



Mario Cilento
President

Terrence L. Melvin
Secretary-Treasurer

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
Climate Action Council

Draft Scoping Plan Comment of:

New York State AFL-CIO

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The maintenance and creation of good union jobs must be a primary goal of the State's climate action initiatives. Therefore, we strongly support aspects of the Draft Scoping Plan that prioritize workers' rights. However, the Climate Action Council must do more.

The Draft Scoping Plan must be amended to ensure that newly-created jobs are good union jobs; minimize job loss; and ensure that any worker who loses their job because of steps taken to combat climate change is promptly, if not immediately, reemployed at the same rate of pay or greater and with the same, or better, benefits.

As part of the transition, we must ensure that workers' organizing rights are protected. Workers who have chosen a union must keep that union and workers in newly created positions must have the most robust organizing rights and protections we can confer.

These commitments to workers must be included in the Scoping Plan in the most concrete, enforceable terms possible, such as job protections; labor peace agreements; civil service protections; project labor agreements; and Buy New York, and Buy American requirements.

Additionally, the Scoping Plan must ensure a skilled and productive workforce by prioritizing apprenticeships and training; and by identifying revenue streams to fund apprenticeship and training programs.

Further, the Climate Action Council must limit impacts on other industries including manufacturing, smelting, restaurants, and hospitality. The Climate Action Council must also take steps to prevent importation of energy from outside New York, such as eliminating arbitrary dates for closing generation facilities. Facilities must not be shuttered until objective criteria, including reemployment of current workers, are met. Similarly, the plan must anticipate and lessen the impact on municipalities that rely on property tax payments from any facility closed as a result of climate change mitigation efforts.

50 Broadway, 35th Fl.
New York, NY 10004
(212) 777-6040
Fax (212) 777-8422

100 South Swan Street
Albany, NY 12210
(518) 436-8516
Fax (518) 436-8470

www.nysaflcio.org



Finally, we must ensure energy reliability and affordability for all. To do so, arbitrary closure dates as described above must be avoided and all options for reducing emissions must be embraced, including green hydrogen and bio-fuels.

As always, we remain eager to work with NYSERDA and the Climate Action Council to ensure that successful renewable energy development in New York prioritizes creation of good union jobs.

Thank you.

The New York State AFL-CIO is a federation of 3,000 unions, representing 2.5 million members, retirees, and their families, with one goal: to raise the standard of living and quality of life of all working people. We keep New York State Union Strong by fighting for better wages, better benefits and better working conditions. For more information on the Union Movement in New York, visit www.nysaflcio.org.

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