

Re: Chapter 13 – Electricity, Rural Communities: Though not mentioned in the Draft Scoping Plan but relegated to Appendix G, the amount of land-based large-scale wind-generated electricity is estimated to be between 9.5 and 11 GW. Spacing requirements for turbines capable of generating this level of power will require well over one million acres of land. Given New York’s geography, the majority of land used for turbine development will be the rich, level farmlands and rolling hills of central and western NY, currently home to millions of New Yorkers. The negative impact on farming will be matched by the negative impact on the quality of life and health of the people who will have to live amidst this massive industrialization. Have any of you on these councils and in these agencies spent much time recently in upstate NY outside its cities? This beautiful, productive countryside which you will be condemning has had to absorb prisons, power plants and landfills, but it will not be able to recover from the massive industrialization proposed in this plan. This is hardly the definition of climate leadership. The loss of population will further reduce New York’s representation in Congress, a political disaster. Without an adequate customer base, the economy of this area will suffer and decline further than it already has. Instead of providing benefits to this part of the state, this Plan may well dictate its demise.

RE: Chapter 8 – Public Health: Industrial wind noise: It is good that the Plan finally acknowledges that wind turbine noise can negatively impact human health. However, it glosses over any substantive actions that the state should commit to so as to prevent such impacts. I personally have experienced the negative effects of infrasound and am facing a wind turbine installation that will place at least three enormous turbines within one-half mile upwind of my house. No one should be forced to live under such circumstances. Within 20 years, if this Plan is implemented, New York will have willfully created an enormous “brownfield site” that it will have to clean up, at taxpayers’ expense.

RE: Chapter 15 – Agriculture & Forestry: Regarding the preservation of our forests versus clearing the land to make way for wind and solar installations: YOU CANNOT SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT BY DESTROYING THE ENVIRONMENT. Even our third graders know by now that trees are our most feasible means of carbon capture, not to mention their value in preserving habitat for animals and precious plant materials. This chapter spends a great deal of time on peripheral issues but neglects to present, let alone quantify the amount of, clear-cutting necessary to accommodate major transmission lines, utility scale wind and solar projects, and their associated laydown areas, access roads, and transmission lines. There is something deeply wrong with a plan which purports to address our energy needs in a way that is sensitive to climate change, yet relies on massive industrialization that will cause serious damage to our planet. This plan needs some major revisions and some high-level creativity, not bound by the preferences of industry, before it can be of benefit to the majority of New Yorkers.

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