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## **NYISO CEO Notes Value of Strategic Transmission Investment at Governor's Energy Highway Summit**

**Rensselaer, N.Y.**— New York Independent System Operator President and CEO Stephen G. Whitley told policy makers and industry representatives gathered at Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's New York Energy Highway Summit that the future of New York State's transmission grid is at a crossroads and that there is an opportunity to make strategic, cost-effective investments that will provide numerous benefits for the state over the next several decades.

"We must decide if we simply replace aging facilities 'as is' and continue to operate the system within its current limits, or if we make cost-effective, incremental upgrades and additions to improve statewide reliability," said Whitley.

In his remarks during the summit's *Setting the Stage for Successful Investment* panel, Whitley noted that a robust transmission system is critical for system reliability and that addressing statewide transmission constraints will enhance New York's competitive wholesale electricity market.

"Today, New York has a statewide surplus of electric energy, but we are limited in our ability to transmit that electricity from areas of surplus to areas of need," Whitley said. "The congested transmission system has led to significant price disparity for wholesale electricity across the state, hinders the ability of generation owners in the northern and western parts of the state to sell their power to areas of need during peak demand periods, limits the growth of renewable resources and frustrates our ability to fully realize the advantages of the diverse generation options we have in New York."

While New York's competitive wholesale electricity markets have encouraged generation and transmission investment where most needed, the investments of the past decade do not diminish the need to upgrade or replace aging transmission infrastructure. Approximately 85 percent of the high-voltage transmission lines in New York state were constructed and put into service before 1980.

"Carefully selected transmission projects provide what I view as 'no regret' additions to the electricity infrastructure of the Empire State," Whitley stated. "Transmission investments made today will provide value for the next 50 years and should be viewed from that long-range perspective. These projects will enhance both the reliability of the grid and our competitive markets as more power can flow from Western New York through the Mohawk and Hudson Valleys to New York City and Long Island."

Whitley noted that New York has witnessed significant growth in the development of renewable resources in the northern and western regions of the state, and there is potential for future growth and expansion.

"An energy highway will help deliver these resources to some of the largest load centers in the United States—New York City and Long Island," he said.

The New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) is a not-for-profit corporation responsible for operating the state's bulk electricity grid, administering New York's competitive wholesale electricity markets, conducting comprehensive long-term planning for the state's electric power system, and advancing the technological infrastructure of the electric system serving the Empire State.

Whitley also pointed out that considerable lead time is required for power infrastructure project execution. While electrons can move instantaneously, it takes years to permit, finance, build and commission the lines that carry those electrons, he noted.

“Events such as this summit—and the attention that Governor Cuomo, his administration, legislative leaders and energy industry officials are paying to modernizing and addressing historical limitations in New York’s electric system—are very encouraging,” Whitley concluded. “The Energy Highway initiative, combined with last year’s Power NY law to address new generation siting, are clear signals that New York state is focused on building a brighter future for electricity consumers in New York.”

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