The Energy Affordability and Reliability Action Team plan creates recommendations for greater energy affordability and reliability, maximizing the amount of electricity generated in-state, reducing reliance on PJM Interconnection, and lowering emissions while supporting job and infrastructure growth.

The report featured recommendations designed to assist with mitigating the immediate impact of future electricity supply price spikes while working long-term to reign in utility profits. Additionally, it is recommended that New Jersey aggressively pursue a New Jersey Energy First approach to get new, cheaper energy online.

To deliver on making energy more affordable and reliable, the Transition Action Team propose these key recommendations:

- Freezing rising electricity costs Report of the Energy Affordability and Reliability Action Team
- and stabilizing bills long-term.
- Increasing homegrown power generation to right-size the current supply and demand.
- Hold PJM accountable and protect New Jersey ratepayers.
- Additional policy measures to consider delivering affordable, reliable, and cleaner energy to New Jersey ratepayers.

Freezing Rising Electricity Costs and Stabilizing Bills Long-Term

The recommendations include shielding ratepayers from PJM-driven cost increases and collaborating with electric utilities to freeze rates. It also includes the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) opening an affordability docket to reform the utility spending-driven revenue model including aligning utility earnings with affordability; implementing performance-based regulation more comprehensively; strengthening cost controls; and improving retail competition opportunities.

Leveraging investments in Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) to reduce energy usage and costs was also recommended.

Increase Home-Grown Power Generation to Right-Size the Current Supply and Demand Imbalance in New Jersey

The recommendations included rapidly launching new solar and storage solicitations to build the largest pipeline of new capacity in New Jersey history. This includes Day One instructions to the BPU prioritize: Rolling out the legislatively required 3GW CSEP solicitation; opening new and bigger Competitive Solar Incentive and Administratively Determined Incentive solicitations; considering indexed solar renewable energy credits and more solar plus storage for future solicitations; opening a new GSESP transmission-scale storage solicitation; expediting the roll out of the distributed storage

program with a capacity block for electric distribution company participation; and establishing a clear regulatory framework clarifying and overcoming net-energy metering constraints to facilitate co-located, behind-the-meter combined-heat and power (CHP) and solar plus storage for large businesses.

As PJM's supply and demand crunch is projected to worse over the next few years, a recommendation wass protecting existing generating units and develop long-term strategy to build more baseload generation. This includes deploying new in-state generation resources and potentially leveraging two existing Nuclear Regulatory Commission pre-approved sites.

An additional recommendation was streamlining clean energy permit reviews and removing barriers slowing project development. Streamlining opportunities include standardizing utility interconnection, making it easier to build, and reducing permitting uncertainty.

The report suggests developing and administering new voluntary demand response/Virtual Power Plant programs to drive down peak demand and enable fullest participation possible in PJM's markets.

Leveling up Regional Leadership to Hold PJM Accountable and Protect New Jersey Ratepayers

Under the suggestions was advocating to extend the price cap on PJM's capacity auction, improve interconnection queue review times, and push PJM to improve transparency in governance, and demand a seat for states at the table. PJM should revise its existing interconnection processes to match the 150-day study timeline required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) Order 2023; create a fast-track process for projects in areas with available transmission headroom, avoiding lengthy network upgrades to get projects online fast; and follow the example of other regional transmission operators and implement available, third-party software to automate and speed up its interconnection study process.

Leading regional effort to combat "ghost" load and improve load growth projections and. developing State policy on large load interconnection to shield residents and businesses from cost increases stemming from skyrocketing demand growth, possibly requiring data centers to "bring your own new generation" were recommended. As was expanding the BPU's regulatory authority to include the review of supplemental transmission projects, which would help protect ratepayers from potentially unnecessary infrastructure investments.

Additional Policy Measures to Consider to Deliver Affordable, Reliable, and Cleaner Energy to New Jersey Ratepayers

The final recommendation of the report suggested exploring creating a standalone State Energy Office to allow for the State's ability to rapidly advance energy goals.

This report of the Transition Team and the recommendations in the report were not unanimously supported.