



442 Lorimer St. Ste D, PMB 116, Brooklyn, NY 11206
saneenergy.org 646-387-3180

Jan 28, 2026

Sane Energy Project – Legislative Budget Hearing Testimony
Energy and Environmental Conservation Hearing, January 28, 2026

Dear Chairpersons and members of the committee,

I want to start with a personal story that gets to the heart of why this moment matters. Because of our sustained community advocacy in the Long Term Gas Plan proceeding at the Lubic Service Commission, National Grid was required to come before my local Brooklyn Community Board on January 15, 2026. They arrived with a polished presentation, claiming they have “four pillars” of decarbonization and active marketing around non-pipeline alternatives. It sounded impressive until residents who are deeply engaged in this work began asking basic questions. When asked what those non-pipeline alternatives actually amounted to—things like heat pumps, insulation, and demand management—National Grid admitted its primary action was simply referring customers to Con Edison, the local electric utility. When a community board member asked how that referral constituted marketing or a decarbonization strategy, the answer was: “When customers call our call center.” A referral is National Grid’s four-pillar plan?

Without advocates in the room who knew the details, National Grid would have walked away having looked serious, responsible, and climate-forward. But the truth was a lot of pomp and circumstance covering up a nothing burger—an illusion of action that protects a gas-only business model fundamentally at odds with our climate law. That same dynamic is playing out at the state level in the Governor’s Executive Budget, and it is exactly why the Legislature must step up and lead.

This is the reality we see across the state: utilities whose very business models are at odds with the law, and a Governor who signals compliance with climate targets while prioritizing corporate profit over the needs of everyday New Yorkers. What New Yorkers need is creative and brave leadership, not gestures to please lobbyists and billionaires. That means making sure the richest corporations pay their fair share and investing in programs that improve labor conditions, public health, and household affordability.

Governor Hochul’s FY27 budget fails to rise to that moment. It continues to subsidize dangerous, expensive nuclear projects, while offering only minimal funding for building decarbonization. It relies on private monopoly utilities to “solve” climate and affordability issues, leaving New Yorkers with higher bills and fewer options. Sane Energy Project calls on the legislature to lead where the Governor does not. Specifically, we urge:

Full funding and implementation of the Sustainable Future Program to advance publicly owned renewable energy, lower utility bills, and meet legally mandated climate targets.



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Investment in non-pipeline alternatives and distributed energy resources in New York City and downstate, to reduce reliance on fossil gas, protect public health, and reverse environmental injustice.

A budget and oversight structure that holds utilities accountable for meeting greenhouse gas reduction targets and delivering benefits to historically overburdened communities.

As you consider your budget plans, we urge you to ask agency heads these key questions to ensure New Yorkers, not private profit, come first:

Buildout and Affordability:

- The Build Public Renewables Act, passed in 2023, promised lower utility bills through public renewable projects. Three years later, no projects have broken ground. How will NYPA accelerate project rollout to deliver on this promise?
- Why has NYPA restricted its renewable energy ambitions, despite its strong credit rating and the ability to borrow more to fund projects that reduce rates and emissions?

Democracy and Transparency:

- Over 10,000 public comments demanded 15 GW of public renewables, yet NYPA cut its plan to 5.5 GW. Will the authority revise its plan to reflect the public demand?
- Would NYPA support expanding its Board of Trustees to include labor representation and experts in community renewables, building electrification, and public finance?

NYC Gas Buildout and Public Health:

- The State Energy Plan calls for 3 GW of new or repowered gas generation in New York City. Why impose this burden on residents when renewable energy and battery storage could meet demand while lowering utility bills and improving public health?
- How will agency planning ensure that distributed energy resources replace peaker plants, reducing both emissions and costs for overburdened communities?

Budget and Program Funding:



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- FY27 budget proposals include no funding for public renewable development. Will the legislature restore and expand the Sustainable Future Fund to ensure these projects move forward?
- EmPower+ and other energy efficiency programs have been successful but are inconsistent in funding. What steps will NYSERDA take to sustain and grow these programs annually, particularly for low- and moderate-income households?
- Why aren't energy efficiency programs covering retrofit readiness investments like roof repairs, electrical upgrades, and lead/mold mitigation—barriers that prevent many families from benefiting from clean energy incentives?
- New Yorkers cannot wait. Rising energy costs, climate disasters, and public health impacts demand urgent, accountable, and public-first solutions. The legislature has the power to direct the FY27 budget toward these outcomes. We urge you to act decisively to prioritize New Yorkers over corporate profit, accelerate public renewable energy, and ensure the climate, affordability, and equity commitments of our laws are met.

Thank you,

Kim Fraczek,
Director
kim@saneenergy.org

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Kim Fraczek". The signature is stylized and includes a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Michael Paulson
Associate Director
michael@saneenergy.org

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Paulson". The signature is a simple, fluid cursive script.