



Direct testimony by Kim Fraczek, Director, Sane Energy Project
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Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:00 AM Senate Hearing Room, 19th Fl 250 Broadway New York, NY 10007

RE: To conduct oversight of the Public Service Commission's processes related to rate case and generic proceedings, and to review the Department of Public Service's efforts to implement and achieve the goals of Climate Leadership and Community

Good morning, Senators Comrie and Parker, and members of the Committees,

My name is Kim Fraczek, and I am the Director of Sane Energy Project, representing over 18,500 New Yorkers who have spent the past 15 years working to halt fossil fuels and transition our economy to an affordable, sustainable, and renewable energy future. We have participated in dozens of proceedings at the Public Service Commission, from rate cases to long-term gas planning, energy efficiency, and gas safety investigations.

I am here to raise serious concerns about the PSC's oversight of New York's utilities, using National Grid's Long-Term Gas Plan and the proposed Northeast Supply Expansion, or NESE, pipeline as a stark example.

The PSC is our utility watchdog, tasked with ensuring safe, reliable service at just and reasonable rates, while advancing the state's clean energy goals under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

Yet, on September 18, 2025, the PSC fast-tracked approval of National Grid's plan just eight business days after the close of public comments. Over 10,000 New Yorkers submitted input, yet only 3,700 were acknowledged. Expert testimony and reports, including from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, were ignored. The decision was rushed, politically influenced, and detached from evidence because the Federal Administration aims to push a pipeline through the NY Harbor that we have denied three times already, and it appears the Governor may bend to this authoritarian push rather than take a stand. We need a STRONG PSC that will give her the support to stand up to this threat, not cower to a UK-based utility corporation that is capitalizing on our lives.

Sane Energy engaged deeply in this process. We hosted a Technical Conference for the Commission, its staff, and the utility to discuss Thermal Energy Networks, as implemented successfully in Massachusetts. We also raised funds to hire a gas systems operator with 35 years of experience to help analyze National Grid's requests and draft testimony. Meanwhile, New Yorkers collectively paid \$1.2 million to the Department of Public Service's independent consultant, PA Consulting, and that work, too, was disregarded.

The NESE pipeline, proposed by Williams, would run from Pennsylvania into New York, directly impacting front-line communities like the Rockaway Peninsula, which rely on a strong Blue Economy of fishing and recreation. The PSC justifies the pipeline by citing Winter Storm Elliott in 2022, but the storm's gas supply failures were mechanical, not demand-driven. Equipment froze in the Marcellus and Utica shale regions, cutting production by over six billion cubic feet per day. Adding another pipeline will not solve this vulnerability. Extreme weather will create competition for gas across states, pushing prices higher rather than improving reliability.

Texas offers a better model. After Winter Storm Uri in 2021, Texas winterized its gas infrastructure and diversified its power supply with wind and solar. During Winter Storm Elliott in 2022, despite record cold, Texas maintained grid stability. New York could achieve similar resilience through weatherization and electrification, rather than doubling down on fossil fuels.

National Grid's plan also aims to convert more homes from oil to gas heat, expanding dependency on fossil fuels, locking in emissions, and undermining CLCPA goals. The PSC minimized costs and failed to analyze potential escalation, leaving ratepayers exposed to billions in unnecessary expenses. The decision treats the NESE pipeline as an "iterative" solution, but pipelines are permanent infrastructure, once built, they cannot be easily reversed.

This is not just about NESE. It reflects broader structural problems: political considerations overshadow evidence, public participation is limited, and transparency is weak. Ratepayers cannot trust that the PSC's decisions are based on technical merit, cost-effectiveness, or alignment with New York's clean energy and equity objectives.

Strong legislative oversight is needed. The PSC must fully consider expert analysis and public input, align utility planning with CLCPA mandates, and strengthen transparency and accountability. Without this oversight, New Yorkers face higher costs, compromised safety, and delayed climate action.

Our utilities are a public good, we cannot allow corporations to gamble with our health, safety, and democracy. The PSC must be held accountable, and the Legislature has a critical role in ensuring it serves the public interest.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "K. H. Fugate", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.