

# Infrastructure Initiative Breakfast Thursday, May 21, 2015

**City Hall Restaurant  
131 Duane Street (lower Manhattan)**

**8 a.m. - 10 a.m.**



May 18, 2015

Dear Friend,

At this very moment, we are losing the opportunity to create over 10,000 new jobs in the state of New York. No matter where you look newly proposed energy, transportation and conservation projects are being opposed by various interest groups and elected officials, who seem to lack perspective on the importance of these projects to New York's crumbling infrastructure and our economy at large.

**The New York Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance ([NYAREA](#)), the Business and Labor Coalition of New York ([BALCONY](#)) and Liberty Natural Gas** are joining forces to help map the way to a better future. We propose an Infrastructure Initiative for an open and frank discussion on how unions and businesses, as well as advocates and other parties can come together to demonstrate support for infrastructure projects in a meaningful, effective manner.

**We invite you to join us on Thursday, May 21st at 8:00 a.m. at the City Hall Restaurant, 131 Duane Street in lower Manhattan, for a complimentary breakfast** meeting that will feature speakers including policy makers, union leaders, representatives of environmental and consumer groups, and project sponsors. As a coalition and alliance we hope to find common ground between all of these players to evaluate these projects and how to improve our state's infrastructure in order to create good jobs, improve the safety and sustainability of our communities and grow New York's economy.

This is the time for a serious conversation on how to address infrastructure in our state and to develop an action plan for encouraging civic engagement through education, outreach. It's time to demonstrate the depth and breadth of public support for upgrading our infrastructure projects and the willingness to pay for it. It's time to engage our citizens, our neighbors, and our elected officials on what may well be the most critical public policy issue of our time.

Among the projects we plan to discuss are:

- AMTRAK Funding
- The NYC Capital Plan
- The MTA Capital Plan
- Port Ambrose LNG Terminal (700 jobs)
- DeLalio Sod Farm Solar Array (70 jobs)
- Constitution Pipeline (1,300 jobs)
- Hudson River Rail Tunnel
- Cross-harbor rail freight tunnel
- Deepwater Wind (2,864 jobs)
- Caithness II on Long Island (400 jobs).

Please join us on MAY 21<sup>st</sup> and RSVP to  
Richard Thomas (212-683-1203) or [thomas@area-alliance.org](mailto:thomas@area-alliance.org)  
Lou Gordon (212-219-7777) or [loug@balconynewyork.com](mailto:loug@balconynewyork.com)

Sincerely,

Jerry Kremer, Chairman, NY AREA | [ajkremer@rmfpc.com](mailto:ajkremer@rmfpc.com)  
Lou Gordon, BALCONY Director 212-219-7777 | [loug@balconynewyork.com](mailto:loug@balconynewyork.com)  
Richard Thomas, NY AREA Executive Director | 212-683-1203 | [thomas@area-alliance.org](mailto:thomas@area-alliance.org)  
Michael Locker, President, Locker Associates | [lockerassociates@yahoo.com](mailto:lockerassociates@yahoo.com)

## **BALCONY Infrastructure Initiative Mission Statement April 2015**

The Business and Labor Coalition of New York (BALCONY) was founded in the spirit of achieving common sense, common ground solutions to the most pressing public policy issues confronting New Yorkers. Infrastructure is perhaps the most critical policy issue currently impacting the well-being of our citizenry and the future of our city and its economy. And it is in dire need of repair and restoration. Infrastructure affects all of us regardless of economic status - from work, housing, education, and public safety to the air we breathe and the water we drink. It cannot be ignored. And yet it is hugely underfunded and under-appreciated - only grabbing headlines in the wake of crises such as the collapse of a bridge, a train crash, a major storm, or a burst water main.

From crumbling, dangerous roads, bridges, subways and commuter rail, to outdated water, sewage, energy, and gas systems to overcrowded, deteriorating classrooms and hospitals, courtrooms and prisons, New York's infrastructure is woefully inadequate to meet current demands. This will only increase as the city's population is expected to grow by 1 million in the next two decades. Our collective inaction presents a growing danger to all New Yorkers and inhibits the City's growth and prosperity.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 2013 report, 4,718 New York State bridges are functionally obsolete, 60% of our major roads are in poor or mediocre condition and 2,169 are structurally deficient - numbers that, obviously, don't account for the recent major damage that occurred as a result of the storms and long winter of 2015. Our schools need \$2.1 billion in infrastructure funding. In New York City, according to a recent report by the Center for an Urban Future, the average age of our sewer mains is 84 years old and our water mains average 69 years, resulting in more than 400 leaks in almost every year since 1998, an average of 4 water main breaks a day, and the loss of 24% of the water piped into the City. Additionally, 60% of Con Edison gas mains are made of outmoded and leak-prone materials, 37% of our subway signal systems have exceeded their 50-year useful life. Even our vaunted hospitals are, on average, 57 years old.

Recognizing that infrastructure is in crisis, and that this is an issue that equally affects both our business and labor members, BALCONY has decided to undertake an Infrastructure Initiative. Our BALCONY initiative will mobilize our members, as well as advocates and experts, in an innovative way to address the deplorable state of infrastructure in New York State and specifically in the New York City metro region. We will seek to raise civic awareness, explore solutions, and accomplish meaningful change in infrastructure funding and policy through public education, forums, media engagement, dialogue, lobbying, and legislation.

A concerted, sincere, and nonpartisan effort to repair and modernize our infrastructure so that it is functional and up to date, is a necessity that cannot wait and requires the efforts and cooperation of business, contractors, building trade unions, advocates, experts, and our elected officials.