



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Walczyk

## Walczyk Calls For A Freeze of Fire-Prone Battery Storage Facilities

MARK WALCZYK July 28, 2023



Senator Mark Walczyk was on the ground Friday, speaking with local officials at the solar farm fire in Chaumont, NY. Lithium-Ion batteries that store the generated power are currently a blaze, causing emergency response resources to be tied up on scene and concerning residents in the Town of Lyme. Senator Walczyk offers the following statement regarding the hazmat situation and calls on state agencies and elected officials to act.

"If New York's 'Green new deal' (CLCPA) needed a cover photo, you could find it today in Chaumont. Another Convergent Energy battery storage facility has been burning for over a day, posing potentially serious health risks to residents. New York's green groups and Democrat politicians are driving public policy that's destroying the environment. I'm calling on the Governor to pause installation of these dangerous battery storage systems until the conclusion of a full investigation.

While local dedicated agencies like Jefferson County Emergency Services and local volunteer fire departments are on scene, other state agencies and the Governor's office are 'monitoring the situation.' Give me a break - they don't want to acknowledge it's their policies that are throwing hard-earned tax dollars and volatile projects which are literally burning to the ground.

I call on the Attorney General's office to investigate Convergent Energy for violating the residents of Chaumont's new constitutional right to clean air and water. When the community accepted the solar developers' proposal, they were trying to go green, not expose residents of Lyme and Chaumont to carbon monoxide, phosphoryl fluoride, hydrogen fluoride, and who knows what else. The AG needs to bring those responsible to justice.

And, where's the parity? When a snowmobile falls through the ice the DEC fines the owner \$1,000 a day. What's the daily fine for a solar company who's made the air too caustic to breathe? I call on the Department of Environmental Conservation to impose daily fines against Convergent Energy until the human health and environmental disaster they've

caused is completely remedied.

Finally, I call on Governor Hochul to freeze all governmental incentives for battery storage development in the State. Thermal runaway of lithium ion battery storage facilities is not a problem isolated to the Chaumont fire. There are serious problems with these facilities and there needs to be an independent and thorough investigation about the causes before any more batteries are installed in New York."

*Senator Mark Walczyk represents the 49th Senate District, which includes the entire counties of Jefferson, Lewis, Hamilton and Fulton. As well as parts of Oswego, St. Lawrence, and Herkimer counties. Sign up for exclusive updates from the Senator via his weekly newsletter by clicking [HERE](#) or by emailing [walczyk@nysenate.gov](mailto:walczyk@nysenate.gov).*