

STATE OF NEW YORK

1031--A

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 6, 2021

Introduced by Sen. STEWART-COUSINS -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Environmental
Conservation -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted
as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to the
location of environmental facilities

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature finds and declares that
2 each community in the state should equitably share the responsibilities,
3 burdens, and benefits of managing and solving the state's environmental
4 problems and the facilities necessary to accomplish such ends. The
5 legislature further declares that there has been an inequitable pattern
6 in the siting of environmental facilities in minority and economically
7 distressed communities, which have borne a disproportionate and inequi-
8 table share of such facilities. Consistent with its commitment to
9 providing equal justice for its citizens, the state has a responsibility
10 to establish requirements for the consideration of such decisions by
11 state and local governments in order to insure equality of treatment for
12 all communities.

13 § 2. Section 8-0105 of the environmental conservation law is amended
14 by adding five new subdivisions 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 to read as
15 follows:

16 9. "Environmental justice community" shall mean an economically
17 distressed or minority community bearing a disproportionate or inequita-
18 ble pollution burden and includes, but is not limited to, environmental
19 justice areas identified by the department.

20 10. "Economically distressed area" shall mean an area characterized by
21 a poverty rate of at least twenty percent; or an unemployment rate of at
22 least one hundred twenty-five percent of the statewide unemployment
23 rate.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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11. "Minority community" shall mean any census tract, census block, or census block group that includes twenty-five percent or more of any ethnic group.

12. "Ethnic group" shall mean those groups identified in the definition of minority group member in subdivision eight of section three hundred ten of the executive law.

13. "Existing burden report" shall mean the report required by subdivision four of section 8-0109 of this article describing the existing pollution burden in an environmental justice community.

§ 3. Subdivision 2 of section 8-0109 of the environmental conservation law, as amended by chapter 219 of the laws of 1990, paragraph (h) as amended by chapter 519 of the laws of 1992, paragraph (i) as added by chapter 182 of the laws of 1990, and paragraph (i) as amended by chapter 238 of the laws of 1991, is amended to read as follows:

2. All agencies (or applicant as hereinafter provided) shall prepare, or cause to be prepared by contract or otherwise an environmental impact statement on any action they propose or approve which may have a significant effect on the environment. Such a statement shall include a detailed statement setting forth the following:

(a) a description of the proposed action and its environmental setting;

(b) the environmental impact of the proposed action including short-term and long-term effects;

(c) any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented;

(d) alternatives to the proposed action;

(e) any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented;

(f) mitigation measures proposed to minimize the environmental impact;

(g) the growth-inducing aspects of the proposed action, where applicable and significant;

(h) effects of the proposed action on the use and conservation of energy resources, where applicable and significant, provided that in the case of an electric generating facility, the statement shall include a demonstration that the facility will satisfy electric generating capacity needs or other electric systems needs in a manner reasonably consistent with the most recent state energy plan and the climate leadership and community protection act;

(i) effects of proposed action on solid waste management where applicable and significant; ~~and~~

~~(j)]~~ (j) effects of any proposed action on, and its consistency with, the comprehensive management plan of the special groundwater protection area program, as implemented by the commissioner pursuant to article fifty-five of this chapter; ~~and~~

~~(j)]~~ (k) effects of any proposed action on environmental justice communities, including whether the action may cause or contribute to, either directly or indirectly, a disproportionate or inequitable or both disproportionate and inequitable pollution burden on an environmental justice community; and

(l) such other information consistent with the purposes of this article as may be prescribed in guidelines issued by the commissioner pursuant to section 8-0113 of this chapter.

Such a statement shall also include copies or a summary of the substantive comments received by the agency pursuant to subdivision four of this section, and the agency response to such comments. The purpose of an environmental impact statement is to provide detailed information

1 about the effect which a proposed action is likely to have on the envi-
2 ronment, to list ways in which any adverse effects of such an action
3 might be minimized, and to suggest alternatives to such an action so as
4 to form the basis for a decision whether or not to undertake or approve
5 such action. Such statement should be clearly written in a concise
6 manner capable of being read and understood by the public, should deal
7 with the specific significant environmental impacts which can be reason-
8 ably anticipated and should not contain more detail than is appropriate
9 considering the nature and magnitude of the proposed action and the
10 significance of its potential impacts.

11 § 4. The opening paragraph of subdivision 4 of section 8-0109 of the
12 environmental conservation law, as amended by chapter 219 of the laws of
13 1990, is amended to read as follows:

14 As early as possible in the formulation of a proposal for an action,
15 the responsible agency shall make an initial determination as to whether
16 or not an environmental impact statement need be prepared for the
17 action. In making such determination for any proposed action that is
18 not a minor project as defined in subdivision three of section 70-0105
19 of this chapter and that may directly or indirectly affect an environ-
20 mental justice community, the responsible agency shall prepare or cause
21 to be prepared an existing burden report and shall consider such report
22 in determining whether such action may cause or contribute to, either
23 directly or indirectly, a disproportionate or inequitable or both
24 disproportionate and inequitable pollution burden on an environmental
25 justice community. The existing burden report shall include baseline
26 monitoring data collected in the affected environmental justice communi-
27 ty within two years of the application for a permit or approval; shall
28 identify each existing pollution source or categories of sources affect-
29 ing the community and the potential routes of human exposure to
30 pollution from that source or categories of sources; the potential or
31 documented cumulative human health effects of such pollution; and the
32 potential or projected contribution of the proposed action to existing
33 pollution burdens in the community and potential health effects of such
34 contribution, taking into account existing pollution burdens. When an
35 action is to be carried out or approved by two or more agencies, such
36 determination shall be made as early as possible after the designation
37 of the lead agency.

38 § 5. Subdivision 8 of section 8-0109 of the environmental conservation
39 law, as amended by chapter 252 of the laws of 1977, is amended to read
40 as follows:

41 8. When an agency decides to carry out or approve an action which has
42 been the subject of an environmental impact statement, it shall make an
43 explicit finding that the requirements of this section have been met and
44 that consistent with social, economic and other essential consider-
45 ations, to the maximum extent practicable, adverse environmental effects
46 revealed in the environmental impact statement process will be minimized
47 or avoided. No action shall be carried out or approved if it may cause
48 or contribute to, either directly or indirectly, a disproportionate or
49 inequitable or both disproportionate and inequitable pollution burden on
50 an environmental justice community.

51 § 6. Subparagraph (i) of paragraph (c) of subdivision 2 of section
52 8-0113 of the environmental conservation law, as added by chapter 612 of
53 the laws of 1975, is amended to read as follows:

54 (i) Actions or classes of actions that are likely to require prepara-
55 tion of environmental impact statements, including action which may
56 cause or contribute to, either directly or indirectly, a dispropor-

1 tionate or inequitable or both disproportionate and inequitable
2 pollution burden on an environmental justice community;

3 § 7. Subdivision 2 of section 8-0113 of the environmental conservation
4 law is amended by adding a new paragraph (m) to read as follows:

5 (m) The form and content of an existing burden report which shall, at
6 the minimum, include baseline monitoring data collected in the affected
7 environmental justice community within two years of the application for
8 a permit or approval and shall identify: (i) each existing pollution
9 source or categories of sources affecting an environmental justice
10 community and the potential routes of human exposure to pollution from
11 that source or categories of sources; (ii) ambient concentration of
12 regulated air pollutants and regulated or unregulated toxic air pollu-
13 tants; (iii) traffic volume; (iv) noise and odor levels; (v) exposure or
14 potential exposure to lead paint; (vi) exposure or potential exposure to
15 contaminated drinking water supplies; (vii) proximity to solid or
16 hazardous waste management facilities, wastewater treatment plants,
17 hazardous waste sites, and petroleum or chemical manufacturing, storage,
18 treatment or disposal facilities; (viii) the potential or documented
19 cumulative human health effects of the foregoing pollution sources; (ix)
20 the potential or projected contribution of the proposed action to exist-
21 ing pollution burdens in the community and potential health effects of
22 such contribution, taking into account existing pollution burdens.

23 § 8. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall
24 have become a law; provided that section three of this act shall not
25 apply to any person who has received an initial determination pursuant
26 to subdivision 4 of section 8-0109 of the environmental conservation law
27 prior to such date and provided further that section six of this act
28 shall not apply to any determination of significance made prior to such
29 date.