**Gerri Wiley–19 Lake Street, Owego–607-342-3159--April 12, 2022–Binghamton Hearing**

Thank you for this opportunity to share our views with you, and to listen carefully to one another.

Last week, I listened to the Brookhaven Hearing. Although as a public health nurse and climate activist, I know we need to move swiftly to reduce methane emissions, and that we must say “no” to all new gas infrastructure, I was surprised to find myself appreciating and identifying with union and utility representatives. Why? Because of their heartfelt statements, their commitment to and pride in their work and their families, their focus on energy reliability and safety, and their solidarity with each other.

I came away from that hearing feeling strongly that we can reach agreement, knowing that right now in the state of Massachusetts, there are pilot programs led by Eversource and National Grid using current utility rights of way to convert gas pipelines in neighborhoods to water lines heated and cooled by ground-source heat pumps--using and balancing waste heat and cooling.

The skill set of current gas utility workers is transferable and will be critically needed as we move forward in this transformative way. \* The current house-by-house geothermal transition is too slow and too expensive. We need our utilities to get us all in the loop--the geo-grid water loop. Projects like this will help to flatten the eventual winter peak load because the ground loops act as seasonal thermal storage.

We are so fortunate to have an engaged and committed Climate Action Council and I trust that this plan, with our help, will set a model for all states to emulate.

\* Volts podcast 4-1-22: Audrey Schulman and Zeyneb Magavi on,“How to Replace Natural Gas with Renewable Heat”

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