

# Time to Weigh the Priorities: People vs. Fish Larvae



By Arthur "Jerry" Kremer

Most of us can agree that the new Yankee Stadium is a special place. Some say it is one of a kind. Many Yankee fans are rightly proud of the team and its stadium. Others blush regarding the topic of replacing the grand old stadium or the \$1.5 billion cost to do so, some borne by taxpayers.

A recent proposal from Albany to protect fish larvae mandates that certain New York State manufacturers and power producers construct very costly new structures, such as cooling towers, or face closure. Estimates by the state DEC forecast a minimum \$8.5 billion impact on businesses and ratepayers, with the costs likely to run higher.

The Indian Point Energy Center in Westchester is one of the first and largest facilities to be impacted by the proposed new policy. Indian Point provides around 30 percent of the electricity that powers New York City, including our subway and MTA suburban transit systems. Yet the new policy would mandate that Indian Point build two massive cooling towers, each the size of "The House That Steinbrenner Built." The cost is estimated at \$2 billion, and the project would take 10 years to permit and build, including a 10 month shut down.

New York leaders must evaluate how tacking on billions of new costs to employers and vital power providers will impact our state's economy and job retention. How many businesses will choose to comply, or just decide to shut down or pick up and leave, taking precious jobs with them? Also how will this impact New York's already sky-high electricity rates, or the price of a ride on the subway, Metro North or LIRR?

In a voluntary effort, Indian Point has proposed using a proven and cost-effective underwater filtration technology that will meet the same goals as the DEC's proposed policy, without the negative repercussions and staggering costs.

At this sensitive time for our state's economy, with high unemployment, businesses struggling and competition for jobs at an all-time record, New York's regulatory bodies need to carefully weigh the priorities, and realize that the livelihoods of hundreds, perhaps thousands of New York families are at stake.

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