

# Consumer Liaison Group Meeting Summary

## September 12, 2024

### Introduction

---

The **Consumer Liaison Group (CLG)** is a forum for sharing information between ISO New England (the ISO or ISO-NE) and electricity consumers in New England. The CLG meets quarterly and attracts a diverse group of attendees at each meeting. Meetings are free and open to the public. Participants generally include consumers and consumer representatives (including state consumer and ratepayer advocates), state business and industry associations, chambers of commerce, individual businesses, trade groups, nonprofit organizations, and other end users. Several New England Power Pool (NEPOOL) members and state regulators are also regular, active participants in CLG discussions.<sup>1</sup> CLG meetings generally follow the same format:

- **Opening remarks** from the CLG Coordinating Committee Chair;
- **A representative from the ISO**, who provides an update on regional energy issues and initiatives that have or will be taking place at NEPOOL and ISO stakeholder meetings that can have an impact on electricity prices;
- **A keynote speech** typically from an industry or business executive, policymaker, or regulator—who provides a unique perspective on a particular topic or issue;
- **A panel discussion**, often representing industry, the ISO, regulators, and consumer perspectives, facilitated by a moderator; and
- **A community roundtable** hosted by a CLG Coordinating Committee member.

The following is a brief summary of the meeting, which was hosted in a hybrid format – remotely (via WebEx) and in-person in New London, Connecticut – on **September 12, 2024**.

The Consumer Liaison Group Coordinating Committee (CLGCC) selects the topic and speakers. The meeting summary is intended to capture the general discussions that took place at the meeting; it does not necessarily reflect the views of the ISO or the CLGCC.

### September 12: Offshore Wind in New England - Opportunities and Challenges

---

**Meeting Objective:** To discuss opportunities and challenges of offshore wind development in New England, and related transmission and energy storage development.

#### Opening Remarks

**Liz Anderson**, division chief of the energy and ratepayer advocacy division at the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General, and CLGCC chair, welcomed meeting attendees. Anderson introduced Ulysses Hammond for the community welcome.

**Ulysses Hammond**, executive director of the Connecticut Port Authority, gave the community welcome. Hammond [discussed](#) the role of the State of Connecticut and the Port Authority in supporting infrastructure for offshore wind development.

#### Panel: Regional Planning and Transmission Buildout

**Claire Coleman**, Connecticut consumer counsel, moderated a panel with **Al McBride**, vice

---

<sup>1</sup> NEPOOL is a group formed in 1971 by the region's private and municipal utilities to foster cooperation and coordination among the utilities in the six-state region for ensuring a dependable supply of electricity. Today, NEPOOL members are ISO stakeholders and market participants. More information is available at [www.nepool.com](http://www.nepool.com).

## **Consumer Liaison Group Meeting Summary**

### **September 12, 2024**

president of system planning at ISO New England, **Abraham Silverman**, assistant research scholar at Johns Hopkins University Ralph O'Connor Sustainable Energy Institute, and **Ulysses Hammond**.

McBride [presented](#) on transmission planning for the future grid. The presentation included information regarding longer-term transmission planning, new resource interconnection, and capacity auction reforms.

Silverman [presented](#) on coordinated advanced planning for offshore wind transmission infrastructure. Silverman highlighted studies discussing affordability and reliability benefits associated with pre-built transmission infrastructure. The presentation continued with a discussion of the Northeast States Collaborative on Interregional Transmission.

A question and answer period followed and panelists answered questions related to the role of the federal government in transmission planning, return on previous investments in transmission infrastructure, labor and economic impacts of the New London State Pier, repurposing transmission from retired generation for new interconnections, consideration of U.S. Department of Energy National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) designations, and grid enhancing technologies (GETs).

#### **Panel: Storage, Potential Cost Savings, and Winter Reliability**

**Ian McDonald**, CLGCC member, moderated a panel discussion with **Josh Berman**, senior attorney at the Sierra Club, **Liz Mettetal**, director of integrated system planning at E3, and **Susan Muller**, senior energy analyst at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Berman [presented](#) on the benefits of offshore wind in the region based on an analysis performed by Synapse Energy Economics. Berman highlighted retail price savings, greenhouse gas emission reductions, and public health benefits associated with adding significant offshore wind capacity to New England that were identified in the study.

Mettetal [presented](#) on resource adequacy of storage and offshore wind in the region. Mettetal highlighted that the combined value, or diversity benefits, of offshore wind and storage is higher than the value of the resources individually.

Muller [presented](#) on the value of offshore wind for winter reliability. Muller highlighted a recent study by the Union of Concerned Scientists that modeled how the addition of offshore wind may reduce the risk of energy shortfalls and blackouts.

A moderated question-and-answer period followed and panelists responded to questions related to details of the report performed by Synapse Energy Economics; impacts of offshore wind on wholesale electricity markets; benefits of various durations of energy storage; pairing energy storage with renewable generation; and natural gas and winter reliability.

#### **ISO New England Update**

**Anne George**, vice president and chief external affairs and communications officer at ISO New England, provided the [ISO's regional update](#). George introduced the ISO's new hire, Ruben Flores-Marzan, as a policy advisor for environmental and community affairs on the ISO's external affairs team; highlighted the ISO to Go app as a way to stay up-to-date on the electric system; noted that the annual open meeting of the ISO board of directors will take place on November 6 in Boston, MA; and highlighted the recent U.S. DOE grant award of \$389 million to the New England states.

## Consumer Liaison Group Meeting Summary

### September 12, 2024

George provided a market administration update, a grid operation update, and a system planning update.

- Market Administration Update:
  - Average real-time electricity prices increased 9% in July 2024 compared with July 2023, and were 38% higher than June 2024.
  - George noted that total electricity use increased by 2% in July 2024 compared with July 2023, and was 22% higher than June 2024.
- Grid Operation Update:
  - A Power Caution was issued on June 18 when generation outages and reductions led to a capacity deficiency. The ISO issued low-level actions of ISO Operating Procedure No. 4 (OP 4), which do not trigger public appeals for conservation. The event triggered the region's Pay-for-Performance (PFP) rules, penalizing resources that fail to meet their capacity supply obligations in real time and rewarding resources that exceed their obligations.
  - During hot summer weather, behind-the-meter (BTM) solar tempered mid-day demand for grid electricity. George highlighted the operating day of June 20 when BTM solar contributed approximately 5,100 MW of power at noon, and 160 MW during the peak hour.
  - A Power Caution was issued on August 1 when higher temperatures and higher demand paired with unplanned outages and reductions led to a capacity deficiency. Public appeals for conservation were not necessary given the short duration of the event and the ability of reserve resources to make up the deficiency. The event triggered the region's PFP rules.
  - ISO proposed the 2025 operating and capital budgets, with budget increases driven by the ISO's commitment to supporting the region as it transitions to clean energy driven by state policies. George explained that ISO-NE is the only ISO/RTO in the country to submit a budget to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for review and approval. Following stakeholder engagement, the NEPOOL participants committee and ISO Board will vote on the budgets in October before the ISO files them with FERC.
- System Planning Update:
  - The ISO published the Economic Planning for the Clean Energy Transition (EPCET) draft report in August for public comment. EPCET explores the operational, engineering, and economic challenges the region must address in order to support the New England States' commitment to reduce carbon emissions over the next several decades. George highlighted the key findings from the report.

A question-and-answer period followed. George responded to questions regarding key findings from the EPCET study and the impact of heating electrification on peak loads.

### Closing Remarks

**Liz Anderson** offered closing remarks and thanked Matthew Rolnick from FERC's Office of Public Participation (OPP) for attending the meeting. Anderson explained that the CLGCC has updated the CLG purpose and structure document; a [draft](#) has been published on the CLG webpage and comments can be sent via email to [Mary.Berner@mass.gov](mailto:Mary.Berner@mass.gov) by October 4 to be shared with the CLGCC.

## **Consumer Liaison Group Meeting Summary**

### **September 12, 2024**

The next CLG meeting will be held on December 4 in Boston, MA. At the December meeting both in-person and virtual attendees will have the opportunity to vote for the members of the CLGCC for the next two-year term cycle. Nominations will be accepted until November 20 and should be sent via email to [Mary.Berner@mass.gov](mailto:Mary.Berner@mass.gov). Attendees were encouraged to fill out the survey after the meeting.

A [recording](#) of the meeting can be found on the [CLG page](#) on the ISO website.