Climate Action Plan Comments

Buildings:

The former NYS Energy Office had a zero interest loan program, with no income requirements, for homeowners and multi-family building owners to install energy conservation measures such as new heating units, storm windows, and wall, attic and basement insulation. They also had a low-interest loan program for businesses to install energy efficient machinery. Energy conservation and energy efficiency are the easiest and quickest ways to save energy and reduce emissions.

There are many buildings in NYS that have radiator or steam heating. Heat pumps with ductwork would be prohibitively expensive in these buildings. We need 100% biofuels for these homes and buildings.

Efficient district heating and cooling and utilizing residual heat from various processes should be a priority. Proctors Theater in Schenectady is a good example of district heating and cooling.

It is almost impossible to buy a clock thermostat for an electric water heater. You do not need to run your water heater when you are sleeping or at work. When a water heater is turned off, it will keep the water hot for hours.

Transportation:

Until there is technology to recharge electric vehicles in less than 5 minutes, how do we expect people without home charging to buy EVs when the shortest time to fast charge a vehicle is about 25 minutes? People who cannot recharge at home are not going to tolerate having to spend 25 minutes to recharge their vehicles at public chargers, and that does not include time waiting for vehicles in front of them. About 45% of NYS residents live in multi-family units and almost all of them do not have the ability to recharge at home. We need 100% biofuels for those people who cannot charge at home. Conventional, non-plug-in hybrids, utilizing biofuels, should be part of the solution until we have, if ever, EV charging in less than five minutes.

Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles can fuel up in the same amount of time as gasoline vehicles. But, the cost of fueling stations is very high and green hydrogen would be necessary to avoid upstream pollution from creating hydrogen.

All internal combustion engine vehicles should be required to have idle-stop technology.

EV Charging Infrastructure:

I have seen many Level 2 public charging stations that are hardly ever utilized. Most public charging stations receive government grant money. Considering that new EVs get over 200 miles to a charge, it is not worth the time and increased cost for people to charge their vehicles at public level 2 chargers, except when traveling long distances. Level 2 chargers in the Albany Walmart and Crossgates Mall are hardly utilized. There should be statewide usage analysis of Level 2 public chargers, that received grant money, to help plan where future chargers should be installed. We shouldn’t be wasting money on placing Level 2 chargers in locations that have been shown by analysis to be underutilized locations. Is it worth installing chargers at food markets, department stores and other businesses where people spend 15 to 30 minutes? Level 3 chargers are different in that all EV owners will need to use them when traveling long distances. There should be a geo-spatial analysis of Level 3 charger usage to analyze how far from main arterials will people travel to recharge. Also, are Level 3 chargers being utilized by people who don’t have home charging and live in MUDs.

Biofuels:

For buildings that have radiator and steam heating, and for those people who cannot charge EVs at home, the state needs to include biofuels in the climate plan. Hemp can be made into biofuel and can be grown in NYS with little or no chemicals or irrigation. Renewable gas is another approach taken by California and other states which reduces emissions from agricultural and other waste and creates a cleaner fuel with a negative carbon footprint. In the early 1900’s, vehicles were powered by batteries, steam and gasoline because no one fuel had proven to be the solution. We are in a similar situation and we need to be open to various fuel types for transportation, just as our power grid has various fuel sources.