

Consumer Liaison Group Meeting Summary

March 27, 2025

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.¹ CLG meetings generally follow the same format:

- **Opening remarks** from a representative of the CLG Coordinating Committee;
- **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; and
- **A panel discussion**, often representing industry, the ISO, regulators, and consumer perspectives, facilitated by a moderator;

The following is a brief summary of the meeting, which was hosted in a hybrid format – remotely (via WebEx) and in-person in Providence, Rhode Island – on **March 27, 2025**.

The topic and speakers were selected by the Consumer Liaison Group Coordinating Committee (CLGCC). 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.

March 27: What's In Demand (and In Control): The Role of Energy Efficiency and Demand Forecasting in Planning for the Region's Grid and Markets

Meeting objective: To hear about the role of energy efficiency and demand forecasting in planning for the region's grid and markets.

Opening Remarks

Don Kreis, New Hampshire Consumer Advocate and CLGCC co-chair, welcomed meeting attendees and provided opening remarks. Following an introduction to the topic of energy efficiency, Kreis introduced Priscilla De La Cruz and David Ruggiero for the community welcome.

Priscilla De La Cruz, director of sustainability, and **David Ruggiero**, energy and resilience initiatives administrator, both of the City of Providence, gave the community welcome. De La Cruz discussed city policies and ordinances that address energy and environmental issues along with the climate justice plan. Ruggiero discussed electricity and gas usage in the city and the implementation of the policies highlighted by De La Cruz, emphasizing the importance of data collection.

¹ 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.

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Keynote Address

Peter Gill Case, vice chair of Rhode Island Energy Efficiency and Resource Management Council, provided the [keynote address](#). He discussed the benefits of energy efficiency in Rhode Island, and highlighted how it can be a tool to combat climate change. Following a discussion of energy sources in the United States compared with Rhode Island, he reported the impact of methane on climate change. He further discussed challenges and opportunities for continuing energy efficiency implementation efforts. He discussed cost savings associated with energy efficiency, noting fluctuations in energy prices in the region. Gill Case concluded with a discussion of the increasing energy needs for artificial intelligence and data centers.

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](#), which focused on market administration, grid operations, system planning, and demand side resources in the ISO-NE markets.

- Market Administration Update:
 - Average real-time electricity prices were significantly higher in January 2025 compared to the prior month and prior year. Peak demand was slightly higher in January than the two comparison periods. In February 2025, natural gas and nuclear accounted for the majority of generation in New England.
 - ISO-NE filed with FERC a proposed mechanism by which the ISO can, if directed, collect customs duties related to electricity imported from Canada and sold into ISO-administered markets.
 - Wholesale market prices in 2024 were slightly higher than in 2023 – approximately \$10.4 billion compared to approximately \$9.7 billion.
- Grid Operation Update:
 - ISO-NE recently published the 2024 [Net Energy for Load \(NEL\) Report](#), which provides an overview of the region's resource mix in 2024.
- System Planning Update:
 - George provided an update on the Longer-Term Transmission Planning Phase II RFP. At the request of the New England states, the ISO will issue an RFP and evaluate proposals to address needs identified by the states and provide technical support for the procurement and efforts to secure federal funding for transmission investments. (Subsequently, the ISO [issued the RFP](#) on March 31, 2025.)

To introduce the energy efficiency discussion, George offered background on the role of energy efficiency in New England, including a snapshot of the 3,600 MW of demand capacity resources currently in the ISO markets.

To conclude, George noted the forthcoming CLG Annual Report, posted ISO Board responses to comments and questions received during the 2024 open board meeting, and the ISO's recent public webinar on the 2023 Electric Generator Air Emissions Report.

A question-and-answer period followed. George responded to questions regarding the potential tariffs on electricity imports, including cost implications for consumers and impacts to proposed transmission developments; pending legislation in New Hampshire proposing to study the state leaving ISO New England; the importance of energy efficiency in the region; the extent to which grid

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enhancing technologies would be considered under the Longer-Term Transmission Planning Phase II RFP; recent executive orders related to renewable energy; demand response modeling; and the impact of possible reductions in energy imports on New England's resource mix.

Panel Discussion: Incorporating Demand Response into Electricity Markets and Transmission Planning

Brett Feldman, energy efficiency manager at Rhode Island Energy, **Marianne Perben**, director of planning services at ISO New England, and **Dave Westman**, director of regulatory and state agency affairs at Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC), participated in a panel discussion moderated by **Jamie Dickerson**, senior director of clean energy and climate programs at Acadia Center and CLGCC member (Rhode Island).

Dickerson introduced the topic of energy efficiency and [presented](#) the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy 2025 energy efficiency scorecard, followed by a snapshot of energy efficiency investments and savings in New England. Dickerson then discussed the forecasted load growth and increased peak demand. Citing a Brattle Group study on grid flexibility in New York, Dickerson highlighted the potential for grid flexibility in New England. Dickerson then introduced the panelists.

Perben [presented](#) on forecasting regional electricity use, introducing the annual Capacity, Energy, Loads, and Transmission (CELT) Report and highlighting the variables considered in those forecasts. Perben presented the impact of energy efficiency and behind the meter solar on the forecasted peak demand and annual energy use. Providing a summary of updates to the forecast methodology for this cycle, Perben explained how the changes address challenges associated with the previous methodology as the region has changed over time. Perben then discussed forthcoming changes to the capacity market, including a shift from a forward market to a prompt market, and from an annual market to a seasonal market.

Westman [presented](#) on the role of Efficiency Vermont and highlighted energy efficiency participating in the wholesale markets. Westman summarized how market revenues are reinvested in weatherization and rebates and technical assistance for commercial and industrial customers, including engaging with ski areas to replace existing snow making equipment with more efficient options. Westman concluded with a discussion of the benefits associated with demand side resources, highlighting how energy efficiency can continue to evolve in New England.

Feldman [presented](#) the historical and forecasted participation of Rhode Island energy efficiency programs in New England's forward capacity market. Feldman then presented summer peak forecasts and the impact of distributed energy resources on the distribution system in Rhode Island. Following a summary of the various benefits associated with energy efficiency plans on residential, income eligible, and commercial and industrial customers, Feldman discussed the cost of supply and bill impacts resulting from energy efficiency programs. Feldman concluded by encouraging attendees to participate in their local energy efficiency programs.

A question-and-answer period followed and panelists answered questions related to ISO New England moving toward a longer-term, hourly forecasting methodology; how program administrators (PAs) plan to adapt to the evolution of wholesale electricity markets; forecasting for shiftable loads; PA communication with customers; rate impacts of energy efficiency; demand for

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energy efficiency programs; degrowth; the future of energy efficiency; and, the accuracy of ISO's long-term forecasts.

“Rethinking Load Growth in U.S. Power Systems”

Tyler Norris, fellow and Ph.D. student at Duke University Nicholas School of the Environment, [presented](#) on a recent publication to support regulators and stakeholders as they identify strategies to accommodate load growth without compromising on state policy objectives. The report focused on data center load growth and associated challenges for regulators. Norris presented the implications of this load growth on system planning and resource interconnection, followed by highlighting potential opportunities for load flexibility and recent trends. To conclude, Norris recounted the study results, including curtailment-enabled headroom and annual hours of curtailment, and discussed state-level actions that could enable large load flexibility.

Closing Remarks

Regine Spector, associate professor at University of Massachusetts Department of Political Science and CLGCC co-chair, offered closing remarks and thanked the presenters and organizers of the CLG meeting. The next CLG meeting will be held on June 4 in Massachusetts.

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