

## Annual Report 2024

## **Meeting the Moment**

A Message from President Daniel L. Sosland

#### Dear Friends,

The country is at a pivotal moment in the fight for a clean energy and safe climate future. Science is firm that climate change poses a dire threat to the health and welfare of people and to the economic future of our communities. Local communities are seeing the negative impacts firsthand through worsening weather, rising energy bills, and public health risks from fossil fuels. Yet, the tools needed to reduce climate pollution are the very same needed to make communities more resilient to changes in weather, improve housing, offer healthier air and better transportation options to rural and urban residents, and gain control over energy costs. Sound data and real-world examples make the case that a clean energy future advances economic and quality of life benefits.

The new federal administration has moved aggressively to roadblock progress to build the clean energy future we, our children, and our economic future deserve. It seeks to turn the clock backwards in ways that will harm—not improve consumers and communities. These are policies that will damage the region, the nation, and to generations to come.

Federal reaction against common sense presents a challenge. Acadia Center is focused on using its tools to continue to shape and implement progress at the local, state and regional levels.

For a quarter of a century, Acadia Center has been guided by the conviction that actions designed to improve the lives of all residents—that reduce costs, improve public health, and build stronger, clean economies—are the most powerful response to the urgent challenges we face. Our journey has been defined by milestones that reflect our steadfast dedication to building the momentum needed to achieve ambitious goals.

At this time, the role of state and local governments and regional cooperation is vital. These are the places at the forefront of efforts to implement clean energy solutions, combat climate change, and protect the health and well-being of communities. Acadia Center is providing the tools, data, and strategic advocacy needed to advance progressive policies, rebut misinformation, and ensure that the momentum for a clean energy future continues unabated.

Acadia Center believes in the spirit of innovation, collaboration, and ambition. Together, we will continue to push boundaries, build coalitions, and drive the transformative change needed to secure a sustainable future for generations to come.

Thank you for standing with our team in this critical work. Your support is the foundation of our success, and together, we will rise to meet the challenges ahead with resilience and resolve.

Onward!

Daniel L. Sosland President



## Letter from the Board Chair

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It is with a profound sense of purpose and determination that we present the 2024 Acadia Center Annual Report. This year has been one of both challenges and triumphs, as we navigate a political landscape that has often been at odds with the urgent need for climate action and clean energy progress. Acadia Center has remained steadfast in its mission, proving that our collective resolve is stronger than any setback.

At the heart of Acadia Center's work lies an unwavering commitment to advancing equitable, science-based solutions for a healthier planet and more resilient communities. In a time when federal climate and clean energy policies have been rolled back and environmental protections weakened; our role has never been more critical. We have responded by doubling down on our efforts at the state and regional levels, forging innovative partnerships, and amplifying the voices of those most impacted by climate change and environmental injustice.

This year's accomplishments are a testament to the passion and dedication of Acadia Center's team, partners, and supporters. Together, we have pushed forward groundbreaking policies, empowered communities, and laid the groundwork for a clean energy future—even in the face of adversity. What sets us apart is not just our vision, but our ability to turn that vision into action, even when the path is steep. As we look ahead, we are filled with both urgency and hope. The challenges are significant, but they are no match for the power of a united movement. We are deeply grateful for your unwavering support, your tireless advocacy, and your belief in the mission of Acadia Center. Together, we are not just shaping policies—we are shaping a future where communities thrive, the planet is protected, and justice is at the forefront of every decision.

Thank you for standing with us in this critical work. Your commitment fuels our determination to keep pushing forward, no matter the obstacles. Together, we will continue to make a difference.

With gratitude and resolve,

Phyllis Theermann Board Chair



## 2024 at a glance

98

49

19

2

times featured in major news outlets on national trends, consumer costs, clean energy progress, and rebuttals to bad information

**clean energy statements and testimonies** on a wide range of reforms and issues such as requiring consumer friendly changes to utility regulation, and adopting standards and definitions for environmental justice

**public presentations** on energy efficiency, consumer costs, clean energy alternatives, and complex utility and power grid reform needs

pioneering reports shaping public health and community involvement

coalitions, working groups, and boards that Acadia Center participated in

## and in **2025** Acadia Center will

- **Debunk disinformation** in rapid response releases, Explainer series, and commentary on new legislation.
- Fight to lessen the energy burden on communities most impacted by climate change.
- Pursue progress at the state and local level to stay on target for the clean energy and climate goals the region has set for 2030.
- Find new, mutually beneficial opportunities for cooperation across state and national borders, showing that everyone benefits by working together.



# **Advocate**

Acadia Center's 25 years of advocating within communities, state houses, and across regions will help push progress forward if the federal government stalls.

## Promoting a Clean Energy Grid, Advancing Equity, and Protecting Ratepayers

**The Problem:** Municipalities and residents are directly impacted in their pocketbooks and energy costs by decisions made in complex regional and state energy deliberations.

The electric power grid is the backbone of the electricity system, a network of transmission lines, substations, and local distribution that delivers electricity to our homes and businesses. Why is addressing the grid important? Because consumers pay billions of dollars annually to support it and decisions made impact whether climate and clean energy goals will be met and equity and cost issues will be fairly addressed.

We are living in a period of rising energy costs: grid-related costs are among the largest and fastest rising on our bills and least understood. A system that has historically been engineered to deliver one way power from large generating stations to our homes and businesses needs a major pivot to support energy generation that is home and community based, connect transmission lines to wind projects, and technologies that offer enhanced computer controls to save money and avoid overbuilding.



Acadia Center is tackling the need for the power grid to evolve with a comprehensive approach at all relevant levels—regional, interregional, state and communities:

- Power Grids Should Embrace Clean Energy Solutions, Not Create Barriers: We are supporting and influencing new approaches to grid infrastructure planning so that clean energy and local options are considered.
- Energy Companies Deserve Reasonable Profits Not Excess Ones: Outdated approaches to the ways utilities and transmission companies earn revenue can lead them to invest in high return projects that ignore lower cost and effective approaches. As a result, consumers are overcharged, and the system is not modernized. This has to change.
- Optimizing Energy Resources Across Power Grids Should Not Be Constrained by Artificial Boundaries: Power grids are defined by historically determined boundaries, not by how resources across boundaries can be optimized for overall benefit. This archaic approach is costing consumers billions while ignoring ways to accelerate decarbonization and provide cleaner air.
- Equity, Rural and Environmental Justice Are Front and Center Priorities: The opportunity to provide a cleaner, healthier system is historic and needs to be designed to benefit rural, and environmental justice residents. Improved planning and stakeholder engagement are key.

At Acadia Center, this work takes the form of engaging in regional power grid committees, such as the Consumer Liaison Group, where Acadia Center's Jamie Dickerson is a member and organized a full meeting session to bring attention to the consumer and system benefits of using energy more efficiently; to complex discussions within power grid policy groups that have decision-making over core planning and incentives like the NEPOOL End User Group; to filings before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in coalition or solo comments and interventions in multiple state regulatory proceedings to modernize the ways utilities are incentivized, so they are focused on the goals of cleaner energy, healthier air, a stable climate, and community resiliency and we are actively seeking ways to improve siting, permitting, and removing barriers to public and community participation in these decisions. Consumers pay for this system: they deserve that it be responsive to their needs and pocketbooks.



## Combatting Disinformation Campaigns that Target Clean Energy

**The Problem:** Misinformation travels quickly, and often without nuance or context, especially when it comes to climate and clean energy.

Energy, climate, cost, and consumer policies depend on sound information so that decisionmakers and the public can make the right choices. Acadia Center has long used its unique in-house data and analytic capacity to not only produce recommendations and solutions, but to rebut false information. Too often, those that oppose the transition to a cleaner future issue statements that mislead the public over sensitive issues like costs and benefits.

In 2024, Acadia Center deployed its Rapid Response capacity to rebut a report claiming that the cost of clean energy could cost consumers billions in excess payments. Key elements of the report failed to withstand basic analytical scrutiny, presenting an inaccurate picture of valuable energy infrastructure investments. The misleading analysis grossly inflated the cost of energy storage, overlooked enormous costs borne by ratepayers under today's fossil grid. Acadia Center's team jumped on this flawed analysis, and on the same day issued an informed critique, showing for example that the study used highly unrealistic costs, and was otherwise flawed in its analysis. This Rapid Response was done in time for the news cycle, where Acadia Center's critique was included in press coverage of the report, greatly diminishing its impact. ACADIA CENTER'S TIMELY REBUTTAL OF A MISLEADING RENEWABLE ENERGY REPORT GREATLY DIMINISHED ITS NEGATIVE IMPACT IN THE NEWS CYCLE:



#### Report On Costs Stirs Clean Energy Debate

Critics Say Report Fails To Capture Region's Existing Spending On Fossil Fuels State House News | Nov. 19th, 2024

TELEGRAM & GAZETTE

Report warns of huge costs from green energy mandates in New England, but critics cry foul

Telegram & Gazette | Nov. 20th, 2024



New report claims New England emissions goals may mean higher electricity costs WMUR | Nov. 19th, 2024

Portland Press Herald

#### New England states' renewable energy push blasted as too costly by free-market advocates

Clean energy supporters and environmentalists pushed back, calling the conservative groups' conclusions inaccurate and misleading. Portland Press Herald | Nov. 20th, 2024

# Implement

Acadia Center recognizes the importance of staying at the table to ensure proposed climate solutions are implemented efficiently and fairly and ensure accurate information is the basis for decisions that affect resident in their pocketbooks, public health, and environmental quality.



#### THE NORTHEAST GRID PLANNING FORUM

BETWEEN THE POWER GRIDS OF NORTHEAST NORTH AMERICA

DANIEL SOSLAND, ACADIA CENTER & FRÉDÉRIC CÔTÉ, NERGICA www.northeostarid.org



## Ensuring Stakeholder Voices are Heard

**The Problem:** Modernizing energy systems to provide reliable, affordable service that meets the climate challenge is a critical task now squarely facing governments, industry, and citizens across the United States and Canada.

Modernizing energy systems to provide reliable, affordable service that meets the climate challenge is a critical task now squarely facing governments, industry and citizens. Acadia Center has been hard at work alongside our partner Nergica on a Northeast Grid Planning Forum (NGPF), which will allow cooperation on energy system planning across the U.S.- Canada border.

The Northeast Grid Planning Forum is a deliberative stakeholder process designed to formalize and deepen collaboration among northeast U.S. states and Canadian provinces around interregional energy system improvements, "Mitigating community impacts is imperative to earn public support for infrastructure build-out to fight climate change"

– Dan Sosland, Acadia Center President

including grid planning coordination, two-way power flows and community engagement.

The Forum will be convened via three roundtable processes:

- 1) Environmental justice and community mobilization
- 2) Interregional planning
- 3) Clean energy procurement and markets development

Working together and in close coordination with civil society, labor and industry, participating jurisdictions will create and deploy a shared policy, legal, regulatory, and market/tariff toolset. This toolset will advance the development of the next-generation power network which will serve as the backbone of the energy transition across the region, capturing the climate, clean energy procurement, and consumer benefits of grid integration.

By catalyzing discussions amongst energy planners, government leaders and community and stakeholder interests, NGPF seeks to deepen the conversation about the potential benefits of coordination and facilitate thoughtful, cross-border responses to the wide range of policy and social concerns regarding energy system planning.

### In 2024, the Northeast Grid Planning Forum accomplished the following:

- Convened three high-level stakeholder roundtables featuring remarks from prominent state and provincial leaders, including Katie Dykes, Commissioner of Connecticut's Department of Energy & Environmental Protection and Pascal Cormier, Deputy Chief of Staff at the Quebec Ministry of Economy, Innovation and Energy.
- Maintained active engagement throughout the year with state and provincial elected officials, utilities, and balancing authorities across New England, New York, and Atlantic Canada, contributing to the re-establishment of the Northeast International Committee on Energy.
- Finalized the project's framing paper and launched our LinkedIn presence, expanding our outreach and visibility.
- Canadian co-lead Frederic Cote showcased the NGPF project to leading figures in Canada's offshore wind and marine renewables sector
- Acadia Center President Daniel Sosland delivered presentations at major industry events, including the Restructuring Roundtable in Boston and the Oceantic Network's New England Forum and Atlantic Canada Offshore Wind Forum in Portland
- Advanced a first-of-its kind open-source energy capacity modeling tool with representatives of the Canadian federal government in Ottawa



- Submitted expert testimony to Canada's federal Standing Committee on Natural Resources, emphasizing the critical need for improved cross-border and interregional transmission planning.
- Hosted the expert panel "Bridging the Power Gap: How Bidirectional Clean Energy Benefits the US Northeast and Eastern Canada," attracting over 100 participants from state, provincial, clean energy, and community sectors. The event received press coverage in trade publication RTO Insider and State House News Service.
- Sustained regular communication with a network of over 600 stakeholders across government, industry, community-based, environmental justice, and First Nations stakeholders.
- Partnered with leading energy system modelers at Princeton University ZERO Lab, Canada's Energy Modeling Hub, and Europe's Open Energy Transition to propose a groundbreaking open-source capacity modeling tool for the Northeast US/Canada electric grid.

# Research

Acadia Center is committed to finding solutions that provide ambitious but pragmatic visions of how to attain the clean energy future before it's too late. Our research will always be expert, unbiased, and mindful of communities most impacted by the changing climate in our region and beyond.



## RGGI Funds in Action: Insights into the Allocation of RGGI Proceeds

**The Problem:** Despite raising billions of dollars of proceeds, where those proceeds have been allocated lacks transparency.

Since its inception in 2008, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) has generated \$8.3 billion in proceeds for participating states. These proceeds are used by participating states to fund programs that advance clean energy, reduce emissions, and save consumers energy and money. This Report dives into the details of RGGI proceeds generation, spending, and reporting, aiming to show where investments are currently going and how these allocations contribute to reducing emissions and remedying inequitable impacts. It also identifies where gaps persist in RGGI states' deployment of program proceeds and offers recommendations on RGGI proceeds investments including environmental justice prioritization, improved reporting, and enhanced governance structures. Acadia Center recommends four key actions that should be taken by RGGI-participating states:

- Establish a requirement that a minimum of 40%-50% of RGGI proceeds are invested in EJ and other underserved communities, setting a value that does not change even if other RGGI funds are raided/diverted.
- Clearly articulate how EJ communities are being defined across all RGGI states and identify in greater detail how these definitions inform which investments are considered as equity and EJ-related.
- Invest in energy efficiency and other clean energy measures as soon as possible to avoid lengthy gaps between auctions and committed/realized investments, address existing energy burdens, and lock in higher lifetime energy and emissions savings.
- Enhance transparency by publishing detailed breakdowns of proceed allocations going toward EJ and equity priorities for each state, including low-income households. This should be done from both RGGI, Inc.'s reports and state agencies' reports on RGGI spending.

"We've known from the start that RGGI benefits everyone in the participating states. But there's always room for improvement, and the Acadia Center report shows us how RGGI can do a better job of cleaning the air in EJ communities. This is an important contribution to the public's review of RGGI."



## The Energy is About to Shift

**The Problem:** Communities have been left out of the decarbonization decision-making process.

We believe in partnerships to amplify our impact and expertise, therefore we partnered up with Clean Air Task Force (CATF) to examine the critical role that community engagement will play in meeting New England's 2050 decarbonization goals. The report highlights the opportunity to accelerate the region's clean energy progress by addressing local concerns and better equipping communities to meaningfully participate in siting and approval processes. Drawing from prominent case studies around the region, the report also identifies promising options for developers, communities, and policymakers to improve project planning and engagement, helping reduce the risk of failures, legal challenges, and delays. Without comprehensive reforms to improve community engagement processes and modernize siting and permitting policies, the region's clean energy transition risks significant delays and setbacks.

Solutions for meaningful community engagement around clean energy infrastructure siting.

This report summarizes the findings of a year-long assessment, offering options and opportunities for both state and local governments, as well as for community stakeholders and project developers. As New England transitions from fossil fuels to a decarbonized, renewable grid, the success of this transformation will depend on active and meaningful community engagement. Without local buy-in, critical clean energy projects will continue to face significant headwinds and delays, putting the region's climate goals at risk.



### **Our Team**

#### **2024 STAFF**

SAM BEAIRSTO Deputy Director, Communications and Development **BEN BUTTERWORTH** Director: Climate, Energy & Equity Analysis (CLEAN-E) JAMIE DICKERSON Senior Director, Clean Energy and Climate Programs **CAROLYN DYKEMA** Senior Project Manager: Strategic Engagement **KRISTEN KANEB** Grants and Relationships Associate **EMILY KOO** Senior Policy Advocate and Rhode Island Program Director **PETER LAFOND** Senior Policy Advocate and Maine Program Director JOE LARUSSO Senior Advocate and Manager of the Clean Grid Initiative PAOLA MONCADA TAMAYO Policy Analyst **KYLE MURRAY** Director, State Program Implementation **JILL PETERSON** Creative Director **ANNA POPLAVSKA** RMI Electric Transmission Fellow SARAH SALKOWSKI Staff Writer & Communications Associate **DANIEL L. SOSLAND** President **CHELSEA SPRAGUE** Deputy Director, Finance and Operations **OLIVER TULLY** Director, Utility Innovation & Reform **JAYSON VELAZQUEZ** Climate and Energy Justice Policy Associate JOY YAKIE Environmental Justice & Outreach Manager

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REVENUE

GRANTS

 CONTRIBUTIONS
GOVERNMENT & OTHER INCOME

**EXPENSES** 

MANAGEMENTDEVELOPMENT

• PROGRAM

REVENUE SOURCE	2023 AUDITED
GRANTS	\$1,784,967
INDIVIDUAL DONORS	\$265,685
GOV'T & OTHER INCOME	\$351,959
SUBTOTAL FUNDS RECEIVED	\$2,401,711
GRANTS AWARDED NOT YET RECEIVED	\$1,020,000
TOTAL REVENUE RECOGNIZED (990 BASIS)	\$3,421,711

EXPENSES	2023 AUDITED	NET ASSETS	2023 AUDITED
PROGRAM	\$1,755,794	TOTAL ASSETS	\$4,191,484
MANAGEMENT	\$156,939	GRANTS AWARDED NOT YET RECEIVED	\$1,020,000
DEVELOPMENT	\$113,603	TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$179,934
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,026,336	FUND BALANCE	\$5,031,550
		INCREASE TO FUND BALANCE From Previous year	\$1,395,375



REVENUE SOURCE	2024 AUDITED
GRANTS	\$2,543,809
INDIVIDUAL DONORS	\$220,781
GOV'T & OTHER INCOME	\$136,717
SUBTOTAL FUNDS RECEIVED	\$2,901,307
GRANTS AWARDED NOT YET RECEIVED	\$1,025,000
TOTAL REVENUE RECOGNIZED (990 BASIS)	\$3,926,307

EXPENSES	2024 AUDITED	NET ASSETS	2024 AUDITED
PROGRAM	\$1,978,775	TOTAL ASSETS	\$5,902,629
MANAGEMENT	\$139,325	GRANTS AWARDED NOT YET RECEIVED	\$1,025,000
DEVELOPMENT	\$115,098	TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$202,970
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,233,198	FUND BALANCE	\$6,724,659
		INCREASE TO FUND BALANCE From previous year	\$947,810

## **Thanks to you!**

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