Comments on the Draft Scoping Plan (the Plan)

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I share the concern for climate change, but find the Plan to be an unrealistic and worrisome proposal for NYS to adopt in its current form. The presentation of the Plan itself, well over 800 pages including appendices and spreadsheets, is not very user friendly or easy to understand. That being said, I have many reservations about what I have learned about the Plan.

I find the heavy reliance on wind, solar and battery storage for electricity to be unrealistic. The shear volume of land required to support the Plan, including vast new electrical transmission infrastructure, is not likely to be accepted by rural communities. The widespread industrialization expected of rural NYS will not be tolerated. Even if it were, the intermittent nature of wind and solar would likely result in a far less dependable electrical power system for the state. It would not be practical to have enough battery storage to make meaningful solar power practical in the winter in NYS.

We have solar panels on our property that cover our annual residential needs, but the output in January is typically less than 15% of the output in June. With the electrification planned for HVAC in NYS in coming years, the winter demand for power will eventually exceed the summer demand and solar power potential output in NYS will be very limited in the winter.

The Plan does not seem to rely much on nuclear power in the coming years. That could be a huge mistake if natural gas options for heating are phased out. I agree that we need to minimize emissions and greatly reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. I am not a big fan of nuclear energy, but we must take a look at state-of-the-art nuclear power solutions that may be more efficient and safer than earlier technology.

Our area was targeted for a large industrial wind installation a few years ago. Our community worked hard to prevent this transformation of our rural community. There are serious quality of life issues associated with large scale wind turbines, such as noise and vibration. These should not be forced upon communities that do not want them.

Other local communities are facing the potential loss of thousands of acres of productive farmland to host huge solar projects. The impact on agricultural communities and ag economics in the state could be very negative.

There have been wind and solar projects approved that include removal of mature forests. The carbon sequestration of forests and the wildlife habitat should be preserved.

While the pricetag for all this is not front and center, it appears that the state is willing to adopt a program whose cost is on the order of $3 trillion dollars over the 28 years of the plan. The cost of the Plan and the uncertainty associated with it creates a very risky environment for business and residents of NYS. If the federal government pursued a coherent energy strategy that all states were compelled to follow, then NYS would not be at a comparative disadvantage. The Plan calls for an energy transformation that is far more aggressive than any other state in the USA, which could easily have unintended major negative consequences and accelerate the exodus from the state.