

What's REV And Why Does It Matter?

When we think of electricity, we often think about flipping on the lights, powering our refrigerator, or paying our utility bill. We don't often think about the way electricity gets into our homes or who ends up with our energy dollars. Yet, how our electricity is generated and distributed and who owns this energy production and distribution matters. Production through dirty means, such as oil, coal, natural gas, and nuclear lead to environmental disaster and a disproportionate impact of air pollution and health hazards in low-income communities and communities of color. Meanwhile, centralized ownership of our energy system takes resources out of our communities and leaves us with little power to change the status quo.

What is REV?

Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) is a process initiated by the New York Public Service Commission (PSC), which is the state agency that regulates the utility companies in New York. REV seeks to speed up the transition to energy efficiency and renewables by overhauling the regulations that govern utility companies and designing new energy markets. The PSC says that REV will give consumers more control over their energy use and engage them as energy producers. By promoting efficiency and **distributed energy**, REV also seeks to avoid billions of dollars in investments to repair or replace our aging energy infrastructure.

- **Distributed energy** refers to small scale energy sources like rooftop solar, residential wind, battery storage, combined heat and power, energy efficiency, demand response, and other decentralized energy resources. A decentralized system based on these resources can be more efficient and resilient (meaning it can better withstand or recover from extreme weather events and outages).



Why does REV Matter?

REV is an opportunity to fight for **ENERGY DEMOCRACY**, so that residents and communities can be full participants in a clean energy future, from owning renewable energy projects, controlling how we distribute energy, or gaining the power to make decisions about how energy investments are made in our neighborhoods.

However, the development of REV has been highly influenced by New York's investor-owned utility companies (like National Grid, ConEdison, RG&E, etc). As a result, **the PSC is poised to hand the design of and responsibilities for our renewable energy and energy efficiency programs over to the for-profit investor-owned utilities.** Also of concern is that as the state moves toward a market-oriented approach to promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy, the PSC is proposing to phase out subsidies for clean energy over the next 10 years.

This is why we must reclaim the energy vision and make our voices heard in the REV process. Attend a hearing near you, or submit written comments to the PSC.

For more information and to get involved, visit www.allianceforagreenecconomy.org/REV.



Talking Points – Reclaim the Energy Vision

Investor-owned utilities should not dominate the process or the system

- The PSC should not hand control over new energy markets to large investor-owned utilities that have little or no public accountability. Instead, energy planning, REV market development, and implementation of clean energy programs should be directed by a publicly accountable institution.
- Community organizations must have a strong role in educating customers and helping them navigate energy efficiency and renewable energy programs because they have the public trust, will protect and advocate for the public interest, and are experts in community education, outreach and moving people to act.

Every New Yorker should have access to the benefits of clean energy

- REV should prioritize community owned and shared efficiency and renewable projects so that we can gain collective control over our energy choices, ensure local jobs, and keep energy dollars in our own communities.
- Access to weatherization and energy saving lights and appliance as well as pathways to clean energy ownership must be open to all New Yorkers. Access should not be based on home-ownership, credit scores, wealth, income, tax credits, or anything that disproportionately excludes low-income people, people of color, women and other oppressed groups.
- The transition to an efficient renewable energy system should be equitable and just. REV markets and state-sponsored clean energy programs should be designed to deliver job creation, cost savings and health improvements to individuals and communities that are most in need of these benefits. Our new energy policies must reverse energy insecurity in low-income communities and address the pollution that disproportionately burdens communities of color.

New York must set and meet ambitious goals for greenhouse gas reductions

- The REV proceeding must include strong greenhouse-gas reduction targets, based on the latest climate science, with short- and medium-term benchmarks and accountability measures to ensure they are met.
- Government support and subsidies for renewable energy should not be phased out unless or until the REV's market approach proves it can meet the state climate goals.

There is a need for regulation and consumer protections

- Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) and other market actors must be heavily regulated to protect consumers from deceptive marketing practices and predatory lending, and the PSC must set up a well-funded office to receive and follow up on consumer complaints.
- REV should guarantee affordable access to a basic level of energy necessary to provide for a comfortable and healthy living space.
- Public interest organizations and public advocates should be funded to intervene in PSC rate-cases and proceedings to protect consumers and the environment.

For a schedule of public hearings or to submit a written comment, visit

www.allianceforagreenecconomy.org/rev

