



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Statement From Senator Liz Krueger On Veto Of TREES Act

LIZ KRUEGER December 21, 2024

| ISSUE: **CLIMATE CHANGE, DEFORESTATION**



Albany – State Senator Liz Krueger released the following statement today regarding Governor Kathy Hochul's veto of the Tropical Rainforest Economic & Environmental Sustainability (TREES) Act:

“I am disappointed that Governor Hochul chose to veto this critical piece of climate legislation. Just two days ago she referred to President Biden’s updated climate goal as “our North Star,” and yet today she has killed an achievable, affordable, and necessary bill that

would be a significant contribution to a global movement to stop tropical deforestation, not to mention a boost to New York businesses.

“The climate crisis is a central driver of the affordability crisis, and New Yorkers can't afford inaction. We can't afford more years of drought, of deadly heat waves, blizzards, and tornadoes, or destructive cloudburst rains. The climate crisis drives up our home insurance, our healthcare costs, our utility rates, and our property taxes. New Yorkers are already paying the price for inaction, and the costs will only increase.

“New Yorkers have demonstrated time and time again, in election after election and poll after poll, that they care about our shared environment. I do not believe New Yorkers want their tax dollars contributing to the destruction of tropical rainforests, and yet, thanks to Governor Hochul's veto, that is exactly what will happen for at least another year.

“I am committed to seeing this bill become law in New York. I have been very clear to the Governor and her staff that solutions to their issues are on the table if they are willing to show up. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to get this bill across the finish line next session.”

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BACKGROUND:

Tropical forests harbor close to 50 percent of all species on Earth. Those species are now going extinct at a rate that is at least 100 to 1,000 times higher than historical levels, due to human activity. Taking into account carbon sequestration potential, stopping the loss of

tropical forests, mangroves, and wetlands could provide over 20 percent of necessary climate mitigation by 2030.

Globally, an estimated 18,000,000 acres of forest, an area more than half the size of New York State, are lost every year to deforestation according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with over one-half of Earth's tropical forests already gone. At the current pace, the entirety of Earth's tropical rainforests will be degraded or destroyed within the next 100 years.

Loss of biodiversity resulting from forest degradation and deforestation, as well as human encroachment on formerly undisturbed ecosystems, also increases the risks of zoonotic disease pandemics such as COVID-19.

The TREES Act would help to ensure that New York State government procurement does not drive tropical deforestation or degradation by tightening an existing state ban on the use of tropical hardwoods for government projects, and creating a new statute requiring state contractors who deal in forest-risk commodities to certify that their products don't drive deforestation. New York would be the first state in the nation to implement such a policy, following in the footsteps of the European Union, which recently enacted economy-wide deforestation regulations.

Many businesses throughout the United States and across the world are already increasingly engaged in efforts to ensure their supply chains are transparent, traceable, ethical, and environmentally sound, whether in reaction to consumer pressure or government regulation, or out of an understanding of corporate social responsibility. Businesses that achieve ethical and sustainable supply chains may also be able to increase their appeal with certain consumers, charge premium prices, or access previously untapped markets as a result

of their efforts.

In order to remain competitive, New York businesses, particularly small and medium-sized businesses and minority- and women-owned businesses, must be able to take advantage of and stay ahead of this socially responsible and beneficial trend. The proposed **Supply Chain Transparency Assistance Program**, included in the TREES Act, to be administered by Empire State Development, would be available to New York-based small and medium-sized businesses, as well as MWBEs, to help them establish more ethical and sustainable supply chains, while ensuring they have the tools they need to compete in the national and global marketplace.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2023-S8898

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- Introduced

 - - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

 - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

 - - Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Vetoed By Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Enacts the tropical rainforest economic & environmental sustainability act and establishes the supply chain transparency assistance program

March 25, 2024

Senate Floor Calendar

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Do you support this bill?