

**A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATOR MILLS**

Re: Opposition Governors 30-day amendment which would Exclude Local Residents in the Siting of Alternative Energy Projects.

WHEREAS, approximately twelve million people live in the Lake Erie watershed, including seventeen different metropolitan areas with more than 50,000 residents each. Most of these residents get their drinking water from Lake Erie; and

WHEREAS, this honorable body finds that the Lake is of tremendous importance to the economic health of our region, the physical wellbeing of Erie County's residents, and provides significant recreational and tourism attractions to residents and visitors year round; and

WHEREAS, a new policy has been proposed in Albany through 2021 Budget amendments that would fast track the development of alternative energy systems and revoke significant amounts of local control in the decision making process; and

WHEREAS, this body wishes to express its concern that New York State or any other authority, agency, commission, or department thereof might nearsightedly allow any private and/or public entity to construct, place, position, and/or install, with or without permanent bases, pylons, piers, or similar structures, one or more wind turbines in the waters of Lake Erie. Even more troubling is that the new proposal would allow for such decisions to be made without the input of any local review; and

WHEREAS, the proposed policy would also remove wind and solar power from NYS's traditional energy permitting process and put them into a new office within an economic development agency for approval. This will mean that wind and solar power will no longer face scrutiny from the state's environmental and utility regulators; and

WHEREAS, the wildlife in Erie County was decimated by years of human progress has finally returned, with increased fish stocks in Lake Erie to birds on its shores. Much of the polluted land has been returned to a useable state. It would be short-sighted for New York to push activities that have the potential to needlessly disturb pollutants in the lake bed, destroy fish habitats, and at best interrupt the migratory patterns of birds and bats; and

WHEREAS, this honorable body finds local input to be of tremendous value in assisting the decision making process with regards to large size energy producing projects. Further, this body finds that any large scale energy producing construction project should have to face review of the project's potential environmental impact using the same standards provided to every other large-scale construction project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED the Erie County Legislature goes on record opposing the 30-day amendment proposed by the Governor which would substantially remove municipalities, environmental, birding and citizens groups from the process of vetting wind and solar projects in New York State.

RESOLVED, that this body hereby calls for the reconsideration of any state procedure that would eliminate environmental review and local opinion regarding the construction of any energy producing systems; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to the Western New York Delegation to the New York State Senate and Assembly, New York State Assembly leader Carl Hestie, NYS Senate President and Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins, Minority Leader John Flanagan, Governor Andrew Cuomo, Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz, and any other party deemed necessary and proper.

Fiscal Impact: None for Resolution