

## 2015 Update from the New York State Assembly

# ENERGY COMMITTEE

Carl E. Heastie, Speaker • Amy Paulin, Chair

### Message from the Chair



Dear Friend,

As Chair of the Assembly Standing Committee on Energy, I am eager to share with you an overview of the committee's activities during the 2015 Legislative session. This newsletter will provide a summary of various issues important to ratepayers. Additionally, this newsletter will include energy saving tips for homeowners.

This session, the committee advanced several bills that passed on the Assembly floor, some of which passed the Senate and are awaiting approval from the Governor. For the second year in a row, the committee advanced legislation that would authorize customers to subscribe to large solar and wind facilities in order to receive credit against their monthly electric usage (A.107-A/Paulin). This legislation was intended to assist ratepayers who cannot install these technologies on their property. The Public Service Commission (PSC) has pursued this idea, and established a statewide shared renewables program, as further explained in this newsletter. The committee also reported legislation, recently signed by the Governor, that would require the Public Service Commission (PSC) to post on its website all requests for proposals by utilities for the procurement of electricity, capacity, transmission and ancillary services. This will increase the availability of information related to solicitations for third party vendors (Ch. 398).

Currently, New York State is at an energy cross road. The most recent State Energy Plan envisions a bold goal of producing fifty percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030. To achieve this ambitious plan, the PSC has instituted several proceedings, including the Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) proceeding, which are discussed in this newsletter. In September 2015, the committee held a hearing to examine the key component of the proposal, which would incentivize utility scale renewable energy. As REV and other proceedings progress, the committee will be an active participant in discussions with various stakeholders to ensure a best outcome for ratepayers and renewable energy concerns.

I look forward to sharing more legislative updates with you in the coming months as the Assembly convenes for the 2016 legislative session.

Sincerely,

Amy R. Paulin  
Chair, Committee on Energy

## Reduce heat loss in your home this winter

Before winter arrives, take some time to check your home for drafts and air leaks that cause heat loss. These simple steps from the U.S. Department of Energy will help you save energy:

- Use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames during the cold winter months.
- Install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades on windows that feel drafty.
- Seal the air leaks around utility cut-throughs for pipes, gaps around chimneys and recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.
- Add caulk or weatherstripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.



Visit: <http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/fall-and-winter-energy-saving-tips> for more information and tips.

## National Gas Policy Institute

Over the summer, Assemblywoman Paulin attended the National Gas Policy Institute, a conference held by the National Conference of State Legislators. The conference, held in Pittsburgh, included a tour of a combined heat and power (CHP) operation at Duquesne University as well as a visit to Braskem America's Technology and Innovation Center, which makes components used in various plastic products.



# What is REV?

In April 2014, following the release of Governor Cuomo's plan to fundamentally transform the electric grid in New York State, the Public Service Commission (PSC) initiated the Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) proceeding. The stated goal of this proceeding is to create a cleaner, more efficient and affordable energy system that can meet the demands of New York's changing energy landscape. The proceeding consists of two tracks. Track One, which is currently underway, examines the role of utilities in enabling deployment of energy resources in order to promote load management and create greater efficiency for the system. Track Two, at a later time, will examine changes to current designs and incentive structures to better align the interests of the energy industry with those of the PSC. The PSC has opened many cases under REV to examine and address every piece of the generation and distribution process, from increasing the use of renewable energy sources and upgrading transmission, to promoting energy efficiency and providing the infrastructure for the inclusion of microgrids.

## Community Choice Aggregation (Case No. 14-M-0224):

The committee previously advanced legislation to create a pilot program for municipalities in Westchester County to set up municipal energy aggregation programs. Municipal energy aggregation programs allow municipalities to pool together a large number of residents and solicit bids from energy service companies on the residents' behalf. This allows the municipality, or group of municipalities, to obtain the best prices for residents and purchase energy from alternative energy sources. Last year, the legislation passed both houses.

Spurred on by the work of the Legislature, and recognizing the benefit that a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program

could be to the state, the PSC, in February of this year, granted an order authorizing Westchester County to set up the first CCA pilot program. The approval of this project is related to the PSC's ongoing proceeding to consider implementation of CCA throughout the state. The pilot program is currently being developed by Sustainable Westchester.

## Shared Renewables (Case No. 15-E-0082):

The committee reported legislation this year to enable customers who cannot install renewable energy systems on their property due to physical limitations or their status as renters to share in a solar and wind energy facility and receive benefits on their utility bill. The customers would receive a portion of the benefit from a shared renewable energy facility, which would lead to a reduction in their utility prices.

The PSC, through the REV proceeding, opened its own case to authorize a Shared Renewables Program (also known as Community Net Metering). In July, the PSC issued an order creating the framework for the program. A group of customers would be able to join together into a membership that would associate as, or contract with, a business, not-for-profit, or governmental entity. That entity becomes the project sponsor, and would be responsible for building a generation facility, interconnecting it to the grid, and then owning or operating it.

The PSC is currently holding collaborative meetings to investigate and evaluate low-income customer participation in this program.



Assemblywoman Amy Paulin in Northern Ireland at AES with fellow Assembly member Brian Kavanagh to learn about the country's new battery storage project.



# Save money during the holidays by switching to LED lights

Switching to LED holiday lights is a great way to save money on your electricity bill during the holiday season. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), LEDs consume far less electricity than incandescent bulbs and are also safer, sturdier, longer lasting, and easier to install. The DOE estimates that the cost of electricity to light a six-foot tree for 12 hours a day for 40 days is \$10.00 with incandescent C-9 lights compared to \$0.27 for LED C-9 lights; or \$2.74 with incandescent mini-lights compared to \$0.82 with LED mini lights. For more information on LED lighting visit: <http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/led-lighting>.



To update or remove your name from the committee mailing list, email [committeemailinglist@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:committeemailinglist@assembly.state.ny.us). Please include the committee name in the subject line and provide the name and address as it appears on the mailing label and any changes you would like made.

## 2015 Update from the New York State Assembly



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### Energy Committee Hearing: The Future of Ratepayer Funded Renewable Energy Development Programs in New York



On September 16, 2015, the committee held a public hearing on, “The Future of Ratepayer Funded Renewable Energy Development Programs in New York.” Topics discussed at the hearing were: the overall performance of the Renewable Portfolio Standard program in developing renewable energy, the role of investor-owned utilities and public power authorities in procuring renewable energy, the establishment of realistic and attainable goals for statewide renewable energy capacity, and the future of Green Jobs Green New York under the Clean Energy Fund. The transcript and video of the hearing is available here: <http://assembly.state.ny.us/av/hearings/>