

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

BALCONY Unites Business, Labor for Common Purpose

Employing a spirit of cooperation and collaboration, the Business and Labor Coalition of New York (BALCONY) has been at the forefront of seeking common ground among business and labor within the Empire State. Founded in 2006 by Alan Lubin, Executive Vice President of New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and Bruce Ventimiglia, Chairman of the Saratoga Capital Management, BALCONY has been recognized as an effective, non-partisan coalition that has advanced significant public policy initiatives beneficial to businesses and workers alike.

“BALCONY represents a new era in collaboration and cooperation between employers, who want to share their successes with the people who labor on their behalf and employees who want their businesses to thrive in this challenging global economy,” said Mr. Lubin. “We seek common ground because we realize we are all in this together and when we work together, we have a far greater chance at achieving our mutual goals.”

Representing businesses, labor unions, chambers of commerce and advocacy organizations such as New York AREA, BALCONY adheres to the principles that the success of business and labor are uniquely intertwined – and that an informed and active membership can achieve great results. As BALCONY Executive Director Lou Gordon, a former journalist and political veteran noted, “We formed BALCONY the old fashion way – one member at a time.”

In 2008, BALCONY joined New York AREA, citing New York AREA’s focus on infrastructure, renewable energy and promoting the growth of a new generation of green-collar jobs. “New York AREA is very responsive to us as members. The projects and initiatives they support reflect those that interest BALCONY, especially those that bolster the New York economy like infrastructure upgrades and energy reliance,” said Mr. Gordon.

BALCONY has also achieved much notoriety for their series of public forums. These events, which have featured the likes of New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, Port Authority Executive Director Christopher Ward, New York City Comptroller William Thompson and former Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond Chairman Dr. Thomas Mackell, Jr.,

have enabled BALCONY members the unique opportunity to personally interact with key policy makers. Topics at these forums have included healthcare, infrastructure, pensions and the economy.

“At BALCONY we are dedicated to developing solutions to the complex issues facing New York State, including health care, economic security, education and infrastructure funding,” stated Mr. Ventimiglia. “Our coalition of business and labor is meeting the challenges of all New Yorkers by working together to address the important issues that we are all confronted with.”

BALCONY is concerned and working towards maintaining the economic viability of New York businesses. “Energy cost is a major component of a business’s bottom line,” said Mr. Gordon. He also expressed the importance of the Metropolitan Transit Authority’s (MTA) infrastructure and capital plan moving forward and the finalization of the \$3.3 billion Port Authority capital plan in



At a recent forum, BALCONY Co-Chair Alan Lubin (l) joined New York City District Council of Carpenters Political Director Steve McInnis (r) to discuss the state of New York's infrastructure.

order to secure the jobs and infrastructure upgrades that are needed in New York. “We’re also supportive of state-funded infrastructure investment that will continuously allow for improvement of the conditions of New York’s roads and bridges,” added Mr. Gordon.

BALCONY is headquartered in New York City with affiliates in Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse. For more information on BALCONY, visit their website at www.balconynewyork.com, or call Executive Director Lou Gordon at (212) 219-7777. *



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* Conditions of membership apply. For more details send inquiries to info@area-alliance.org. New York AREA is a 501(c)(6) IRS Tax-Exempt Organization that advocates for reliable, affordable, and clean energy solutions, as well as conservation measures, for New York and all New Yorkers.