

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Energy Justice and Transmission Planning in New York State

Energy Justice Law and Policy Center

### Overview

As New York State moves to upgrade and expand its energy transmission infrastructure for clean energy, there is a critical need to ensure this expansion advances energy justice instead of perpetuating existing inequities. This report examines how to integrate energy justice metrics into the New York State Public Service Commission's (NYPSC) coordinated grid planning process, with a focus on the Energy Policy Planning Advisory Council (EPPAC) process.

### Key Challenges

New York's grid planning process faces several challenges in advancing energy justice:

1. **Justice Mandate Integration Gap:** While New York's 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) requires a minimum of 35% of benefits to go towards disadvantaged communities (DACs) with a goal of 40%, there is currently insufficient integration of this or other CLCPA justice mandates.
2. **Limited Transparency:** The grid modeling process itself currently lacks stakeholder transparency.
3. **Missing Metrics:** There is an urgent need for energy justice metrics within the planning process to guide investments according to the CLCPA's justice mandate.
4. **Impact Assessment:** Beyond guiding investments, energy justice and equity metrics are needed to measure the impact of grid infrastructure projects and ensure DAC benefits.

### Key Recommendations

#### *Grid Modeling Process*

- Treat justice measures as inputs at the beginning of modeling for the highest efficacy
- Model scenarios specifically for just outcomes
- Use equity and justice metrics to analyze results

Download the complete report at <https://www.ejlpc.org/transmission>

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- Increase transparency throughout the planning process
- Conduct a grid hosting capacity analysis in energy justice communities

### Metrics

Below are recommended metrics for the grid planning process. The metrics fall into two categories: metrics that are important to implement now to track for greater energy justice, and metrics to develop in order to ensure just outcomes as a result of the actions taken during the grid planning process, as well as to start tracking to use for future projects.

#### **Track Now:**

- Energy burden at a granular household level
- Frequency/duration of power outages in DACs
- Fuel mix and energy ownership in DAC households

#### **Develop Next:**

- Impacts of renewable infrastructure on communities
- Cost of disasters borne per household
- Customer access to renewable energy

### **NYPSC Reform**

Below are three main recommendations for the NYPSC to center equity and justice in their work.

- Create a two-year rolling working group focused on DACs
- Include justice and equity training for NYPSC members
- Reform procedures to prioritize equity and justice

### **Impact**

**Short-term:** This research enables energy justice organizations to advocate for equity throughout New York's grid planning process, providing concrete metrics and mechanisms for ensuring justice is centered in decision-making.

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**Long-term:** This work advances progress in an emerging area of research, providing guidance for New York and other states in creating just and equitable transmission planning. The framework developed here can serve as a model for integrating justice considerations into grid planning nationwide.

### Implementation Pathway

The recommendations in this report can be implemented through:

1. Immediate integration of justice metrics into current EPPAC modeling
2. Development of more granular standardized measurement tools
3. Creation of transparent reporting mechanisms
4. Establishment of accountability systems
5. Regular review and adjustment of metrics based on community feedback

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