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GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

GOVERNOR HOCHUL ANNOUNCES NEW TRANSMISSION LINE TO DELIVER CLEAN ENERGY IN QUEENS

Energization of the Rainey-to-Corona Transmission Line Allows for Retirement of Dirty Peaker Power Plants in Queens

Reduces Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Pollution

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced that the new Con Edison Rainey to Corona transmission line has been energized and will support continued grid reliability, including the May 1 closure of an Astoria fossil fuel-fired power plant owned by NRG Energy. The six-mile transmission line from the Rainey 345 kV substation to a 138 kV substation in Astoria can carry 300 megawatts, or enough electricity for 240,000 average-sized homes. The closure of the plant will reduce carbon emissions and co-pollutants and move the state closer to meeting the goals in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

"As we continue our efforts to combat climate change, upgrading New York's transmission system to deliver clean energy across the state is a top priority," **Governor Hochul said.** "With this critical new transmission line, we are enhancing and upgrading New York City's electric grid and enabling the continued development of renewable energy."

The \$275 million transmission line is one of three that Con Edison began building in 2021 to support the retirement of fossil-fuel power plants in the city, including the Rainey to Corona project, the Gowanus to Greenwood project and the Goethals to Fox Hills project. These projects, known collectively as the Reliable Clean City projects, are on track to be completed in 2025 and will add 900 megawatts of transmission capacity across New York City.

When all three transmission lines are complete, the following peaker plants will retire: the Con Edison 59th Street GT1 (17.1MW) and 74th Street GT units 1&2 (37MW) in Manhattan; Con Edison's Hudson Ave unit 5 (16.3MW) in Vinegar Hill, Brooklyn; the Helix Ravenswood units 1,10 & 11 (68.6MW) in Long Island City, Queens; the NRG Astoria GTs (528MW) in Astoria, Queens (closed May 1); and the NRG Arthur Kill GT1 unit (20MW) in Staten Island.

Commission Chair Rory M. Christian said, "New York State is in the middle of a fundamental change in the generation and delivery of electricity. Our priority is ensuring renewable, clean sources are integrated into the grid while polluting sources are being

phased out. Given this fact, it is expected that additions and modifications to the utilities' transmission infrastructure will accommodate the cleaner sources of electricity while ensuring reliability. These are much needed, welcomed changes that will improve all of our lives for the better."

Chairman and CEO of Con Edison Tim Cawley said, "Today marks a significant step forward in providing the infrastructure to reliably deliver clean energy to our customers while enabling the closure of inefficient, fossil fuel burning peaker plants. As we make clear in our [Clean Energy Commitment](#), we are strong supporters of New York's climate goals and we're committed to building a grid that can carry 100 percent clean energy by 2040. I want to thank Governor Hochul and Chair Christian for their leadership on this critical issue as well as the dedicated women and men of Con Edison for completing this important project on time and under budget."

The projects are needed for reliability in 2023 and 2025 and to address deficiencies in two of Con Edison's transmission load areas because of the retirement or unavailability of older, higher air polluting power plants that generate power when demand for electricity peaks. Increasing amounts of that power will be clean energy as the state adds to its portfolio of renewable generation, including 9,000 megawatts of offshore wind mandated by the Climate Act by 2035. The work in Queens accounts for \$275 million of the \$800 million Con Edison is investing in these projects.

Simple-cycle combustion turbines (known as peakers or peaking units) are usually used only to meet peak electric demand during the summer, which is typically the worst air quality period. In 2019, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation adopted regulations requiring peakers to comply with regulations limiting allowable nitrogen oxide (NOx) during the ozone season; and if the peakers can't comply, they need to be retired or made unavailable for operation during the ozone season. The NRG Energy plant closed May 1 to comply with the adopted regulations.

The retirement of downstate fossil fuel-fired peaking generation units without the addition of any new fossil-fueled power plants is a significant, step toward realizing New York's clean energy future. The retirement of peaking units, located in and near environmental justice communities, will bring near-term air quality improvements to those communities on the worst air quality days. The projects will also open pathways for the delivery of upstate and offshore renewable generation to the State's largest concentration of population and demand for energy.

President of the New York League of Conservation Voters Julie Tighe said, "We need reliable renewable energy more than ever as New Yorkers electrify buildings and adopt electric vehicles. While New York is taking steps to generate enough clean energy to supply the state in line with the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) timeline, New York City needs increased transmission capability to bring renewable energy from outside the city to our homes and businesses. Con Edison recognizes that climate change is a harsh reality and that we need dramatic action to keep our city and planet safe and sustainable."

Executive Director of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance Eddie Bautista said, "NYC-EJA has been a steadfast advocate against the re-permitting of NRG Astoria and many peaker power plants. With more than a dozen fossil fuel generators still polluting in the area, we are optimistic that the new Con Edison transmission line can lower demands for those power plants to operate and be a first step in a necessary and just transition for Queens. We are grateful for the state to focus on improving clean energy delivery and reliability to help us achieve the mandates of New York's Climate Law."

President of the Local 1-2 James Shillitto said, "We are proud to support upgrades to the system that will ensure reliable clean power for our city that is staffed by a workforce of dedicated professionals such as the people who make up Local 1-2 of the Utility Workers of America. Our members are proud to apply their skills, talents, and knowledge to ensuring that our region remains safe and sustainable."

Business Manager of IBEW Local 3 Christopher Erikson said, "Generations of New Yorkers will enjoy a cleaner environment and continued reliable service, thanks to the work of Con Edison's great unionized workforce on this project. Our members look forward with pride to the completion of Reliable Clean City projects in Brooklyn and Staten Island, which will mark additional steps toward a future with clean air and good public health, particularly for those in disadvantaged communities."

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