



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo raises concerns with Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO November 23, 2020

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New York State Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, expressed concern today about a recently passed state law, set to go into effect soon, that will see unelected bureaucrats in Albany making decisions for local governments and energy generated upstate sent to downstate communities.

The Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act, which Sen. Griffo voted against, was passed as part of the 2020-21 State Budget. It revamps the approval, siting and construction process for energy-generating facilities in the state. However, the Act also removed two local ad hoc representatives from the New York State Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment - essentially ensuring that local governments and communities will no longer have a say in the siting of certain projects.

The previous Public Service Commission Article 10 regulations that the Act now bypasses had included local governments in the process.

“Most of these projects will be constructed in Upstate New York but will provide energy solely for downstate and New York City, regions that stand to benefit the most from this law” Sen. Griffo said. “It is unconscionable that localities in which these projects will be

situated will not be able to provide input as a result of the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act. Local control has been taken away and now unelected Albany bureaucrats will be making important decisions that will affect upstate communities throughout the state for years to come.”

Sen. Griffo stressed the importance of local input. He pointed to New York Regional Interconnect’s decision in 2009 to withdraw its application to run a 190-mile power line from Marcy in Oneida County to Orange County following public outcry from local residents, communities and officials.

"I have and continue to believe in a diversified energy portfolio, and with an understandable new focus on renewable energy sources such as hydroelectric, wind, solar, and zero-emission facilities such as nuclear, the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act diminishes the role that local governments play in making decisions that impact those they represent," Sen. Griffo said. "We have seen the powerful affect that local voices can have when it comes to what goes on in their own backyards. Instead of telling residents and communities that their input doesn't matter, as the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act does, we should welcome and encourage public input and let their thoughts, opinions and concerns be heard."

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