



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Antoine M. Thompson

## Senator Antoine Thompson, Chair of the Environmental Conservation Committee Acts to Create Green Jobs

ANTOINE M THOMPSON February 23, 2010

| ISSUE: **ENVIRONMENT, GOING GREEN**

| COMMITTEE: **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

For Immediate Release

Contact: Heather Zeisz | [zeisz@senate.state.ny.us](mailto:zeisz@senate.state.ny.us) | 716.854.8705

(Albany-NY)Yesterday, the New York State Senate passed an environmental package that promotes the use of clean energy, creates green jobs, empowers property owners to upgrade to energy efficient gas systems and protects New Yorkers from environmental discrimination.

“As Chair of the Environmental Conservation Committee, I am pleased the Senate acted yesterday to continue to move New York forward as an environmental leader,” Senator Thompson (D-Parts of Erie and Niagara Counties) said. “The measures taken today will save property owners money, reduce our carbon footprint and create jobs supported by our ‘green jobs initiative’. The passage of these bills shows the deep commitment of the Senate Majority to invest in renewable energy, a clean energy economy and the people of New York State.”

Yesterday’s package included the following bills:

S4407 – Schneiderman/Thompson : Sponsored by Senator Eric Schneiderman (D-Manhattan), and co-sponsored by Senator Antoine Thompson (D- Erie, Niagara), this legislation mandates a policy of equal treatment for people of all races, cultures, religions, incomes, education

levels and sexual preference in the creation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. It also ensures that the State of New York will provide environmental justice for all of its citizens regardless of their political or economic strength.

“A Climate of Change,” a 2008 report by the Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative found that 71 percent of African Americans live in counties in violation of federal air pollution standards compared to 58 percent of white; and 78 percent of African Americans live within 30 miles of a coal-fired power plant, as compared to 56 percent of whites.

Minority community populations are burdened with a disproportionate number of incinerators, dumps, factories and other sources of pollution – a practice known as “environmental racism.” This legislation will provide environmental justice to minority and disadvantaged communities by supporting their legal right to a healthy and clean environment.

S6700 – Maziarz/Thompson : Sponsored by Senator George Maziarz (R-Niagara) and co-sponsored by Senator Antoine Thompson (D-Erie, Niagara), this bill eliminates the peak load limitation on the size of non-residential solar and wind electric generating equipment eligible for net metering.

Net metering was expanded to non-residential customers in 2008 to encourage increased deployment of solar electric and wind electric technologies. This expansion was limited to non-residential customers with systems with a rated capacity of the lesser of 2,000 kilowatts or the customer generator’s peak load as measured over the prior 12 month period.

Currently, the intended expansion of net metering to non-residential customers has been hindered by the limit on peak load. This bill would encourage greater deployment of renewable energy generation systems that advance the State's clean energy goals. In addition to helping to achieve renewable energy goals, on-site solar and wind generation will also allow the customer to save on energy costs.

###