



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Senate Passes Measures To Encourage Energy And Environmental Conservation

ANDREW J. LANZA June 15, 2018

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The New York State Senate today passed three important bills to make it easier for New Yorkers to reduce, reuse, and recycle. The measures increase access to affordable and environmentally sustainable housing, require recycling of old solar panel materials, and continue providing a financial incentive for New Yorkers to go solar. Additional bills passed this week help invest in water infrastructure, save paper, and encourage the reusing or recycling of materials to prevent improper disposal.

Energy Initiatives for Green Buildings and Solar Panel Use

S7321, sponsored by Senator Joseph Griffo (R-C-I, Rome), requires the New York State Energy and Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) to establish a program to provide incentives to owners for the construction of energy efficient and environmentally sustainable affordable residential homes. This legislation provides for information, technical assistance, and financing to developers, builders, design professionals and other. NYSERDA will also be required to issue a report to the Governor and the Legislature to determine the benefits of providing new financial incentives for the construction of residential green buildings.

Senator Griffo, Chair of the Senate Committee on Energy and Telecommunications, said, “This legislation is focused on improving the environmental footprint of new construction projects in New York State. NYSERDA's program targets new homes which should be using sustainable building techniques to conserve energy and other natural resources.”

S2837B, sponsored by Senator Tom O’Mara (R-C-I, Big Flats), enacts the “Solar Panel Collection Act” to require manufacturers of solar panels to collect panels when they are taken out of use. As more New Yorkers switch to alternative forms of energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, there has been a rise in the use of solar panels. Eventually these panels, which contain various valuable materials and rare metals, will reach the end of their life and become waste. Proper recycling will ensure that these materials and metals can be reused.

Senator O’Mara, Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, said, “As New York State continues to aggressively move forward to address a range of energy and environmental conservation challenges, it’s important to cover all the bases. This legislation offers a series of commonsense, proactive, economically and environmentally sound approaches to managing waste and keeping it out of landfills through recycling and other initiatives.”

S8049, sponsored by Senator Lanza (R-C-I, Staten Island), extends and strengthens an existing incentive program to encourage the installation of solar electric generating systems. This property tax abatement will offset the additional cost associated with solar energy installation in the City of New York.

Environmental Measures Passed This Week

S3292, sponsored by Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C,I,REF-Glenville), implements a companion program to the existing Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS), called the Safe Water Infrastructure Action Program (SWAP), which offers assistance to local governments for drinking water, sanitary sewer and storm water infrastructure. This fund would be in addition to \$2.5 billion secured from the Clean Water Infrastructure Act of 2017.

Senator Tedisco said, "There's a monster lurking in New York State's aging water and sewer infrastructure that could wreak havoc on millions of people if it's not stopped. Many of our towns and cities all over the state have underground infrastructure that's over 100 years old, with some as old as the Civil War. The Safe Water Infrastructure Action Program will enable local governments to make repairs now and help them plan to replace our underground infrastructure in the future."

S4149B, sponsored by Senator Tedisco, "The Online Paperwork Reduction Act," saves tax dollars and the environment by making state agency, university, authority and bureau reports and public documents available online to promote greater government efficiency and reduce paper waste.

S2284, sponsored by Senator O'Mara, removes a cap on the price of deposits for lead-acid batteries. Current law requires retailers to collect a \$5 deposit as a return incentive to encourage recycling of lead-acid batteries. The removal of a price cap would place New York retailers on equal footing with those in surrounding states.

S7747A, sponsored by Senator O'Mara, protects the environment by reducing the amount of products, such as fertilizers containing pesticides, that become waste. It allows retailers and

distributors to continue making minor repairs to damaged storage containers in accordance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) policy.

The bills will be sent to the Assembly, with the exception of S7321, S8049, and S7747A which have already passed the Assembly and will be sent to the Governor for review.