**May 13, 2022**

**Comments to New York State’s Climate Action Plan**

Thank you to the members of the Climate Council for the determined effort to design a plan to deal with the important work needed to resolve the impacts of anthropogenic climate change. May this comment please be considered and incorporated in the final plan for New York State:

**From the plan documents - *The governor should assign the CSRO the task of overseeing development of a comprehensive statewide climate change adaptation and resilience plan.***

**This task above has been critically underdefined, underfunded, and undeveloped in the proposed plan.**

The plan proposed will be one of the single largest investments in at least the next three decades of New York State’s future. Every citizen will be required to change behaviors, participate in huge changes, and integrate change into their homes, their jobs, their transportation, and their economy. Such change will be dramatic and very complex in implementation. While the plan projects the costs associated with climate change if action is not taken, and spends a lot of effort to preach the harm of in action, the draft plan does not adequately propose the critical importance of community based messaging, information exchange and true public education to implement this very critical element for true progress. I write as a thirty plus year experienced professional who enjoyed leading two large public programs that each won NYS awards for environmental excellence (in the solid waste spade and in the water environment space.) In my experience, to truly implement an action plan there must be community learning, deep public education, and true public interaction/community-based initiatives. The plan, as proposed, will be left sitting on the digital document shelf. It is solid but not adequately approachable or even understandable by the broad segment of the public critical for success. The plan therefore should:

1. **Fund a very broad public education program.** **Expect an investment of one dollar per household, per year, for at least the next five years to explain the plan and accept community feedback and implementation recommendations from the public.** Inadequate public education will result in this being a static plan, not an actual success measured by action not density of document. Fund a true public education program. Fund it with millions, not a handful of public meetings in a few cities across the state.
2. Expect barriers to the plan and **gratefully receive community-based feedback and recommendations on changes to actually implement real action.** (Refer to the Community Based Social Marketing concepts by Douglas Mackenzie Mohr).
3. Take extra steps to listen to community barriers to implementation, and **to accept and implement community-based solutions** to barriers to plan implementation.
4. **Diversity and inclusion will clearly require a huge variety of community-based solutions.** These solutions will vary across the state. They will be unique, they will have to accommodate the broad diversity which is all of the state, not just those in elected office or in appointed authority. Build a foundation for community input and take community solutions, don’t simply defend the plan. Build a diverse and varied community action plan.
5. **Consider a much more streamlined document and reformat the plan.** Allow the plan to be flexible enough to implement a large cross section of solutions much closer to the ground. Rather than narrowly defining a plan full of deep reading and policy wonk jargon, reformat the plan to be less preaching to the choir and much more open to the potential for true community implementation.

**Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments to the proposed plan. Please consider ways to be sure the plan is fair and inclusive for all New Yorkers.**

**Tom Rhoads**

**Resident of Onondaga County, NY**