

# New Siting Law Key to Long Island's Economic Recovery



By Dr. Matthew C. Cordaro

Long Island is poised to lead our state's economic recovery. A highly-educated and skilled, workforce has led our community's rebirth as an incubator for innovation and entrepreneurship. However, the availability of affordable electricity will continue to hinder Long Island's progress unless immediate steps are taken in Albany.

Long Island and New York State need a modernized energy infrastructure to meet the demands of a recovering economy. Simply put, there is inadequate major transmission line capacity available and much too much reliance on older, inefficient power plants. Additionally, New York State continues to lack a comprehensive power plant siting law; critical to meeting these challenges.

The Article X power plant siting law, which expired in 2002, helped expedite the development of new power plants with significant community input. Now with the pipeline for new efficient electricity generation projects dry, the lack of a siting law is a hindrance making New York less attractive to potential energy investors, just when we need the jobs they provide most.

Downstate is starving for jobs and economic development and our leaders must act. Led by Congressman Steve Israel, federal Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Bonds will bridge the gap between the desire to create energy efficiently and the incentives needed to underwrite it. PACE bonds guarantee 100 percent of taxable debt obligations by state, local and private sector entities for qualified projects that produce clean and efficient energy.

With the need for multiple sources of in-state, affordable and clean electric generation, it is imperative that a new Article X be fuel neutral. Proposals for re-powering old fossil fuel generating plants and establishing cost effective renewable energy facilities are great examples. Yet without a new siting law, the simple mention of an energy initiative generates knee jerk opposition by NIMBY activists without consideration of the facts.

To fully benefit from the innovative PACE Bond program and continue on the path to economic recovery, we need a new comprehensive, fuel-neutral power plant siting law.

*Dr. Matthew Cordaro is a seasoned electricity industry executive who formerly served as President and CEO of the Midwest Independent System Operator, the not-for-profit operator of the region's transmission grid. In addition, he served as CEO of Nashville Electric, one of the 10 largest public utilities in the U.S. and an administrator and professor specializing in energy at Long Island University. He is the Dean of the Townsend School of Business at Dowling College.*

SPECIAL SPONSORED SECTION

**NY**

**A\* R\* E\* A**

AFFORDABLE RELIABLE  
ELECTRICITY ALLIANCE

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.

[WWW.AREA-ALLIANCE.ORG](http://WWW.AREA-ALLIANCE.ORG)