

For Immediate Release:

Contact:

Carol E. Murphy 518-461-1436 (cell)
Ken Klapp 518-356-6253

**NYISO TESTIFIES BEFORE U.S. – CANADIAN TASK
FORCE HEARINGS ON AUGUST BLACKOUT**

**CEO William J. Museler Comments on the Task Force’s Interim Report,
Supports Findings on the Task Force’s Causes of the Blackout**

Guilderland, N.Y., December 5, 2003 – The primary lesson from the August 14th blackout is that it was caused by largely avoidable human and operational failures and mistakes – and not by system or equipment failures according to William J. Museler, President and CEO of the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO).

Museler testified today before the U.S. - Canadian Power System Outage Task Force public meeting on the August 14 power blackout in eight states and the province of Ontario.

Mr. Museler applauded the Task Force’s Interim Report for its detail and accuracy in identifying the blackout was caused by violations of "well established operating rules and practices" and the failure to enforce "six specific standards" set by the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC).

"Simply put, if the rules had been followed and the companies involved had supported and insisted on compliance with the rules, the blackouts would have either been avoided entirely, or certainly been much less severe," he said.

In previous testimony before the Congress and the New York State Legislature, Mr. Museler revealed that NYISO has launched its own investigation into the electric power failure that affected 15 million people in the U.S. and Canada, resulting in a series of recommendations:

- To avoid a recurrence, the NERC reliability standards must be made mandatory, not voluntary.
- Strengthen the transmission grid in New York State and surrounding areas by providing incentives to expand transmission capabilities.
- The communications among the ISOs, RTOs and control areas need to be significantly improved.
- Participation in an ISO, RTO or tight power pool for reliability purposes should be made mandatory.

###

The New York Independent System Operator ("NYISO") -- www.nyiso.com-- is a not-for-profit corporation established in 1999 to facilitate the restructuring of New York State’s electric industry. Based in New York’s Capital Region, in addition to administering the State’s wholesale energy markets, the NYISO operates the State’s high voltage electric transmission system. Last year, the NYISO’s, market volume was \$5.2 billion.