**Public Hearing Statement**

**Ken Kujawa**

**Chief Clean Energy Development Officer**

**National Grid**

Good afternoon, my name is Ken Kujawa and I am the Regional Director of Customer and Community Management for Western New York, here on behalf of National Grid to tell you ***There Is A Better Way.***

Solving climate change requires sweeping emissions reductions across all sectors – and National Grid is here to do our part – in fact, last week, National Grid launched our vision to eliminate fossil fuels from our US gas and electric systems to reach our shared greenhouse gas reduction goals in the CLCPA.

As you may know National Grid in Western New York is an electric utility. There is an important and critical role for electrification in a net zero future. There is also a critical role for weatherization and energy efficiency, through which we can dramatically reduce the amount of energy needed to power our society. We are also focusing on targeted electrification and networked geothermal. Efficient and coordinated electrification will be an essential piece of the clean energy future, however those tools alone cannot achieve the goals. The third critical element is a 100% fossil-free gas network to deliver clean energy in the form of renewable natural gas and green hydrogen. This approach is more affordable and more reliable than the scenarios that the Draft Scoping plan currently considers. Our approach will not only achieve a net zero energy future and the CLCPA climate goals, but will also provide more affordable clean energy choices so no customer is forced into a solution they don’t choose or can’t afford, and no community is left behind in the clean energy transition.

However, reliability, affordability and optimization are all issues that must be addressed in this process, and currently are not properly accounted for in the Draft Scoping Plan. It should be noted that the New York Independent System Operator raised concerns about the recommendation from the Power Generation Advisory Panel regarding elimination of natural gas/oil-fueled generation facilities. We believe that the NYS Reliability Council and NYISO reliability planning process must be included in the analysis of T&D system reliability for the state.

For variable renewable electricity to be reliable, it must be backed up with flexible emissions-free generation and/or long-duration storage. This draft Scoping Plan acknowledges that it is not known which technologies will be prevalent in 2040, and they do not exist today.

Currently NYS has a summer-peaking electric system, and building an electric network to meet a new winter peak load is ***not*** cost-effective. A better approach is **leveraging existing networks –** to deliver no- and low-carbon fuels to steady generation units that will be able to back up variable output from renewables, resulting in cost-effective reliable electric supply.  A **coordinated gas and electric** decarbonization strategy is a **better way to manage the costs and feasibility risks of the State’s plan.**

**We also call on the Council to consider a pathway that utilizes our existing energy networks and addresses the reliability issues raised by us and others.**

Thank you.

###