

New York's Climate Act needs your input

You have just two weeks left to provide your input to one of the most significant state initiatives in memory. On June 10th, the public comment period closes for the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (also known as the Climate Act). Passed by the state legislature in 2019, it is among the most ambitious climate laws in the world and requires New York to reduce economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions 40% by 2030 and no less than 85% by 2050 from 1990 levels. *as per*

The law had created a Climate Action Council charged with developing a scoping plan of recommendations to meet these targets. The draft plan is available online, where reams of information can be found at tinyurl.com/ScopingPlanNYS, ranging from an 18-page summary to the 341-page plan, and numerous supporting documents and appendices.

The list of goals is incredible. Here are just some of the action items:

- 70% renewable energy by 2030. *as per*
- Zero-emissions electricity



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COMMENTARY

by 2040. *?*

- Retirement of natural gas electrical generation.

- Accelerated development of clean energy projects such as solar and wind farms. *as per*

- Transition from natural gas to electrified heat in buildings and homes.

- Inducement of the purchase and use of heat pumps, smart devices and the like while encouraging the early retirement of older equipment.

- Changes to farming process such as feeding, manure and soil management. *?*

- Conversion of refrigerant technologies. *?*

- Electrification of public transit and personal and fleet vehicles. *?*

- Investment in electrical storage. *?*

- Changes to waste management. *as per*

- Elimination of so-called "fugitive methane". *?*

- Development of carbon sequestration opportunities and technologies.

Depending on what side of the issue you're on, this plan may be just what the doctor ordered to save the environment from ruin or it could be something that needs a physician-like approach to save the economy from ruin it imposes. Or, maybe you're like me and you can see value in parts of "both sides" and your views are a little more nuanced. Regardless, set aside some time to really read up on the scoping plan and then share your love, hate or suggestions with state officials.

The Climate Action Council recently wrapped up a whirlwind tour across the Empire State, hosting eight public hearings at which they heard from hundreds of residents and special interests. Now, your

comments must be submitted via their website or by mail.

I suggest the latter option. There's something meaningful about a letter, whether it's handwritten or typed with your signature upon it. Keeping with that personal touch, it is strongly suggested that you write your own comments. Many lobbying organizations that you might be part of, such as the Audubon Society or the Farm Bureau, have likely tried to influence you to share their thoughts or send one of their canned letters. Don't. If policymakers see the same letter over and over they'll become numb to it. Make it real. Make it valuable. Make it a point to share how the Climate Act specifically impacts you and future generations. Mail your comments to: Draft Scoping Plan Comments, NYSEERDA, 17 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203.

This is your chance to help decide the future of New York's environment, energy and economy. Don't miss that opportunity.

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? need more info.