

News Releases

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STATE OF NEW YORK | EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ANDREW M. CUOMO | GOVERNOR

Governor Cuomo's Energy Highway Task Force Holds Summit

Summit Brings Together Energy Experts to Explore Ways to Meet New York's Future Power Needs While Protecting the Environment and Creating Jobs

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's Energy Highway Task Force today convened a summit at Columbia University that brought together federal, state and industry officials to discuss and explore ways to meet New York State's future electric power needs while protecting the environment and creating jobs.

At the New York Energy Highway Summit, national industry experts explored various topics, including state energy policy objectives, public/private partnerships, case studies of infrastructure development success stories, and building a sustainable energy system. The Task Force expects to issue a Request for Information (RFI) on April 11, seeking ideas for potential energy projects from private developers, investor-owned utilities, the financial community and others. A conference for potential responders and other interested parties will be held on April 19. The Governor created the Task Force to oversee implementation of the Energy Highway initiative and enlist the private sector in a wide-ranging effort to upgrade and modernize the state's electric system.

"The Energy Highway initiative will ensure that New Yorkers have reliable, affordable clean power to meet the electricity needs of a strong and growing economy," Governor Cuomo said. "The Energy Highway project has the potential to create thousands of jobs and stimulate billions of dollars in private investment in order to rebuild New York's energy infrastructure. This summit brings together leading energy and environmental officials to get the Energy Highway off the ground."

The Energy Highway is envisioned as at least a \$2 billion private sector initiative to encourage job creation and capital investment in the state's electric system by private companies in

partnership with New York State. It is a major part of Governor Cuomo's comprehensive programs to rebuild the state's infrastructure and to forge close partnerships with the private sector to meet this goal.

Task Force Co-chairs are Gil C. Quiniones, President and Chief Executive Officer of the New York Power Authority, and Joseph Martens, Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Joining them on the Task Force are Kenneth Adams, President, Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner of the Empire State Development Corporation; Garry A. Brown, Chairman of the State Public Service Commission; and Francis J. Murray, Jr., President and Chief Executive Officer of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

"We welcome this opportunity to help transform Governor Cuomo's bold vision for the Energy Highway into a reality that will benefit the people of New York State for many years to come," the Task Force members said in a joint statement. "The Governor has described this initiative as comparable to construction in New York of the Thruway and the Northway. We are committed to working with the public, developers from the private sector and all interested parties to ensure its success."

Following its review of the responses to the RFI, the task force will issue an Energy Highway Action Plan in the summer of 2012 with recommendations for moving forward. The action plan will be available to the public.

The goal of the Energy Highway is to ensure that a cost-efficient, reliable and environmentally sustainable supply of power is available to fuel the state's economic growth and to meet the needs of its residents. A key element calls for proposals to modernize existing transmission lines to improve the efficiency of grid operation and also to build new transmission lines in existing right-of-ways to carry excess power from upstate sources to the downstate area, where demand for electricity is greatest. The plan also envisions the repowering of existing power plants to make them more efficient and combat air pollution in urban areas. In addition, it provides for the potential construction of new plants, particularly those powered by the wind, the sun and other renewable sources.

While the Energy Highway initiative focuses on buttressing the electricity supply and infrastructure, energy efficiency measures remain a critical part of the state's overall energy strategy. The state is carrying out a number of programs to promote energy savings and will expand on those efforts. The Governor called for an increased focus on energy efficiency in his 2012 State of the State with including the development of a master plan for energy efficiency in state facilities. Energy efficiency development must be complemented by investments to upgrade and modernize the electric system, which includes aging transmission lines and power plants facing possible retirement.

A new website, www.nyenergyhighway.com, has been launched to provide information about the Energy Highway and the activities of the Task Force. Initially, the website will serve as the registration method for those interested in attending the RFI conference and will also be a source of information for those interested in the Energy Highway. The website will also be a source of information for those interested in the Energy Highway. The website will also be a source of information for those interested in the Energy Highway.