

WOMEN'S CITY CLUB OF NEW YORK

**POSITION APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
January 30, 2008**

ENHANCING ENERGY EFFICIENCY

COMMITTEE: INFRASTRUCTURE

Chair: Joan S. Freilich

Vice-Chair: Marjorie K. Shea

MOTION:

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BACKGROUND:

The first energy efficiency program in the U.S. was Con Edison's Save-A-Watt program, initiated by Chairman Charles Luce in 1971 in response to soaring energy costs and supply shortages. Since then, a variety of energy-savings programs have been available to New Yorkers, primarily through local utilities and the NY State Energy Research and Development Authority, including incentives for the use of more energy-efficient equipment and appliances, incorporation of "green" building elements in new construction codes, and consumer education campaigns to raise awareness. Nevertheless, energy consumption per capita, as well as total energy consumption, has continued to increase, with the proliferation of air conditioners, large screen TVs, cell phones and other electronic devices. Over the decade 1995-2005, New Yorkers' electricity usage rose almost three times as fast as the population grew.¹ Today, energy consumption in the City accounts for roughly 80% of our global-warming emissions and more than 40% of all locally generated air pollution.²

RATIONALE:

Unchecked, New York's peak electricity demand – the highest amount of electricity we will need at a single point in time – is projected to grow by 29% by 2030.² Total electricity consumption is projected to rise by 44% or more and our consumption of heating fuels by 14%.² Aggressive energy efficiency and load management measures could significantly reduce this growth in usage. Examples include installation of more efficient lighting, appliances and motors; programmable thermostats; time of use pricing, and HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) tuning. Some programs may be mandated by the State or City, but most will be pursued through education, training and financial incentives. In New York State, most such programs are authorized by the Public Service Commission, and the cost is borne by all energy consumers, through their utility rates. Consumers who are able to reduce their own energy usage as a result can see significant net savings over time.

FOLLOW-UP:

The WCC supports the development and implementation of cost-effective energy efficiency and demand reduction programs to be accomplished through legislative or regulatory requirements, targeted incentives, and public education and outreach. The WCC will evaluate related proposals and issues as they are presented, and will undertake advocacy and education actions consistent with current WCC positions and policies.

¹ Source: Con Edison, Inc. 2006 Annual Report

² Source: PlaNYC, April 2007