

STATE OF NEW YORK

411

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

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Introduced by M. of A. CARROLL, COLTON, SIMON, REYES, L. ROSENTHAL, STECK, EPSTEIN, BURDICK, ANDERSON, JACKSON, MAMDANI, OTIS -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. SAYEGH -- read once and referred to the Committee on Environmental Conservation

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to declaring a climate emergency and placing a ban on new fossil fuel infrastructure

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

1 Section 1. The environmental conservation law is amended by adding a
2 new section 1-0103 to read as follows:

3 § 1-0103. Climate emergency declaration and policy.

4 1. The legislature finds and declares the following:

5 (a) A climate emergency exists that threatens the state of New York,
6 the nation, and the world;

7 (b) Irrevocable damage to the environment has been caused by global
8 warming of approximately one degree celsius demonstrating that the earth
9 is already too hot for safety and justice, as attested by increased and
10 intensifying wildfires, floods, rising seas, diseases, droughts, and
11 extreme weather;

12 (c) On April twenty-second, two thousand sixteen, world leaders from
13 one hundred seventy-four countries and the European Union recognized the
14 threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the
15 Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep warming well below two degrees celsius
16 above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temper-
17 ature increase to one and one-half degrees fahrenheit;

18 (d) On October eighth, two thousand eighteen, the United Nations
19 International Panel on Climate Change ("IPCC") released a special
20 report, which projected that limiting warming to the one and one-half
21 degrees celsius target this century will require an unprecedented trans-

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

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1 formation of every sector of the global economy over the next twelve
2 years;

3 (e) On November twenty-third, two thousand eighteen, the United States
4 Fourth National Climate Assessment ("NCA4") was released and details the
5 massive threat that climate change poses to the American economy, our
6 environment and climate stability, and underscores the need for immedi-
7 ate climate emergency action at all levels of government;

8 (f) According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's
9 (NASA) Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS), global temperatures
10 in two thousand eighteen were eighty-three one-hundredths degrees celsi-
11 us (one and one-half degrees fahrenheit) warmer than the nineteen
12 hundred fifty-one to nineteen hundred eighty mean, and the past five
13 years are collectively the warmest in modern history;

14 (g) World Wildlife Fund's 2018 Living Planet report finds that there
15 has been a sixty per centum decline in global wildlife populations
16 between nineteen hundred seventy and two thousand fourteen, with causes
17 including overfishing, pollution and climate change;

18 (h) According to the intergovernmental science-policy platform on
19 biodiversity and ecosystem services, human activity has already severely
20 altered forty per centum of the marine environment, fifty per centum of
21 inland waterways, and seventy-five per centum of the planet's land, and
22 it is projected that five hundred thousand to one million species are
23 threatened with extinction, many within the next few decades;

24 (i) Globally, eighteen of the nineteen hottest years on record have
25 occurred since two thousand one;

26 (j) The state of New York is particularly vulnerable to the effects of
27 climate change and has already been subjected to devastating disasters
28 caused by global warming, including increasing superstorms and severe
29 flooding;

30 (k) Marginalized populations in the state of New York and worldwide,
31 including people of color, immigrants, indigenous communities, low-in-
32 come individuals, people with disabilities, and the unhoused are already
33 disproportionately affected by climate change, and will continue to bear
34 an excess burden as temperatures increase, oceans rise, and disasters
35 worsen;

36 (l) Restoring a safe and stable climate and reversing biodiversity
37 loss requires an emergency mobilization on a scale not seen since World
38 War II to attain zero greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors at
39 wartime speed, to rapidly and safely draw down or remove all excess
40 carbon from the atmosphere, and to implement measures to protect all
41 people and species from the consequences of abrupt climate change and
42 ecological destruction;

43 (m) Building a society that is resilient to the current, expected, and
44 potential effects of climate change will protect health, lives, environ-
45 ments, and economies. Resilience is best achieved by preparing for the
46 most dramatic potential consequences of climate change; and

47 (n) Justice demands climate policy that addresses the specific experi-
48 ences, vulnerabilities, and needs of the marginalized communities most
49 affected by the effects of climate change, and includes those communi-
50 ties in climate and ecological resilience planning, policy and actions.

51 2. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state of New York to
52 restore an optimal safe climate and to provide maximum protection from
53 climate change to all people and species, globally, including the most
54 vulnerable.

55 3. It is the intent of the legislature that the state do all of the
56 following in furtherance of such policy:

1 (a) Convert the economy to net zero greenhouse gas emissions as quickly
2 as possible.

3 (b) Immediately initiate a multigenerational effort to draw down
4 greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere in as short a time as possible,
5 and develop research in support of this goal.

6 (c) Immediately initiate a massive effort to restore ecosystems.

7 (d) Respond to the climate emergency based on a just transition frame-
8 work that focuses on equity, self-determination, culture, tradition,
9 democracy, and the fundamental human right of all people to clean, heal-
10 thy, and adequate air, water, land, food, education, and shelter.

11 (e) Engage the public in climate-emergency-related deliberations so
12 that citizens can see their influence on the policy and resource deci-
13 sions that impact their daily lives and their future.

14 (f) Encourage nongovernment actors to contribute to the development
15 and implementation of solutions.

16 (g) A sweeping overhaul of the economy that centers on equity and
17 justice in its solutions is vital to our future and must include the
18 following goals: dramatically expand existing renewable power sources
19 and deploy new production capacity with the goal of meeting one hundred
20 per centum of national power demand through renewable sources; build a
21 national, energy-efficient, "smart" grid; upgrade every residential and
22 industrial building for state-of-the-art energy efficiency, comfort and
23 safety; eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from manufacturing, agricul-
24 tural and other industries, including by investing in local-scale agri-
25 culture in communities across the country; repair and improve transpor-
26 tation and other infrastructure, and upgrade water infrastructure to
27 ensure universal access to clean water; fund massive investment in the
28 drawdown of greenhouse gases; and make "green" technology, industry,
29 expertise, products and services a major export of the United States,
30 with the aim of becoming the international leader in helping other coun-
31 tries become greenhouse gas neutral economies and bringing about a
32 global transition.

33 (h) Support efforts for an emergency mobilization to restore a safe
34 climate in other states and at the federal and global level.

35 § 2. Article 23 of the environmental conservation law is amended by
36 adding a new title 29 to read as follows:

37 TITLE 29

38 BAN ON NEW FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

39 Section 23-2901. Ban on new fossil fuel infrastructure.

40 § 23-2901. Ban on new fossil fuel infrastructure.

41 1. Legislative intent. New York state faces an existential climate,
42 ecological, economic, and security emergency which threatens our munici-
43 palities, state, nation, and the world; a World War II-scale mobiliza-
44 tion is needed to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions. Human-caused
45 climate change and air pollution are due to using fossil fuels. Climate
46 change disproportionately impacts communities of color, children, elder-
47 ly, Native Americans, indigenous peoples, the ill, the poor, farmers,
48 and future generations. The state shall promote a controlled reduction
49 of fossil fuel utilization and a transition to clean, renewable energy
50 for the purpose of improving safety, public health, environmental
51 protection, economic growth, and energy reliability as well as providing
52 cost savings, creating jobs, and preventing climate catastrophe.

53 2. For the purposes of this section, "fossil fuel" shall mean coal,
54 petroleum products and fuel gases.

55 3. For the purposes of this section, "fossil fuel infrastructure"
56 shall mean a structure, such as a natural gas plant, coal power plant,

1 natural gas compressor station, or ancillary facilities used to move
2 fossil fuel from one location to another, such as a natural gas or oil
3 pipeline. The phrase does not include: motor vehicles; gas stations;
4 underground tanks or pipes located on the site of a motor vehicle
5 service station; retail, manufacturing or other facilities not primarily
6 used to produce or store fossil fuels; retail products; or pipes leading
7 to a residential or commercial building from a fuel tank to which fuel
8 is delivered by motor vehicle. Furthermore it includes:

9 a. large-scale uses and facilities engaged in the wholesale distrib-
10 ution, extraction, refinement or processing of fossil fuels;

11 b. terminals engaged in the bulk movement of fossil fuels, excluding
12 rail yards, fuel storage for airports and marine servicing facilities;

13 c. bulk storage of fossil fuels in excess of two million gallons and
14 fossil fuel facilities that do not provide direct sale or distribution
15 to consumers; and

16 d. any additional meaning of fossil fuel infrastructure for the
17 purposes of this section shall be determined by the commissioner in
18 accordance with the primary intent of this section.

19 e. This ban shall not apply to uses and facilities necessary to
20 address a bona fide imminent threat to public health, safety and
21 welfare. This ban shall also not apply to uses and facilities necessary
22 for public safety, including, but not limited to, police, fire and
23 rescue agencies.

24 4. A ban shall be established on any and all new fossil fuel infras-
25 tructure projects including as it relates to the distribution, process-
26 ing, storage, or extraction of fossil fuels. No new permits, licenses,
27 or any form of permission shall be granted for any new fossil fuel
28 infrastructure project nor shall any funding, investment, or any other
29 financial assistance be granted to any new fossil fuel infrastructure
30 project as long as there are economically and technologically feasible
31 alternatives to ensure energy reliability. This section shall not apply
32 to the repair or maintenance of existing infrastructure as of the effec-
33 tive date of this section. Such ban shall apply to the entirety of the
34 state including all departments, agencies, offices, municipalities, and
35 any other governmental body.

36 5. The ban shall be lifted upon an act of the legislature.

37 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.