

To the Climate Action Council:

My name is Sarah Woodams and I live in Pittsford, NY outside of Rochester. I am an environmental studies student at the University of Rochester and am very passionate about climate action.

Decarbonizing and expanding electricity generation in NY is critical to decarbonizing the buildings, transportation and industrial sectors. As we transition our homes, businesses, and private and public transportation to electrical power, affordable, reliable and clean electricity is essential for achieving our net-zero goal.

The recent events in Ukraine underscore the need for energy independence and fossil fuel independence. We must do our part to remove fossil fuels from the international geopolitical equation, and at the same time provide reliable, clean and affordable energy throughout New York State.

I wholeheartedly support the plan to zero out emissions from electricity generation by 2040 and the use of regulatory options and market mechanisms to carry out this plan while maintaining reliability and affordability. I am concerned that some proposals to address long-term storage and peak demand involve using processes that emit GHG's or are produced with significant embedded carbon.

I strongly support NYSERDA's renewable energy procurement targets, and we need targets for siting of renewables. I strongly support building renewable energy capacity and shutting down gas-fired power plants while maintaining reliability and affordability. I believe in easing opposition to siting of renewables through public education and other methods. We must have targets to expand roof top and parking lot solar, and pair solar with electrification of low-income housing and opportunities for low-income participation in community renewable energy. The plan should also consider otherwise unusable areas (e.g., highway rights of way and brownfields) for siting of renewables, grid enhancements, and related infrastructure. It is important that local governments have more control through the use of siting tools. Innovative siting such as agrovoltaics should be encouraged.

As NY is situated near two of the Great Lakes, pumped storage hydropower should be considered in addition to battery storage technology. I support investment in R&D for long-term energy storage, grid technology, and novel zero-emissions electricity sources.

I strongly oppose blending "green hydrogen" and "renewable natural gas" for wintertime use. Their production and use require a thorough evaluation to ensure that no additional harms are caused to disadvantaged communities and that no net GHG emissions result from their production and use. Furthermore, such alternatives are entirely unacceptable if they serve only as an excuse for fossil fuel interests to maintain their pipeline infrastructure.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to make public comments concerning the Draft Scoping Plan.

Sincerely,

Sarah Woodams