



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Senator Ortt Joins State And Local Officials in Decrying Government Overreach

ROBERT G. ORTT April 15, 2021

| ISSUE: [HOME RULE](#)



Today, Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt was joined by Assemblymen Angelo Morinello and Mike Norris, Niagara County Legislators John Syracuse and David Godfrey, local town officials, and community groups decrying Gov. Cuomo's new renewable-energy edict.

Last week's 2021-2022 New York State Budget included language that would establish a new state process for wind and solar projects in Upstate and Western New York communities.

This new language would essentially undo the current “home rule” law and remove local input from the process.

“Local legislators, residents, and community-based opposition groups have been fiercely outspoken against these industrial energy projects, and up to this point, we have been successful in keeping these unwanted projects out of our backyards,” **said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt.** “The new process is Albany’s one-party rule way of removing local voices from the equation entirely and erasing any control that municipalities have over land usage in their communities. This is only further evidence of Gov. Cuomo and Albany Democrats’ complete disregard for local concerns and demonstrates their intent to force the ‘Green New Deal’ agenda upon us whether we like it or not.”

The new section, 575-B of the “New York State Real Property Tax Law,” will task New York State, not local municipalities, with assessing the taxation of proposed land usage for wind and solar projects, eliminating any negotiations between local governments and renewable energy project developers.

Assemblyman Mike Norris said, “These massive energy projects should be assessed under the cost approach and within the discretion of the local municipal assessing unit. This is yet another encroachment of the State government on decisions that should be left to our local communities. I am proud to have voted against this legislation, and I will continue to fight against initiatives that limit or circumvent local control.”

Assemblyman Angelo Morinello said, “This issue is not an objection to alternative energy, but with the loss of local control over land use within the jurisdictional boundaries of towns, villages, and cities by further limiting their zoning and tax authority over massive solar and wind projects. This equates to a form of eminent domain without just compensation.”

Niagara County Legislator John Syracuse said, “575-B eviscerates a local municipality’s Home Rule as it relates to zoning ordinances and further shifts the determination of taxable value on these projects to downstate bureaucrats.”

Niagara County Legislator Dave Godfrey said, “This is just the latest attempt by Gov. Cuomo to silence local voices, and it paves the way for him to do whatever he wants on land he does not own. He wants to decide where these unwelcome projects are located and when they will begin while removing local governments from the negotiating table. Thanks to Democrats in Albany, Gov. Cuomo’s executive power will now give him his way with what happens in our backyard regardless of how we feel. As the saying goes – Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely. This is utterly unacceptable.”

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