



February 7, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Honorable Michelle L. Phillips
Secretary to the Commission
New York State Public Service Commission
Empire State Plaza
Agency Building 3

Doreen Harris
President & CEO
New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
17 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY 12203-6399

Dear Governor Hochul, Secretary Phillips, and Ms. Harris:

We the undersigned Bronx residents and stakeholders are writing to express our concern about a petition filed on November 30, 2021 by NYS Department of Public Service staff and NYSEERDA seeking approval of a contract for the purchase of Tier 4 RECs by NYSEERDA from Clean Path New York, a joint venture of the New York Power Authority, energyRE, and Invenergy (Case 15-E-0302). As you may know, since 2001 the New York Power Authority has operated 4 natural gas-fired peaker plants in the Mott Haven and Port Morris neighborhoods. While the people of the South Bronx were assured that these plants were only temporary measures when they were first commissioned two decades ago, they have instead become permanent fixtures, burdening our community with additional air pollution.

Pollution in our community has been linked to higher rates of respiratory illnesses. Our asthma hospitalization rates are eight times higher than the national average and 21 times higher than any other NYC neighborhood. And the COVID death rate in the Bronx is twice the city average. New research shows that the health impacts of air pollution accumulate over a person's life, including brain development in the womb, heart and lung disease, stroke, diabetes, dementia, and heart failure. Every additional year that a peaker plant is allowed to operate has consequences far beyond that year.

NYPA has as yet made no commitment whatsoever to shutter these peaker plants despite the success of its Tier 4 application. In fact, in a recent television appearance, a NYPA spokesman stated that the agency has no plans to decommission its South Bronx peakers before 2035, though the Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE) Tier 4 transmission line would bring in enough renewable energy to replace 15 of NYC's 16 peaker plants by 2026, as estimated by



Transmission Developers Inc., the company developing CHPE. And Governor Hochul, in her State of the State, said that she “will further direct NYSERDA, DPS, and DEC to develop a blueprint to guide the retirement and redevelopment of New York’s oldest and most-polluting fossil fuel facilities and their sites by 2030.” Though this is better than the 2035 date indicated by NYPA, we believe that NYS can and must mandate the retirement of peakers even sooner, given the health consequences outlined above. Therefore, we urge the Department of Public Service to reject a Tier 4 contract with NYPA and Clean Path until NYPA makes a clear commitment to decommission the four South Bronx peakers as soon as there is a commensurate level of renewable energy introduced to Zone J, projected to be 2026 by TDI. Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

Senator Gustavo Rivera
Assemblywoman Amanda Septimo
Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez
Assemblyman Kenny Burgos
Mychal Johnson, South Bronx Unite
Wanda Salaman, Mothers on the Move
Maria Torres, The Point CDC
Carla Precht, Bronx Children’s Museum
Dr. Melissa Barber, Mott Haven-Port Morris Community Land Stewards
Eileen Torres, BronxWorks
Evelyn Hey, South Bronx Charter School for International Cultures and the Arts
Gabriel Foreman, Duro UAS
Paloma Hernandez, Urban Health Plan
Don Eversley, Greater Hunts Point Economic Development Corp.
Robert Fanuzzi, Bronx Council for Environmental Quality
Julio Pabon, Latino Sports
Liza Austria, UpbeatNYC
Edmundo Martinez, Friends of Concrete Plant Park
Jason Epting, Mott Haven Families