



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo's streetlight legislation signed by Governor to help municipalities become more energy efficient

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO November 25, 2015

| ISSUE: **ENERGY, TAXES, UTILITIES, VILLAGES, TOWNS OR COUNTIES**

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Municipalities from across the state will now be more empowered to make energy-efficient investments in their streetlight equipment after the Governor signed legislation sponsored by State Senator Joseph Griffo.

This legislation, known as the Streetlight Replacement and Savings Act ([S5205B](#)), would provide clear guidelines for municipalities to begin the process of purchasing its streetlights

from the electric companies that own them. Outdoor lighting is one of the biggest expenses that municipalities have to confront, but sometimes these villages, towns and cities find it challenging to even begin negotiations with electric companies.

As a result, municipalities are often unable to make changes to their outdoor lighting that would help cut costs, save taxpayer dollars and prevent energy waste.

But now, Sen. Griffo's legislation – also sponsored by Assemblywoman Patricia Fahy, D-Albany, in the Assembly – would facilitate discussions between the parties involved by requiring that all investor-owned utilities have the appropriate tariff in place that allows municipalities to purchase streetlights. This legislation, while not forcing utilities to sell their property, would also establish specific steps to make it easier for a municipality to initiate a proceeding for the Public Service Commission (PSC) to review and approve the sale of these streetlights.

**Senator Joseph Griffo, R-Rome, said:** “As Chairman of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, I recognize that many municipalities across the state are always looking for ways to save taxpayer dollars by becoming more energy efficient. This legislation would give municipalities a little more leverage to accomplish that goal, either by acquiring streetlights and supporting infrastructure, or by making other arrangements with the utility company, such as phasing in more energy efficient lighting equipment while the company continues to own and maintain the streetlights and wires. The more easily our communities are able to move toward a more energy efficient future, the more they can devote limited financial resources to services and priorities that matter most to their residents.”

**Assemblywoman Patricia Fahy said:** “As municipalities struggle to find ways to save money while retaining adequate services for taxpayers, this legislation will make a significant

difference in reducing the utility bill of localities, in which the cost savings can be truly substantial. Through owning their own streetlights, villages, towns, and cities can now pave their way to an energy-efficient and taxpayer-friendly future. I thank Senator Griffo for his partnership on this bill and Governor Cuomo for signing this bill on behalf of the localities it will no doubt help.”

The new legislation also directs the PSC to work with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority – or NYSDERA – to identify energy efficiencies or funding that could help municipalities try to save money over time by purchasing their streetlights and supporting infrastructure.

Leaders of various statewide organizations that bring together municipalities from all across the state expressed their support for this new legislation, which they believe will have a far-reaching positive impact.

**Richard B. Milne, Mayor of the Village of Honeoye Falls and President of the New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM), said:** “New York Conference of Mayors commends Senator Griffo for his efforts in getting this bill through the State Legislature and signed into law. Municipal ownership of streetlights allows local governments to upgrade to LED technology and benefit from the subsequent reduction in operational costs, energy use and required maintenance. Having a process in place to allow for the purchase of their streetlights will provide local governments with the opportunity to generate significant cost savings for their taxpayers.”

**Stephen J. Acquario, Executive Director of the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC), said:** “This is smart government that creates a win, win, win scenario. The taxpayers will see lower costs on street lighting, the municipalities can take ownership and retrofit more efficient lighting, and utilities can divest an asset they are not in the business of providing. We applaud Senator Griffo for working this bill through the legislative process.”<sup>2</sup>

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RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2015-S5205B

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- Introduced
  
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
  
- Delivered to Governor
  
- Signed By Governor
  
- 

Relates to municipal acquisition of street lights from electric utilities

May 07, 2015

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Joseph A. Griffo**

Do you support this bill?

NAY