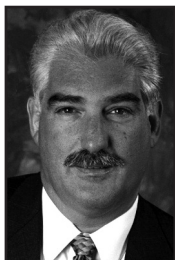


Reinvesting to Jumpstart New York's Economy



By Lou Coletti

An icon of New York's skyline, the legendary Empire State Building is in the midst of a major multi-year retrofit of the machinery and equipment that keeps it one of the finest and most recognizable attractions in the Big Apple.

The project will replace and upgrade heating and ventilation, ductwork, electric and windows in the massive 103 story, 2,768,000 square-foot office tower and tourist destination.

The result will not only be jobs, but significant energy and cost savings for the building managers and reductions in regional greenhouse gas emissions. According to Mayor Bloomberg's PlaNYC, "nearly 80 percent of our citywide emissions result from the energy that we use in buildings."

In December Congress amended the Mechanical Insulation Installation Act (HR 4296) to address this and include tax deductions to encourage property owners to install energy efficient technologies. This incentive makes reinvesting in our cities' properties more affordable, while creating jobs for skilled tradesmen.

Some estimates say retrofitting mechanical infrastructure can produce up to a 100 percent return on investment in less than six months. The Empire State Building project will save \$4.4 million annually and reduce energy use 38 percent and carbon emissions by 105,000 metric tons over 15 years.

Getting to work on the thousands of eligible, older properties in New York will create countless savings in economic, energy and environmental terms and, we hope, the jobs our state is counting on. New York State also needs to maintain a clean, affordable power supply, so we do not further drive up the region's excessive electricity costs and give businesses a reason not to invest here and now.

Speaking for the Building Trade Employers large and small, our industry needs more than just a single piece of legislation to hang our hat on and to return the real estate sector to good health.

As we have continually proven in past economic cycles, this vital leg of the New York economic stool will produce the jobs and tax revenue our state economy needs if leaders of government at all levels focus on implementing solutions that will get New York working once again.

Louis J. Coletti is President & CEO of the Building Trades Employers' Association (BTEA) representing 28 union trade contractor associations and over 1,700 construction managers, subcontractors and specialty contractors. Its contractors employ 25,000 project managers and support staff as well as the 100,000 skilled members of the building trades union in New York City.

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The New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (New York AREA) is a diverse group of business, labor, environmental, and community leaders working together for clean, low-cost and reliable electricity solutions that foster prosperity and jobs for the Empire State.

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Cooling Towers Will Damage Air Quality, Environment



By Dr. Patrick Moore

As an environmentalist deeply focused on the issues of sustainability and public health, I am troubled by a recent proposed regulation issued by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

While the officials at DEC may be sincere in their efforts, the affects of this proposal would actually trigger negative environmental consequences which would severely impact the state, especially Westchester County and much of the lower Hudson Valley.

Westchester, Orange and Rockland Counties have already been designated by the U.S. EPA as nonattainment areas for fine particle matter; placing the air quality of the region in violation of federal standards. Enactment of the DEC's proposal at a local level would affect the long-term operations of numerous power plants along the Hudson River including Indian Point.

Building two cooling towers the size of Yankee Stadium at Indian Point will require blasting and moving 2.1 million cubic yards of rock and soil. This will take several years, cost over \$1 billion and require both reactors to be shut down for 40 weeks or more. The cooling towers would emit 100 tons of particulate matter annually, including salt, into the region's air.

The regulation could also force plants like Indian Point to shut their doors, requiring a minimum of four large fossil-fuel burning power plants be constructed to make up for the lost power. Safeguarding public health and meeting federal air standards would be further compromised.

New York's nuclear power fleet is a primary catalyst behind the state's achieving the lowest per-capita carbon emissions in the U.S. And Indian Point's proposal to install "wedgewire" screens to their water intake system would be implemented in a reasonable time frame and without the negative environmental impacts wrought by the cooling tower construction and operation.

The best environmental policies focus on economically viable, sustainable solutions which safeguard the best interests of the community. To achieve the right balance, the New York State DEC should support a common-sense approach that ensures all these important goals are met.

Dr. Patrick Moore is the co-founder and former leader of the environmental advocacy organization Greenpeace and is Chair and Chief Scientist of Greenspirit Strategies, based in Vancouver, British Columbia. He is an advisor to the New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (New York AREA).

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New York AREA's membership includes some of the state's most vital business, labor and community organizations including the New York State AFL-CIO, Business Council of New York State, Partnership for New York City, New York Building Congress, National Federation of Independent Business and many more.

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