

Long Island Association



2023 POLICY PRIORITIES

www.longislandassociation.org

The LIA's 10 Most Important Priorities for 2023

Advance transformative economic development, including Midway Crossing, the Nassau Hub, and modernization of Belmont Racetrack

Advocate for state incentives for local governments and developers to diversify our housing stock

Oppose any new laws and mandates that increase costs for our region's small businesses and make it harder for them to operate

Support a clean energy economy and jobs while ensuring CLCPA energy regulations assess grid reliability and financial burden

Ensure the state addresses the MTA budget and that the LIRR receives an equitable share of funding

Advance collaborative, inclusive economic development to support the growth of the overall economy

Ensure the Legislative Commission on the Future of LIPA examines all options for our electric utility operating model

Urge the state to address pressing public safety issues including strengthening the bail laws

Turbo-charge our economy by capitalizing on our research and academic assets and create jobs through innovation

Expand eligibility for safe, affordable, and equitable child care and support the child care workforce



Long Island's
Future is our Business

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Photos on cover: Top left - Belmont Racetrack (photo credit NYRA); Top right - Grand Central Madison (photo credit Marc A. Hermann/MTA); Middle - Aerial view of Long Island; Bottom left - the Alston in Ronkonkoma (photo credit Tritec Real Estate LLC); Bottom right - Offshore Wind (photo credit - Ørsted)

Long Island's Future is Our Business.

Introduction

The Long Island Association (LIA) has been advocating for our region's economic development on the federal, state, and local levels of government since 1926 and is a non-partisan organization. Our core priorities are to ensure a positive business climate, support programs that create jobs and result in a return on investment, oppose any government policy that hinders economic growth, advocate for our region's fair share of funding, and guarantee a bright future for all Long Islanders.

In 2023, nearly all pandemic restrictions for businesses have been lifted, but we are combating inflation and interest rate levels not seen in decades. Many economists predict this will continue for the short-term, creating an uncertain operating environment for our region's business community.

Governments will face challenging choices in 2023 to maintain recent programmatic investments and at the same time exercise fiscal restraint as their Covid relief coffers dwindle.

We urge our elected officials to be innovative in addressing Long Island's challenges that continue to plague our economy. The LIA's following policy roadmap will address opportunities for growth and ensure a successful economic future.

Tackle Long Island's affordability, cost of living, and housing crisis.

Long Island has an affordability crisis - because the cost of living is too high, including housing, transportation, and child care - the suburban dream needs to be reimaged. On face value, national statistics may demonstrate that our poverty and income levels are better than the national average, but this does not consider regional cost differences. The LIA aims to partner with our government officials to develop creative solutions to serious challenges stunting our growth, cultivating an environment that allows residents and businesses to thrive.

- Partner with federal, state, and local officials and non-profit organizations to develop innovative solutions to diversify our housing stock and expand assistance and incentive programs for municipalities, residents, and developers, ranging from down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers to options for seniors.
- Support the expansion of safe, affordable, and equitable child care through greater federal and state investments and policies that expand eligibility and support the child care workforce, and advocate for an enhanced federal child tax credit.
- Build regional support for large-scale projects that will have a transformative impact on expanding the tax base and new jobs, like the Midway Crossing proposal in Ronkonkoma, the Nassau Hub, and other downtown transit-oriented developments.
- Explore the economic benefits that a destination resort and casino would create on Long Island.
- Build upon the world-class sports and entertainment complex at UBS Arena, home of the New York Islanders, and adjacent Belmont Racetrack by modernizing the racing facility and consolidating all downstate horseracing there.
- Advocate for the federal reinstatement of the State and local Tax Deduction (SALT).

Alleviate the economic pressures facing Long Island businesses.

We are in the fourth calendar year since Covid-19 changed our lives forever and shut down non-essential businesses for a period of time, and our region is currently facing economic pressures including cost of goods and high interest rates. Government officials should make policy decisions through the lens of the economic environment we are operating in. This includes:

- No new taxes or fees that negatively impact the business community.
- Continue grant and tax relief programs for small businesses.
- Restore the New York State Unemployment Insurance Fund so businesses do not shoulder the state's debt to the federal government as a result of the pandemic.
- Halt the advancement of federal and state efforts to enact single-payer healthcare, which would have a disastrous impact on the healthcare system and costs.

Create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive economy.

Long Island can only realize its full potential for economic success if all communities are participating. In 2023, the LIA will continue to work with partners to foster inclusive economic development, building upon relationships with the the Long Island African American Chamber of Commerce and Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and other chamber organizations across Long Island.

- Lead by example to ensure that our business community diversifies their workforce and corporate boards by hiring and appointing more people of color, women, veterans, and people with disabilities, which will contribute to their company's growth and overall success.

Continued: Create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive economy.

- Provide support to LIA members who strive to create a more inclusive workplace.
- Facilitate relationships for MWBE and veteran-owned certified small businesses who seek to be competitive with procurement opportunities.
- Partner with workforce development programs to connect the business community and trade unions with a pipeline of a diverse, highly skilled talent pool.
- Speak out against speech and actions that breeds hatred against marginalized groups.

Advocate for investments in our aging infrastructure.

A strong and efficient system of transit, roads, bridges, sewers, water, and broadband is key to economic growth. Governments should build upon the funding available through the federal bipartisan infrastructure package to continue to invest in modernization, leveraging public-private partnerships.

- Address the fiscal challenges facing the MTA LIRR in the state budget. The state should examine leveraging new revenue streams like sports betting, legalized cannabis, and the proposed downstate casinos, and allocate a fair share to our region.
- Allocate an equitable portion of congestion pricing funding to the LIRR and transit on Long Island in the event it is approved.
- Capitalize on the economic benefits of the Third Track and Grand Central Madison (connecting to the east side of Manhattan). The next transformative transit priorities should be electrification of the railroad east of Ronkonkoma, the redevelopment of Penn Station, and improved service at underserved LIRR branches.
- Ensure Long Island receives substantial funding from the Environmental Bond Act for infrastructure improvements approved by voters in 2022.

Continued: Advocate for investments in our aging infrastructure.

- Expand sewers, which is key to improving water quality, protecting our environment, and attracting businesses in our downtowns, such as Smithtown and Kings Park.
- Support investments to improve Long Island's drinking water and resources to treat emerging contaminants, an extremely costly process.
- Collaborate with Long Island MacArthur Airport (ISP) and the Town of Islip to make Long Island a destination with ISP as the gateway, promote the expansion of air service at ISP, and support intermodal connections with the LIRR Ronkonkoma Train Station.
- Advocate for streamlining the New York State Department of Transportation broadband permitting process to increase high-speed internet access, particularly for underserved communities.

Diversify our energy mix and create jobs without undue burden on businesses and residents.

New York State has ambitious goals through the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), and while we strongly support reducing emissions to combat climate change, it is critical the implementation does not overly harm our economy and preserves reliability and energy system resilience. As we further develop our clean energy economy, which will result in new economic investments and job creation, it is imperative that the transmission and distribution system is upgraded to maintain the reliability of the grid.

- Ensure the Legislative Commission on the Future of the Long Island Power Authority will examine all options for our electric utility operating model (enhanced public-private partnership, municipalization, or privatization), and the recommendations result in the most cost-effective and efficient option for Long Island commercial and residential taxpayers.

Continued: Diversify our energy mix and create jobs without undue burden on businesses and residents.

- Ensure the state's regulations and policies following the Climate Action Council's final report maintain our status as a national clean energy leader without negatively impacting residents and businesses and the transition to clean energy is affordable for consumers. State policy should foster all types of clean energy, including offshore wind, renewable natural gas, clean hydrogen, solar power, and geothermal power, and should not consider an unrealistic timeline for all-electric new construction.
- Make Long Island the offshore wind capital of the country through seeing projects to fruition, including South Fork Wind, Sunrise Wind, Empire Wind, and Beacon Wind, and future projects from the New York Bight leaseholders.
- Support investments in our region's electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Ensure that supply chain opportunities in the clean energy industry will be accessible to Long Island's small business community, including participation from MWBE and SDVOB-owned enterprises.

Maintain Long Island's world class K-12 educational system and close the achievement gap.

There is no more important future than our children, and the LIA supports state investments in our Pre-K and K-12 educational system to prepare them for higher education and the workforce.

- Support New York State's efforts to fully fund Foundation Aid to reduce the burden on property taxpayers.
- Support the New York Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Commission, which was formed to re-examine graduation requirements and foster equity.
- Expand Universal Pre-K and before and after-care programs for school age children.

Continued: Maintain Long Island's world class K-12 educational system and close the achievement gap.

- Partner with workforce readiness programs in the K-12 school system and facilitate connections with the business community.
- Support the efforts of BOCES technical schools to make their programs more accessible to students who want to learn a trade or industry prior to college or as a gateway to entering the workforce with marketable skills.

Elevate Long Island's reputation as a hub for innovation and discovery and create high-tech jobs.

Long Island's globally recognized research and higher education academic assets and our national laboratory catalyze economic growth through research and discovery, and 2023 shows promise to further expand their impact with anticipated government investments in facilities and programs to support innovation.

- Support the work of the non-profit organization Accelerate Long Island (incubated by the Long Island Association) in building an innovation ecosystem and commercializing technology from our research corridor and university-based business incubators in all high-tech sectors.
- Capitalize on the opportunity through the New York State Long Island Innovation Hot Spot program awarded to Accelerate and its partners to support entrepreneurs.
- Leverage funding and programs available through the Federal CHIPS bill passed in 2022 to create high-tech jobs and further develop our research assets.
- Support expansion of the advanced manufacturing sector and help address their challenges, such as hiring and accessing national and international markets.

Target the most pressing public safety issues for Long Island, because a safe region is an economically prosperous one.

Our business community cannot be successful if employers, employees, and customers do not feel safe. Too many tragedies in 2022 show us the importance of gun safety and the need to prevent recidivism.

- Strengthen the state's bail laws to give judges discretion to consider dangerousness when setting bail.

Continued: Target the most pressing public safety issues for Long Island, because a safe region is an economically prosperous one.

- Support New York State's efforts to enforce stronger gun laws in response to the 2022 shooting in Buffalo and June 2022 Supreme Court decision regarding concealed carry and support a federal ban on assault rifles.
- Support the efforts of the Nassau and Suffolk County Police Departments, and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, to address and reduce crime, with special attention devoted to human trafficking, gangs, and drug abuse threatening our region.
- Encourage investment and education in deterring cybersecurity crimes to minimize the impact of attacks on businesses, schools, and governments.

Support organizations and government policies that enhance our communities and help our most vulnerable residents.

During the pandemic, we saw just how critical healthcare institutions, non-profit organizations, and other community-based programs were to assisting Long Islanders in need. Pandemic aid is dwindling for these organizations. Many struggling, working Long Islanders are shut out of programs that would support them because of income requirements that are not aligned with our high-cost region.

- Help sustain and strengthen the not-for-profit industry on Long Island as it is a significant economic generator and an essential social services resource for the region.
- Support investments in mental health, which have a direct impact on worker productivity and company success.
- Modify the federal poverty limit so it reflects our region's higher cost of living.
- Sustain funding levels for the New York State Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program to meet the emergency food need of Long Islanders.

Appendix

There are a myriad of proposals and potential investments on all levels of government that will serve to further our primary policy objectives. In 2023 the LIA will engage in actions, along with regional partners, to advance these additional initiatives to boost economic growth.

Cost of Living

- Reign in soaring Medicaid costs for county governments by requesting the state take over each county's local share, as is done in most states.
- Oppose any further expansion of prevailing wage legislation.
- Support legislation that would end binding arbitration for public sector labor disputes and/or support a cap on mandatory arbitration awards.
- Repeal the portion of the Triborough Amendment that requires automatic salary step increases to be paid to public employees after labor contracts expire.
- Reform the state Scaffold Law by making liability standards against owners of construction projects less onerous.
- Support the New York State constitutional amendment proposed by the Court of Appeals to make the state court system more efficient and less costly to businesses and support the creation of a 5th Department of the Appellate Division for Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Cut the Red Tape

- Working with the Long Island Builders Institute (LIBI) and Association for a Better Long Island (ABLI), support state legislation to implement building permit deadlines to expedite economic development projects.
- Propose legislation that would require a bond be submitted by the party appealing a land-use decision pursuant to Article 78 of the New York State CPLR.
- Streamline the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process and support new legislation that adds certainty to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) timeline.
- Create a special New York State Supreme Court for land-use litigation to accelerate decisions.
- Repeal the state Wicks Law.
- Support the expansion and permanent extension of the design-build method of project delivery.

LIA POLICY PRIORITIES 2023

Education

- Support our region's diversity of higher education programs to prepare students for the workforce.
- Increase funding and expand eligibility for higher education student aid programs for New York public and private colleges, such as TAP, Pell Grants, Federal Work-Study, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), Bundy Aid, and support of graduate programs in high-need areas, such as healthcare and education.

Energy

- Oppose the state proposal for the New York Power Authority to build renewable generation projects, as this should be driven by the private sector.
- Address the looming regional crisis in solid waste management, landfill closure, and the recycling market.

Housing

- Oppose the expansion of rent regulations in New York State that could negatively impact the cost of apartments on Long Island, including good cause eviction proposals.
- Reimagine underutilized office space into live-work-play environments.
- Encourage development of the Town of Hempstead's Lawrence-Inwood TOD Overlay District, which will reposition blighted underutilized sites around two major LIRR stations to address the acute housing need on Long Island.

Healthcare and Community

- Support law enforcement, non-profit agencies, and employers in combating the opioid crisis.
- Support efforts to eliminate disparities in healthcare.
- Oppose state efforts to expand wrongful death lawsuits, which will result in significantly increased costs for the healthcare industry and businesses.

Infrastructure and Transportation

- Relocate and modernize the Yaphank LIRR Station, create a new Republic Airport LIRR Station, and preserve service on the West Hempstead LIRR line.
- Support a bus rapid transit plan for the Route 110 Corridor.
- Support the efforts of the Long Island Contractors' Association (LICA) to advocate for investments in our road and bridge infrastructure, including the Route 347 overpass, safety on the Southern State parkway, funding for the Meadowbrook Parkway and Southern State Parkway interchange, widening of the Sagitkos Parkway and Northern State Parkway, and an assessment of our region's underground drainage systems.
- Support a transit connection to LaGuardia Airport that links to the LIRR Jamaica Air Train.
- Support Amtrak's Gateway project and East River Tunnel rehabilitation with as limited LIRR service disruption as possible.

Small Business and Innovation

- Support next generation technologies in the sectors of life sciences and biotechnology, bioelectronic medicine, semiconductors, artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing and engineering, quantum communication, battery storage, machine learning, accelerator technology, blockchain, and clean tech.
- Support the HIA-LI's Long Island Innovation Park and its plans to cluster together industries there and encourage builders to take advantage of the overlay district for mixed use to build apartments for a live-work-play environment.
- Support the efforts of the Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce and Suffolk County Alliance of Chambers and other chamber organizations to ensure vibrant downtowns and main streets.
- Support federal immigration reform to increase the number of H-1B visas and ensure highly skilled immigrants can legally enter and stay in the United States.
- Oppose anti-trust proposals on the federal and state levels, which would hinder innovation and hurt small businesses.
- Ensure the new regulated cannabis economy is equitable for Long Island small businesses and the BIPOC community, creates jobs, and results in ending illicit operations. Advocate for federal law changes that support the state regulated market.
- Support New York State small business savings plan legislation that allows businesses to establish a pre-tax account.

Tourism

- Ensure fair and equitable federal and state rules to expand and promote sustainable agriculture, fisheries, wineries, craft breweries, aquaculture and the tourism industries, particularly on the East End.
- Ensure that the Midway Crossing Project results in moving the terminal to Long Island MacArthur Airport adjacent to the Ronkonkoma Train Station and the project includes the vision of biotech space and a convention center.
- Support Discover Long Island's proposed Tourism Recovery & Improvement Districts (TRID).
- Continue developing a sports economy on Long Island, supporting the New York Islanders at UBS Arena, the Long Island Nets G-League basketball team, the Long Island Ducks minor league baseball team, the New York Riptide lacrosse team, the New York Lizards lacrosse team, the Long Island Rough Riders soccer team, and the New York Cosmos soccer team, and attract prestigious golf tournaments and other sports competitions.
- Leverage the economic benefits of the Ryder Cup coming to Long Island in 2025.



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