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PEAK Coalition Statement on New York Power Authority's Small Clean Power Plant Adaptation Study

[The PEAK Coalition](#)—UPROSE, THE POINT CDC, New York City Environmental Justice Alliance (NYC-EJA), New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI), and Clean Energy Group (CEG)—today released a study with the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to analyze the pathways to transition NYPA's Small Clean Power Plants (SCPPs, or “peakers”) with battery storage alternatives.

The Small Clean Power Plant Adaptation Study results from a [landmark agreement between NYPA and PEAK Coalition](#) to explore options for transitioning NYPA's six peaker power plants in New York City to cleaner energy technologies. Given site characteristics and battery density assumptions, the study finds that each of NYPA's peakers could individually be replaced with battery storage by 2030. With more renewable development predicted throughout New York, the run times of these peaker plants are expected to dramatically decline in both frequency and duration, which would allow for the possibility of full replacement at each individual plant with 4-hour battery storage. Retiring these peaker plants also presents opportunities to eliminate substantial sources of greenhouse gas emissions, including nitrogen oxide (NOx), from fossil fuel combustion.

In addition to engaging with NYPA throughout the study process, PEAK further contributed to an Alternative Scenario analysis, in consultation with Strategen Consulting, which analyzed opportunities to displace higher-emitting fossil generation further through accelerated development of community-based solar and battery storage resources. This Alternative Scenario was found to result in even more significant reductions in local NOx emissions. With increased investment in local renewable and storage development, peakers could be shut down sooner and provide local economic, health, and resilience benefits.

The findings of this study are dependent on modeling assumptions such as the future build-out and integration of more renewable resources and future transmission and distribution development and modernization. Further study will be needed to assess resiliency and reliability impacts, as well as capacity requirements required by the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) and Con Edison.

PEAK also celebrates a [parallel release from NYPA](#) for Request for Proposals to utilize its in-city peaker plant sites and related electric infrastructure to develop bulk-scale battery storage projects. It is critical that the findings of our study are put into practice and realized as soon as possible for the long-term health and environment of New York, especially those living in frontline communities.

PEAK Coalition is committed to continuing our collaboration with NYPA towards an emissions-free future. We continue to advocate for replacing all public and private peaker plants in New York City with renewable energy and battery storage solutions. This study presents a first step in demonstrating that this future may be technically feasible. Even power generation companies like



Eastern Generation, who, last year, withdrew permit applications to “repower” the Gowanus Generating Station and announced their plans to instead explore renewable energy and battery storage, are taking steps to transition away from harmful fossil fuels. The onus is now on the political and financial will to ensure that New York is a true leader in tackling the public health and climate crises. The State must work in co-governance with environmental justice communities to ensure implementation of our state’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act is grounded in racial justice and equity to realize a Just Transition.

The NYPA Small Clean Power Plant Adaptation Study, with Executive Summary, is available [here](#).

“These findings support previous reports put out by PEAK – that battery storage could replace the operations of each individual NYPA peaker power plant in NYC, coupled with clean renewable energy sources on the grid, by 2030,” said **Eddie Bautista, Executive Director of the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance**. “While we await further analyses from NYISO and Con Edison regarding reliability/capacity questions, these findings invite a broader and bolder question: can clean renewable energy plus battery storage also replace all the City’s older, polluting private peaker plants? Can NYC become the first city in the nation to have all its peaker plants replaced? We believe we can - especially if we follow the visionary direction established by the New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.”

Seth Mullendore, President and Executive Director of Clean Energy Group, said, “This first-in-the-country partnership is a national precedent other states should follow. It shows that true collaboration with environmental justice communities can produce viable, emission-free, renewable energy and battery storage alternatives to replace the hundreds of urban peaker plants that pollute frontline communities across America.”

Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director of UPROSE, said, “Environmental justice leaders fought tirelessly for years to pass New York State’s Climate Act. This is an example of the truly transformational work that can be achieved through innovative partnerships and co-governance models to operationalize BIPOC frontline-led visions. We must ensure that the benefits of our life’s work such as emission reductions, renewable energy development, and green job creation are centered on racial justice and equity and address the legacy of harm and health disparities from burning fossil fuels in our communities.”

Anthony Karefa Rogers-Wright, Director of Environmental Justice at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, said “For all the recent talk about deficits, we rarely talk about our largest deficit-that of time. Efficacious solutions to this climate crisis require a rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels to a zero-emissions economy. And we must be clear, ‘low emissions’ is a low bar when our landmark Climate Act mandates zero emissions no later than 2040. This doesn’t mean we can wait until that year as much as it necessitates the need to exercise and advance proactive measures that get us to zero emissions. This study is very promising and further proof that peaker plants can and must be retired expeditiously in a way that upholds environmental justice principles and the leadership of environmental justice organizations. Let’s stop wasting time and money as we



embrace a fossil fuel free future in New York by investing in renewable energy sources and regenerative economies.”

About PEAK Coalition

The PEAK Coalition—UPROSE, THE POINT CDC, New York City Environmental Justice Alliance, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, and Clean Energy Group— is the first comprehensive effort in the US to reduce the negative and racially disproportionate health impacts of a city’s peaker plants by retiring and replacing them with renewable energy and storage solutions. The Coalition is leading to reduce the negative and racially disproportionate health impacts of a city’s peaker plants by bringing technical, legal, public health, and planning expertise to support organizing and advocacy led by communities harmed by power plant pollution.

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