

Alliance to Save Energy Charles Percy Award Nomination
Paul D. Tonko, president and CEO of New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)

New York State is moving aggressively to meet energy challenges and goals. The state has launched a plan to reduce statewide electricity use by 15 percent by the year 2015 and increase the sources of non-polluting, renewable energy in the State to at least 25 percent by the year 2013. To lead the "energy revolution" in New York, the governor's office appointed Paul D. Tonko as President and CEO of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) on July 1, 2007.

Tonko's assessment of the challenges New Yorkers face was stark: environmental damage caused by climate change, skyrocketing energy costs, reliability issues, and concerns about the adequacy of energy supplies and energy security. "I believe we are in a deepening energy and environmental crisis. Our economy, our environment, and our communities cannot sustain this course. It is imperative that we act now," he stated in recent speech to the New York Academy of Sciences.

In the first six months of Tonko's leadership, NYSEDA has thrived.

- NYSEDA was a national leader in the 2007 ENERGY STAR® Change a Light, Change the world, with over 11,356 New Yorkers pledging to switch to energy efficient lighting.
- NYSEDA oversaw the nation's first Multifamily Performance Program in the Bronx.
- New York's 2007 *BE COOL* campaign resulted in 7,406 window and through-the-wall air conditioners being replaced with ENERGY STAR qualified models, preventing 979,852 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions and saving 897,300 kWh of electricity overall.
- Despite the fact that New York State saw nearly a 20 percent reduction in new home starts from the previous year,¹ demand for New York ENERGY STAR Labeled Homes was untouched by the decreasing trend seen statewide and nationally.
- New York State continues as a national leader in Home Performance with ENERGY STAR. Since 2001, 17,610 families have had their homes improved through Home Performance with ENERGY STAR.

Tonko has built a career as a leader in energy issues. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Tonko served in the New York State Assembly, representing the 105th Assembly District - including all of Montgomery and part of Schenectady County - from April 1983 to June 2007.

At age 26, he was the youngest person in the history of Montgomery County to be elected to the county's Board of Supervisors. He served as chairman of that body in 1981. Prior to his election to the Assembly in 1983, Mr. Tonko was an engineer in the New York State Department of Transportation and also served on the staff of the Department of Public Service.

Mr. Tonko has gained a national reputation as an expert on energy and utility issues. From 1992 to June 2007, Mr. Tonko served as chairman of the New York Assembly Standing Committee on Energy. In April 2007, Mr. Tonko was called upon by the Congress of the United States to provide expert testimony before the Subcommittee on Domestic Policy in relation to the Energy Policy Act of 2005. In 2007, he was awarded the Solar Leadership Award by the New York Solar Energy Industries Association.

¹ U.S. Department of Commerce