

Acadia Center □ Adirondack Mountain Club □ ALIGN □ All Our Energy □ Alliance for a Green Economy □ Alliance for Clean Energy New York □ American Lung Association of the Northeast □ Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition □ Campaign for Renewable Energy □ Catskill Mountainkeeper □ Citizen Action of New York □ Citizens' Climate Lobby Brooklyn □ Citizens for Local Power □ Climate Justice Coalition of WNY □ Coalition for Community Solar Access □ Coalition for Economic Justice □ Cody Creek Farm □ Conservation Law Foundation □ Co-op Power □ Demos □ E4TheFuture □ Energy Democracy Alliance □ Environmental Advocates of New York □ Environmental Defense Fund □ Fossil Free Tompkins □ Freedom Solar Alliances, LLC □ Good Old Lower East Side □ Green For All □ Green Resource Hub for the Finger Lakes □ GRID Alternatives Tri-State □ Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc. □ Long Island Progressive Coalition □ Massachusetts Avenue Project □ National Wildlife Federation □ New York Communities for Change □ New York Lawyers for the Public Interest □ New York Public Interest Research Group □ Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson □ Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition □ NYC Environmental Justice Alliance □ Peoples Climate Movement NY □ Physicians for Social Responsibility □ Protect the Adirondacks □ PUSH Buffalo □ Renewable Energy Long Island (reLI) □ RUPCO, Inc. □ Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter □ Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development □ Sustainable McDonough □ Sustainable Solutions □ Syracuse Cultural Workers □ The Adirondack Council □ The Democracy Collaborative □ The WASH Project □ UPROSE □ Vermont Natural Resources Council □ Vote Solar □ Workers' Center of Central New York

March 27, 2017

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor
Executive Chamber
New York State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Hon. Carl E. Heastie
Speaker
New York State Assembly
LOB 932
Albany, New York 12248

Hon. John J. Flanagan
Temporary President
New York State Senate
Capitol 330
Albany, New York 12247

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Democratic Conference Leader
New York State Senate
LOB 907
Albany, New York 12247

Hon. Jeffrey Klein
IDC Leader
New York State Senate
LOB 913
Albany, New York 12247

Hon. Brian Kolb
Minority Leader
New York State Assembly
LOB 933
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Governor Cuomo and Legislative Leaders:

As negotiations proceed on the 2017-2018 New York State Budget, we respectfully request the adoption of a final spending plan that incorporates the proposal advanced by the Assembly to dedicate \$23 million in climate pollution funds raised through New York's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) to fund direct grants for community solar in low income and environmental justice communities (Section 20-a in Part Z of A3005-B).

We are strongly opposed to proposals advanced in the Executive Budget and the Senate resolutions that would divert a significant amount of RGGI funds to the state budget, including \$23 million for tax credits that would otherwise be supported by the General Fund and the Senate's substantially larger \$108 million raid.

Tax credits offer little to no direct benefit to the lower income and environmental justice communities that are disproportionately burdened by the impacts of climate change and fossil fuel derived pollution. RGGI funded grants to cover expenses that are not paid for by programs offered or planning to be offered by NYSERDA through the Clean Energy Fund, NY Sun or other sources would provide communities on the front lines of climate change with new, and needed, opportunities to tap into the economic and health benefits clean, renewable energy systems provide.

The wise stewardship of RGGI funds has ensured the deployment and use of renewable energy and efficiency initiatives. Utilizing RGGI resources to supplant funding for items in the state budget significantly limits the state's ability to support existing programs. For these reasons, we oppose the Senate's efforts to sweep nearly 90-percent of the funds allocated in the 2017-18 RGGI Operating Plan and the Governor's proposal to fund tax credits. The Assembly's commitment to community solar is consistent with the intended use of RGGI funds and has our strong support.

Sincerely,

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