

# Talking Energy Affordability

From Technical Facts to  
Kitchen Table Conversations

February 17<sup>th</sup> at 3PM ET



# Introduction

Kristen Soares



State Climate Policy  
Network Manager

CLIMATE **X** CHANGE  
[SCPN]

# State Climate Policy Network



Network of **15,000+**

- State and local elected officials
- NGO advocates
- Researchers
- State agency staffers
- Organizers and activists
- Business leaders

... working on state climate policy

[www.climate-xchange.org/network](http://www.climate-xchange.org/network)

# Pro Bono Policy Assistance

We specialize in state climate policy design and analysis.  
Reach out to [kristen@climate-xchange.org](mailto:kristen@climate-xchange.org) with your requests on:

- **Example states** and **model rules** for a given policy
- **Gap analysis** of your state's climate policy landscape
- **Connections** to other actors working on similar issues

# Talking Energy Affordability: From Technical Facts to Kitchen Table Conversations



**Abby Watson**

*Co-Founder and President of  
The Groundwire Group*



**Abe Silverman**

*Assistant Research Scholar at  
the Johns Hopkins Sustainable  
Energy Institute*



**Alisa Fox**

*Director of Grid Campaigns at  
ACORE*



**Annie Levenson-Falk**

*Executive Director of the  
Citizens Utility Board of  
Minnesota*

## Agenda

1. Communicating A Story: Investments in a Time of Rising Bills
2. Moderated Panel: *How do different tools achieve energy affordability?*
3. Q&A: Lessons Learned on Communications

# Speaker

Abby Watson



**Co-Founder and President**

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# Anatomy of a Bill Increase

Communicating with the public about the  
affordability benefits of clean energy and  
transmission investments

# The solution to energy affordability is **investment.**

How do we deliver this message when the subject is so complex, when we run the risk of sounding out of touch?

## Anatomy of a Bill Increase

Prices for electricity in Delaware are up **34%** and rising

as new low-cost solar and battery projects struggle to come online

leaving consumers exposed to volatile fuel costs.

Improving interconnect and transmission planning process will save Delaware hundreds.

## Delaware

### Anatomy of a Bill Increase

New Jerseyans' energy bills are up **37%**

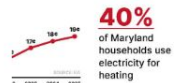
## New Jersey

### Anatomy of a Bill Increase

Prices for electricity in New Jersey are up **42%**

## Maryland

Average MD Electricity Price (kWh) **40%** of Maryland households use electricity for heating



**67%** of Maryland's electricity infrastructure is at least 30 years old, while only **8%** has been built in the last decade. The aging grid raises costs for consumers and stifles the entry of low-cost power.

## PJM Spotlight

PJM Capacity prices have risen more than tenfold compared to prices in 2023.

**10x**

### Record-breaking Capacity Auction

Grid operators ensure there is enough electricity to meet future demand by purchasing capacity in advance. "Capacity" is a guarantee from electricity plant owners that they will be available to operate if called upon. PJM is the grid operator for 13 states, including the entire mid-Atlantic region.

- There were not enough eligible bidders in PJM's recent capacity auction to meet the total demand, so prices rose all the way to the price cap put in place before the auction.
- New electricity resources are not being added at a pace that can keep up with the growth in electricity consumption, causing prices to soar. It can take five or more years for new resources to connect to the grid.

### PJM's Solution? The Reliability Resource Initiative (RII)

UCAP by In-Service Year

RII is an intended solution to insufficient supply present in the capacity auction.

- Through this process, PJM selected 39 gas projects, which are slower to build and won't deliver significant new energy supply until 2030 or later.
- Meanwhile, nearly all of the 31 battery storage projects submitted would come online before 2030, and only 5 were selected.
- This solution won't help address near-term demand, and ratepayers will suffer through the end of the decade.

### Solutions for States

State regulators need to ensure PJM keeps costs low by planning regional transmission to connect the lowest-cost clean power sources and requiring utilities to maximize the value of existing infrastructure using grid-enhancing technologies and high-performance conductors.



## Anatomy of a Bill Increase

New York is hungry for energy and isn't bringing renewables online fast enough

causing New Yorkers to pay more on their energy bills

and remain exposed to volatile fuel costs.

Getting more renewables online would save New York millions.

## New York

New York's economy is growing, and so are its energy needs.

In 2023, large projects requiring a lot of electricity reconnected more than 4,000 megawatts (MW) of new demand, a 16% increase from 2022. As demand for electricity balloons, inefficient supply drives up costs.



Average Monthly Con Edison



## New York City Public Policy Transmission Need (PPTN)

Transmission projects often take over a decade to build. New York's grid operator NYISO plans for future energy needs under the PPTN process.

New York City represents nearly 1/3 of the state's total electricity demand.

The NYISO has flagged a risk of electricity shortages there as early as Summer 2026 for 3 key reasons:

- Limitations on how much energy can be delivered from upstate through congested transmission lines
- Retirement of dirty peaker plants
- Increased electricity demand

- Grid operators project future electricity demand and identify the sources of generation expected to meet that demand. The 2025 Draft NY State Energy Plan expects electricity demand to grow by 20% through 2040.
- New York's busy harbor is home to a crowded environment of shipping lanes, communications cables, and protected areas, presenting the need to strand cables for dialling offshores wind energy to New York City.
- The NYISO identified a set of transmission solutions that will reduce the cost and impact of integrating 4,770 MW of future offshore wind in its NYC PPTN selection.



Despite these clear needs, the NY Public Service Commission (NY PSC) chose to cancel the NYC PPTN solicitation process.

Further delay in making transmission investments for offshore wind will only add cost and risk.

The NY PSC should expediently re-issue the NYC PPTN solicitation, in collaboration with NYISO and NYISO, to unlock the benefits that offshore wind can bring to all New Yorkers.



## Anatomy of a Bill Increase

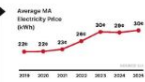
Prices for electricity in Massachusetts are up **36%** and rising

as significant sources of local power are blocked

leaving consumers exposed to volatile fuel costs.

Getting more renewables online would save Massachusetts millions.

## Massachusetts



**3rd highest** residential electricity price in the country in 2023

Trump Admin Halts Nearly Finished Project

On August 22, 2023, the Trump administration issued a stop work order for

Grid Operator Warns that this will lead to Higher Costs  
"Delaying (Seawind Wind) will increase risks to reliability... Unpredictable risks and threats to resources—regardless of



## New England ISO's Long Term Transmission Planning (LTP) Spotlight

Investments in the transmission system benefit the entire region, and New England states are working together to plan for the future.

- Grid operators project future electricity demand and identify the sources of generation expected to meet that demand.
- ISO New England's 2020 Transmission Study projects that in 2050, peak demand periods for the region could rise as high as 57 gigawatts (GW), roughly double the all-time peak ever recorded on the system.
- The region is currently conducting its first solicitation for transmission solutions that will benefit all New England ratepayers, with a goal of unlocking 3,000 MW of affordable offshore wind in Northern Maine.

Meeting our future energy needs means making commitments for the long term

**6.5 - 10+ years**

Number of years it takes to plan and build a typical transmission project  
ISO New England expects the region to need 32,000 MW of offshore wind by 2050. One study found that consumers could save as much as \$20 billion by coordinating Atlantic Coast offshore wind transmission.

Further delay in making transmission investments for offshore wind will only add cost and risk.



State regulators must ensure ISO-NE keeps costs low by planning regional transmission to connect the lowest-cost clean power sources and requiring utilities to maximize the value of existing infrastructure using grid-enhancing technologies and high-performance conductors.

# The Storyline

**New York is hungry for energy and isn't bringing renewables online fast enough**

**causing New Yorkers to pay more on their energy bills**

**and remain exposed to volatile fuel costs.**

**Getting more renewables online would save New York millions.**

Problem Statement

Solution

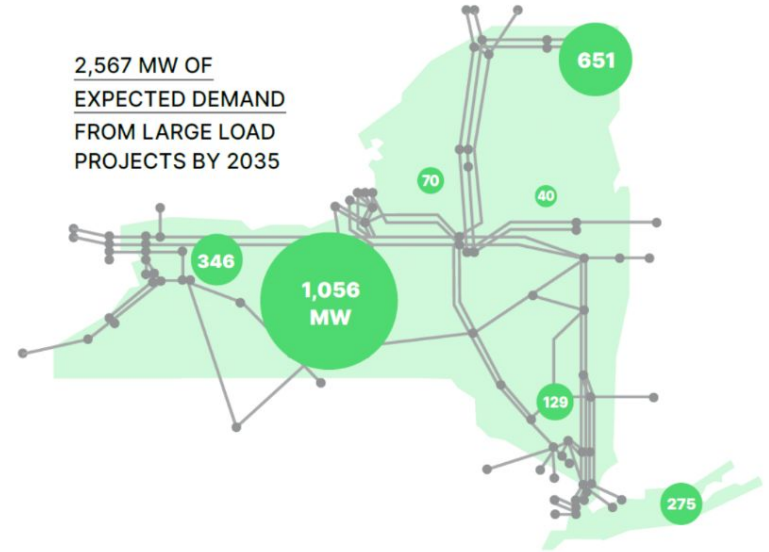
# The Storyline

**New York is hungry for energy and isn't bringing renewables online fast enough**

New York's economy is growing, and so are its energy needs.

In 2025, large projects requiring a lot of electricity represented more than 4,000 megawatts (MW) of new demand, a 4x increase from 2022. As demand for electricity balloons, **insufficient supply drives up costs.**

2,567 MW OF  
EXPECTED DEMAND  
FROM LARGE LOAD  
PROJECTS BY 2035



Claim

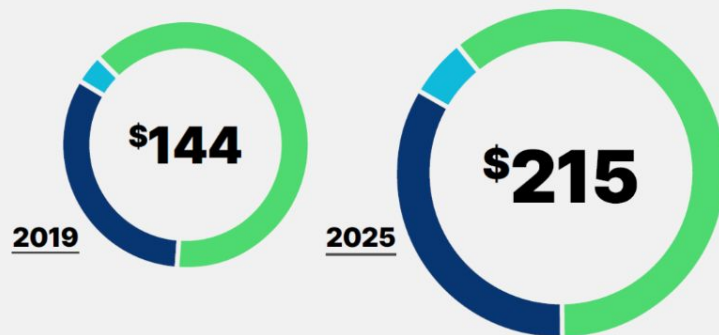
Evidence

# The Storyline

**causing New Yorkers  
to pay more on their  
energy bills**

## Average Monthly Con Edison Electricity Bill

- Delivery Charge
- Surcharge
- Generation Charge



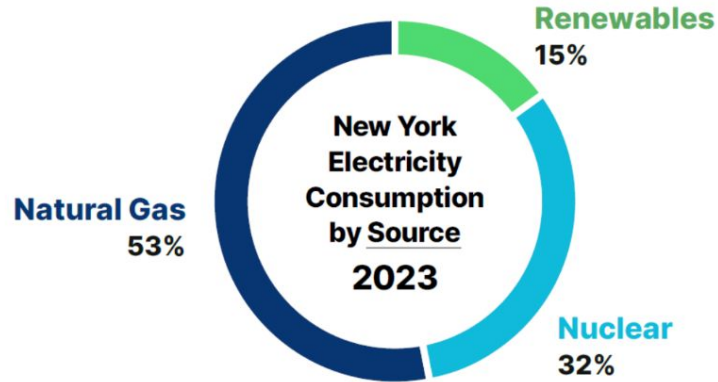
Spending on power lines nationwide has shifted to lower-voltage and local projects, which are built with less oversight from regulators and often deliver less value to ratepayers — representing roughly **90% of all recent transmission spending**.

Claim

Evidence

# The Storyline

**and remain exposed  
to volatile fuel costs.**



With **53% of electricity consumption coming from natural gas**, New York consumers are subject to swings in **natural gas prices, which are projected to more than double from 2024-2027**.

Claim

Evidence

# The Storyline

**Getting more  
renewables online  
would save New  
York millions.**

Ratepayer savings projected in one cold  
winter month from offshore wind additions



**\$77 million**  
in savings



Claim

Evidence

# The Deeper Dive

Transmission projects often take over a decade to build. New York's grid operator NYISO plans for future energy needs under the PPTN process.



Grid operators project future electricity demand and identify the sources of generation expected to meet that demand. The 2025 Draft NY State Energy Plan expects electricity demand to grow by 20% through 2040.



New York's busy harbor is home to a crowded environment of shipping lanes, communications cables, and protected areas, prompting the need to streamline cables for delivering offshore wind energy to New York City.



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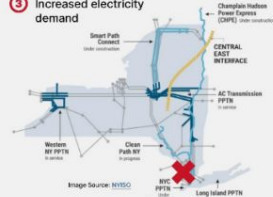
## New York City Public Policy Transmission Need (PPTN)

Transmission projects often take over a decade to build. New York's grid operator NYISO plans for future energy needs under the PPTN process.

► New York City represents **nearly 1/3** of the state's total electricity demand.

The NYISO has **flagged a risk** of electricity shortages there as early as Summer 2026 for 3 key reasons:

- 1 Limitations on how much energy can be delivered from upstate through congested transmission lines
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► The NY PSC should expediently re-issue the NYC PPTN solicitation, in collaboration with NY SERA and NYISO, to unlock the benefits that offshore wind can bring to all New Yorkers.



# Get In Touch

## **Abby L. Watson**

Co-Founder & President  
The Groundwire Group

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# Speaker

Alisa Fox



**Director of Grid Campaigns**

ACORE

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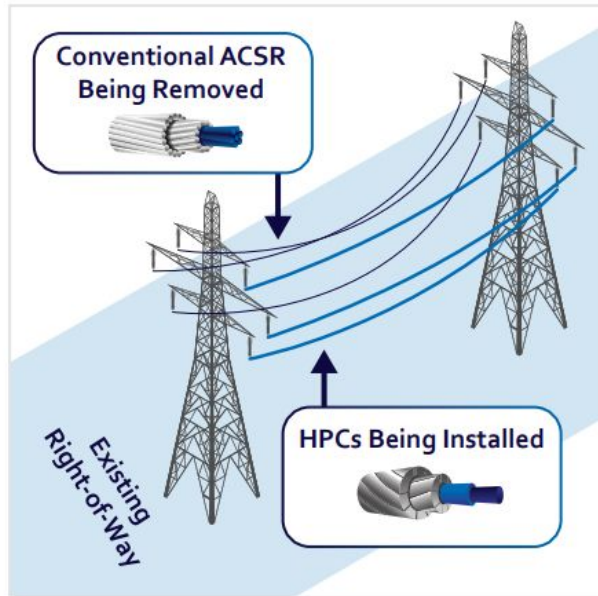


# Advanced Transmission Technologies (ATTs)

Alisa Fox, Director of Grid Campaigns

# ATTs make the grid run more efficiently

## High Performance Conductors (HPC)



Source: [HPC Playbook](#)

## Grid Enhancing Technologies (GETs)



**Dynamic Line Ratings (DLR)** measure and calculate the true carrying capacity of transmission lines.

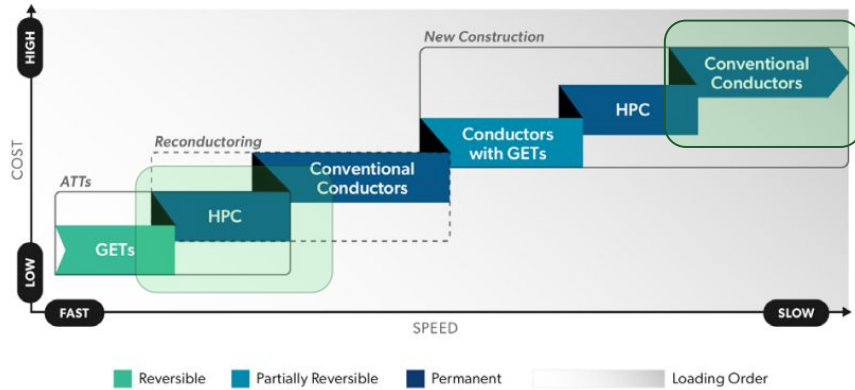


**Advanced Power Flow Control (APFC)** redirects power from overloaded to underutilized circuits

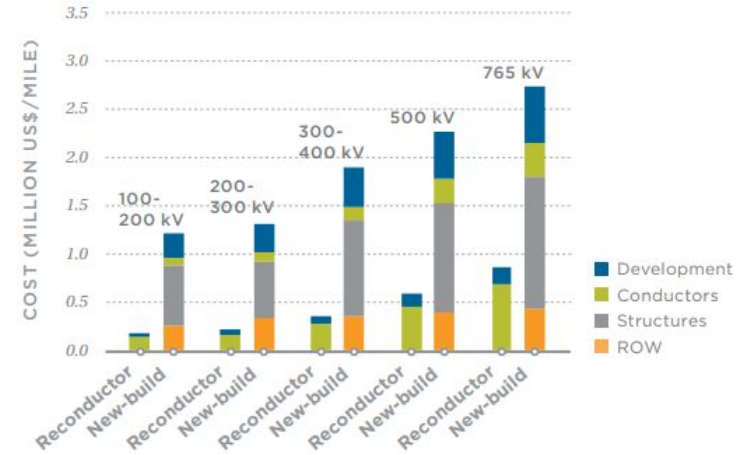


**Topology Optimization** is software that finds ideal grid configurations to avoid constraints.

# ATTs increase capacity of the grid faster and at lower cost



Cost Estimates for Reconductoring Projects Vs. New Transmission



Source: [Incorporating ATTs in FERC Order 1920](#)

Source: [2035 and Beyond: Reconductoring](#)

# ATTs can save consumers money in many ways

## Reduce congestion

- GETs can reduce grid congestion by 40%+, which would have saved \$4-8 billion per year in the last five years<sup>1</sup>.

## Unlock low-cost power generation

- The production cost savings by adding more renewables to the grid more quickly for GETs alone is estimated at \$5B annually<sup>2</sup>.

## Improve efficiency


- HPCs can reduce annual transmission losses by 20%+, generating over \$2.2 billion in annual consumer savings<sup>3</sup>.

1: [Building-a-Better-Grid-How-Grid-Enhancing-Technologies-Complement-Transmission-Buildouts.pdf](#)

2: [Unlocking the Queue with Grid-enhancing technologies](#)

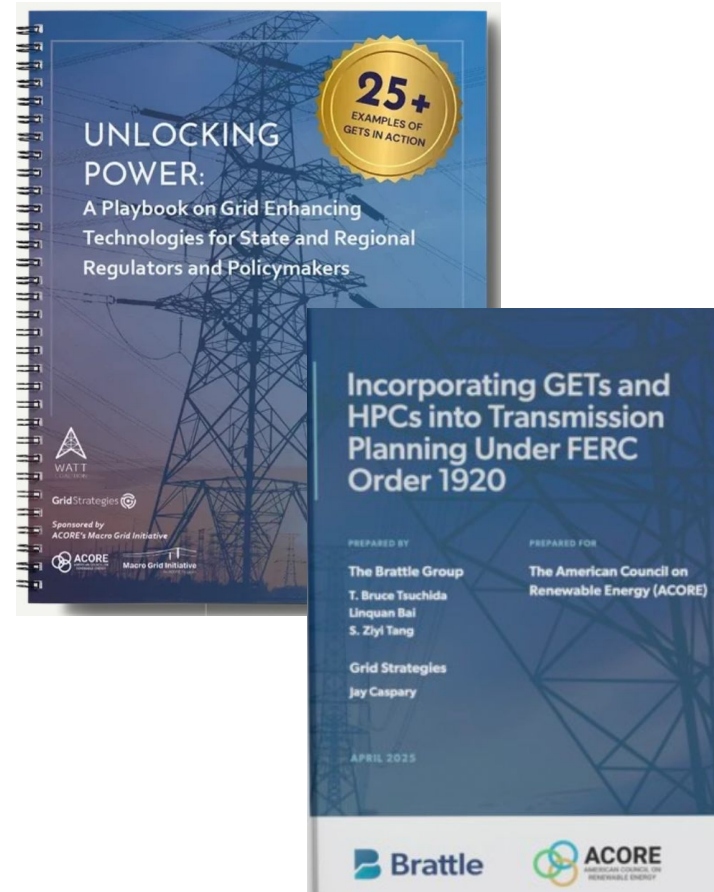
3: [HPC Playbook](#)

# State regulators and policymakers play a large role in successful ATT deployment

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- Study the potential and benefits of ATTs (e.g. CA SB 1006)
  - Require evaluation of ATTs in State IRP Processes, state-level transmission planning, and/or CPCN Proceedings. (e.g. Virginia HB 862)
  - Change or develop incentives for ATTs to encourage further deployment by utilities (e.g. Montana HB 729)
  - Shift utility and public utility commission (PUC) planning and project evaluations from a “least upfront cost” to a “maximum net benefits” framework, with a particular focus on energy efficiency (e.g. Vermont)
  - Make permitting changes to more closely align with federal exclusions for reconductor and rebuild projects (e.g. CA AB 3246)
  - Encourage or require the creation of utility working groups to study and share lessons learned on ATTs. (e.g. NY Advanced Technologies Working Group)
  - Engage with RTO/ISOs on FERC Order 1920 and 2023 to ensure ATTs are properly evaluated

# Learn more!

- [Unlocking Power: A Playbook on Grid Enhancing Technologies for State and Regional Regulators and Policymakers](#)
- [Unlocking the Grid: A Playbook on High Performance Conductors for State and Regional Regulators and Policymakers](#)
- [Incorporating GETs and HPCs into Transmission Planning Under FERC Order 1920](#)
- [Assessment and Evaluation of Grid Enhancing Technologies \(GETs\)](#)
- [Advanced Transmission Technologies Planning Guide](#)
- [Best Practices for State Legislation on Advanced Transmission Technologies](#)



Reach out! Alisa Fox, [Fox@acore.org](mailto:Fox@acore.org)

# Speakers

Abe Silverman



**Assistant Research Scholar**  
Johns Hopkins Sustainable Energy  
Institute

Annie Levenson-Falk



**Executive Director**  
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# Q&A

**Thank you for joining!**

**Reach out to  
kristen@climate-xchange.org with any  
additional questions!**

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