGI is consistently reinvested in the program and not diverted from its intended purpose. Reinvesting these funds further decreases the costs of energy for families, creates more clean energy resources, more clean energy businesses, and more clean energy jobs in New York State.

As we build our capacity to generate clean energy, it is equally vital that we shift away from "dirty" sources of energy. Investing in nonrenewable energy sources such as coal, oil, and gas present communities with significant health and environmental risks and is counterproductive to the gains made through initiatives like RGGI. Weighing the comparative costs and benefits presented by potential energy investments is an important process. While direct financial costs are an important factor to consider in making such determinations, they should not be the only factor considered. Short-term financial savings should not foreclose long-term financial, environmental and human health benefits. Only taking into account the direct costs of building infrastructure for non-renewable energy sources, relative to those for renewables like solar, hydroelectric, and wind, is a short-sighted strategy that neglects burdens placed on our more vulnerable communities.

In making the economically and environmentally prudent decision to invest in renewable energy sources, it is essential that New York State emphasize the important role that shared renewables can play. Unfortunately, not all New Yorkers are able to easily access renewable energy. Encouraging the growth of shared renewables will mean that regardless of where New Yorkers live, how much money they make, or whether or not they own a home, they are able to benefit from clean and affordable energy.

I thank you for your consideration of my comments, and I look forward to working with the Cuomo administration and my colleagues in the State Legislature to make New York a leader in spurring clean energy innovation and improving consumer choice and affordability.