

For Immediate Release
Thursday, December 17, 2009

Contact: Kristin Legere, 518-447-6723
Bill Ferris, 518-447-6712

AARP Calls for Accountability, Oversight and Transparency in New York State Electricity Markets

ALBANY, NY – An AARP report released today called for major reforms in New York State's electricity marketplace. The report focuses on the need to hold the New York Independent System Operator, Inc. (NYISO), which oversees the wholesale electricity market, more accountable to electricity rate payers. AARP believes that new state reform policies will help mitigate price increases and have the potential to lower energy costs for New Yorkers in the future.

"Reforming the way NYISO functions is major step in reducing energy prices paid by consumers in New York State," stated Lois Aronstein, AARP NY State Director. "The Governor and the Legislature must develop new laws that bring more openness and accountability to the organization that oversees how electricity is bought and sold in this state."

New York households pay among the highest electricity rates in the United States. Households in New York on average pay \$185 more annually for electricity than customers in any other state in the continental U.S. except Connecticut.

"The NYISO and its dysfunctional electricity markets for energy and capacity add to the high cost of electricity in New York," said Gerald Norlander, Executive Director of the Public Utility Law Project of New York, Inc. "It is in the public interest to reform the market by restructuring the NYISO to make it accountable to the public, with new rules to promote greater transparency and provide remedies for overcharges due to market gaming or malfunction."

Among the recommendations in the report:

- **Accountability** - The State Legislature should pass reforms allowing the Governor and the Legislature to appoint NYISO's board of directors.
- **Transparency** – Require the bids, bidders, and computer computations in NYISO's wholesale electricity market auctions to be public after no longer than two days.
- **Oversight** – Require the New York Public Service Commission to review the NYISO budget and approve the fee charged to consumers for NYISO's operations. The NYISO should also be required to follow New York's open meeting law.

There is no New York State law that created or supervises the NYISO. It is governed by a board, which writes its own rules, collects over \$144 million for its current operations, and oversees wholesale electricity prices without any real accountability to the public or any elected official.

[Click here](#) to view the complete report.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates. We produce AARP The Magazine, the definitive voice for 50+ Americans and the world's largest-circulation magazine with over 35.5 million readers; AARP Bulletin, the go-to news source for AARP's nearly 40 million members and Americans 50+; AARP Segunda Juventud, the only bilingual U.S. publication dedicated exclusively to the 50+ Hispanic community; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands