



Honorable Jaclyn A. Brillling, Secretary
New York State Public Service Commission
Three Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12223-1350

August 9, 2006

Case 06-E-0894—Order Instituting Proceeding and Directing Staff Investigation

The recent power outage in Queens has caused millions of dollars in economic and personal losses and underscores the urgency for developing energy-efficient homes as well as an overhaul of Con Edison's distribution system. Because of its direct control over Con Edison's rates, the Public Service Commission is in a unique position to demand that Con Edison dedicate their efforts to updating their distribution system and expanding their support for energy efficiency programs. This crisis highlights the need for New Yorkers to take stock of our current energy situation. We face a fundamental challenge to guarantee reliable electricity to our homes and businesses. As a city we must collectively address this problem by taking full advantage of innovations in renewable energy.

Over the past 10 years, the population of Queens has surged by 14.2%, making it the second fastest growing county in the state. This underscores the urgency for thinking about ways to reduce our need for traditional energy sources as well as utilizing the potential of high performance buildings to create a generation of high-skilled good jobs in the building construction, electrical, and operating trades if linked to a comprehensive worker training, re-training, and education strategy. Residents

increasingly demand air conditioners, dish washers, and other amenities, yet do not want power plants sitting in their back yards. By providing subsidies for energy efficient air conditioners and buildings and linking distributive sources of energy both on and off the grid to homes, schools, and businesses (among other sites), for instance, would reduce the need for new power plants but would also create new highly skilled jobs, resulting in net gain employment not net loss. Such an approach would create the opportunity to revitalize New York City's industrial sectors if we can locally design and produce the products that support the high-performance building market.

According to the NYC Energy Policy Task Force, our city will need 3,780 additional megawatts of capacity by 2012, which translates roughly to the energy found in five large power plants. Where will the City find these thousands of megawatts to keep lights burning and computers working? Energy policy can not continue to be addressed by spending billions of dollars to support an inefficient system. Rather, energy-demand reduction strategies and alternative energy development coupled with improvements in our existing infrastructure can be linked to a comprehensive strategy for job creation and environmental health and prosperity. Doing so is good for our economy, security, health, and environment.

High performance buildings must become the new norm because they are an important part of a larger strategy for a strong economy and healthy city. They create a new energy paradigm that creates jobs and revolutionizes how our city is powered. Healthy and high performance buildings also improve student performance, worker productivity, and the overall health of the city, and they will help ensure that New York maintains its status as the world's preeminent global city. Besides, as we learned during the northeast blackout in 2003, we need to promote energy efficiency if we're going to continue relying heavily on networks, internet, refrigeration, communications, electric cash registers, electronic security systems, and neon lights that operate day and night. This is all the more reason to do

the right thing for New York City's economy, environment, neighborhoods, workers, and health. The Public Service Commission should view this summer's energy crisis as a catalyst for future collaboration with policy makers, community residents, organizations and local politicians to think of innovative and sustainable ways to address energy consumption and conservation in our great City.

NYC Apollo Alliance has taken the lead in implementing an energy vision for our City that is far-sighted, equitable, sustainable, and growth-oriented. A diverse coalition of labor leaders, environmentalists, businesses, and civil rights activists are spearheading Apollo's national call for serious investments in clean energy and good jobs, while grassroots coalitions are organizing to enact legislation, galvanize public support, and affect change.

About NYC Apollo

NYC Apollo (www.nycapollo.org), Urban Agenda's key initiative which brings together labor unions, environmental justice advocates, businesses, environmentalists, community organizations, and educators to transform the way New York City is powered in order to create jobs, improve health and productivity, promote equity, and ensure that New York City maintains its status as a leading global city. By combining communications, education, research, and advocacy NYC Apollo demonstrates that a socially just, environmentally balanced, and economically prosperous future is attainable. Urban Agenda conducts strategic and timely research and convenes coalitions to foster a shared agenda among disparate stakeholders in order to more to promote social and environmental justice in New York City.