

**Catherine F. Parker**

Legislator, 7th District  
Chair, Committee on Planning, Economic  
Development and Energy



Committee Assignments:  
Budget & Appropriations  
Environment & Health  
Intergovernmental Services  
Labor & Housing  
Parks & Recreation  
Public Works & Transportation

October 13, 2020

Hon. Michelle L. Phillips  
Secretary to the Commission  
New York State Public Service Commission Three Empire State Plaza  
Albany, New York 12223  
VIA E-MAIL

RE: Proceeding on Motion of the Commission in Regard to Gas Planning Procedures Case  
Number: 20-G-0131

Dear Secretary Phillips:

Please accept for filing a letter signed by 91 elected officials across New York state supporting the NY Public Service Commission's March 19 launch of a proceeding to align New York's methane gas system planning with New York's legally mandated climate goals. Our letter urges the Commission to enact a well-researched, comprehensive plan for a managed, equitable, affordable transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy compliant with the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). We must ensure all people in New York have the energy needed for heating, hot water, and cooking, and that access to renewable options for these services is provided in a timely, orderly, and affordable manner.

Sincerely,

*Catherine F. Parker*

October 13, 2020

To: Secretary Michelle L. Phillips

CC: Governor Andrew Cuomo, John Rhodes, NYDPS Chair, Public Service Commissioners: Tracey Edwards, Diane X. Burman, James Alesi, and John Howard.

Re: Proceeding on Motion of the Commission in Regard to Gas Planning Procedures Case Number: 20-G-0131

The undersigned elected officials thank the NY Public Service Commission (PSC) for initiating this ground-breaking proceeding. A managed, equitable, affordable transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy is in the best interests of our constituents and all New Yorkers. It is incumbent upon the PSC to enact a well-researched, comprehensive plan to align New York's gas utilities with the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). We must ensure all people in New York have the energy needed for heating, hot water, and cooking, and that access to renewable options for these services is provided in a timely, orderly, and affordable manner.

We whole-heartedly support this proceeding. In the aftermath of chaotic gas moratoria declared in 2019 by some utilities, the State must require utilities to plan better for the future, and this planning must take climate goals into account. Such chaotic situations impose an extra cost to local governments and residents.

We ask the PSC to use this proceeding to impose measurable emissions reduction requirements on gas utilities to achieve the goals of the CLCPA. Climate change is rapidly exceeding worst case predictions; aggressive goals and benchmarks for energy transition are needed to get ahead of the escalating speed of the climate emergency.

Additionally, the following outcomes are needed to ensure the gas planning proceeding is successful:

NYSERDA must provide guidance and resources to cities and towns for responsible development. New construction is one of the drivers of gas expansion, but it is often more economical for new buildings to go “all electric” with energy efficiency, heat pumps, and induction stoves, rather than investing in outdated fossil fuel combustion technologies. Local municipalities and cities need planning resources to help their local residents and businesses avoid costly retrofits, stranded assets, and crises due to gas moratoria.

Require steps to ensure affordability and resilience of the electric grid. As heating costs shift from the gas bill to the electric bill, the Commission must work to make electricity more affordable to customers, especially those struggling already to pay their bills.

Require gas and electric utilities to plan comprehensively together so that as customers are shifted to renewable thermal energy for heating and cooking, there is a renewable-based electricity supply to provide the power for those uses.

As we move to fully electric heating and cooking, consequences of outages will become more severe. Direct the utilities to invest more in electric grid resilience and reliability, such as buried power lines in areas with high outages, distributed electricity generation, and renewably powered microgrids.

We look forward to working with you to help our communities transition from fossil fuels. A comprehensive planning process, resources for municipalities to support this transition, and a focus on affordability will ensure that we can avoid chaotic gas moratoria and ensure an orderly transition to renewable heating.

Sincerely,

Catherine Parker, Westchester County Legislator  
Catherine Borgia, Westchester County Legislator  
James F. Creighton, Councilman, Town of Cortlandt  
Manna Jo Greene, Ulster County Legislator  
Kathryn E. Paterson, Councilman, City of Corning  
Timothy Murray, Councilman, Town of Caroline  
Vanessa Agudelo, Councilmember, City of Peekskill  
Mark Witmer, Supervisor, Town of Caroline  
Joseph Driscoll, Common Council Member, Syracuse  
John Deer, Councilor, Town of Manlius  
Mary Lupien, City Council, Rochester  
Katelyn Kriesel, Councilor, Town of Manlius  
Jen Metzger, New York State Senate, 42nd District  
Irene Weiser, Councilmember, Town of Caroline  
Melinda Little, Trustee, Village of Saranac Lake  
Sean Ryan, NYS Assembly, 149th District  
Joel Gagnon, Town Supervisor, Town of Danby  
Sarah Schnabel, Councilmember, Town of Danby  
Anne Koreman, Tompkins County Legislator  
Mary Kuhn, Onondaga County Legislator  
Damon Maher, Westchester County Legislator  
Colin D. Smith, Westchester County Legislator  
Heather Waters, Councilor, Town of Manlius  
Nancy E. Barr, Westchester County Legislator  
Nick Page, Dutchess County Legislator  
Anthony Grice, Councilman at Large, City of Newburgh  
Anna Kelles, Tompkins County Legislator  
Ruth Walter, Westchester County Legislator  
Benjamin G Darfler, Trustee, Village of Trumansburg  
Ken Wray, Mayor, Village of Sleepy Hollow  
Robert Carroll, NYS Assembly, 44th District  
Stephanie Redmond, Supervisor, Town of Enfield  
Jo Anne Simon, NYS Assembly, 52nd District



Amber Grant, Councilmember at Large, City of Beacon  
Victoria Gearity, Mayor, Ossining Village  
Nily Rozic, NYS Assembly District 25  
David Buchwald, NYS Assembly District 93  
Paul Feiner, Town Supervisor, Greenburgh  
Virginia C. Bryant, Councilperson, Town of Enfield  
Jason Leifer, Supervisor, Town of Dryden  
Kathleen Talbot, Councilmember, City of Peekskill  
Latrice Walker, NYS Assembly, District 55  
Stephen Levin, NYC Council, District 33  
Brian Pugh, Mayor, Village of Croton-On-Hudson  
James E. Skaley, Councilperson, Town of Dryden  
Barbara Lifton, NYS Assembly, 125th District  
Benjamin Boykin II, Westchester County Legislator  
Joel P. Feroletto, Common Council, City of Buffalo  
Dan Lamb, Deputy Supervisor, Town of Dryden  
Joseph Wetmore, Town Board, Town of Lansing  
Rachel May, NYS Senate, 53rd District  
Martha Robertson, Tompkins County Legislator  
Sherry Horowitz, Trustee, Village of Croton-On-Hudson  
Thomas Roach, Mayor, City of White Plains  
Richard Gottfried, NYS Assembly, 75th District  
Deborah Dawson, Tompkins County Legislator  
Ronny Hardaway, Trustee, Village of Lansing  
Christina Sonsire, Chemung County Legislator  
Kerin Rigney, Town Councilor, Town of DeWitt  
Terry Nelson, Councilmember, City of Beacon  
Ann Gallelli, Trustee, Village of Croton-on-Hudson  
Anthony Del Plato, Deputy Mayor, Village of Interlaken  
Sarah Salem, Councilmember-at-large, City of Poughkeepsie  
Michael Aymar-Blair, Councilmember, City of Beacon  
Pamela Hunter, NYS Assembly, 128th District  
Thomas Butler, Mayor, Village of Tarrytown  
Karines Reyes, NYS Assembly, 87th District  
Dan Klein, Tompkins County Legislator  
Brent A Stermer, Councilman, City of Elmira  
John Fracchia, Councilmember, Town of Caroline  
Shawna M. Black, Tompkins County Legislator  
Elaine Denton, Councilor, Town of Manlius  
Andy Simmons, Trustee, Village of Croton-on-Hudson  
Robin Wilt, Councilmember, Town of Brighton  
Paul H. Rudz, Trustee, Village of Lancaster  
Yuh-Line Niou, NYS Assembly, 65th District  
Teresa Cheetham-Palen, Councilperson, Town of Keene  
Dana Levenberg, Supervisor, Town of Ossining  
Ellen Calves, Town Board, Town of Bedford  
William Reinhardt, Albany County Legislator  
Rod Howe, Supervisor, Town of Ithaca

John L. Habib, Trustee, Village of Croton-on-Hudson  
William D. Goodman, Deputy Supervisor, Town of Ithaca  
Loren Sparling, Councilperson, Town of Dryden  
William T Kinne, Onondaga County Legislator  
Kevindaryán Luján, Orange County Legislator, Newburgh-District 4  
Jeffrey Dinowitz, NYS Assembly, 81st District  
William Colton, NYS Assembly, 47th District  
Bronwyn Losey, Councilperson, Town of Lansing  
Gregory Young, Fulton County Supervisor, Gloversville Ward 5  
Brian Kavanagh, New York State Senator, Senate District 26