



NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

April 5, 2024

Hon. Kathy Hochul
Governor, State New York
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

RE: Concerns over proposed Renewable Action Through Project Interconnection and Deployment Act

Dear Governor Hochul,

We are writing to express our concerns and opposition to the proposed Renewable Action Through Project Interconnection and Deployment (RAPID) Act.

While the RAPID Act purports to streamline the approval process for renewable energy projects, it does so at the expense of diminishing the already limited say of local communities in these crucial decisions. It is our firm belief that the local community should be the most important voice in determining the siting of electrical generating projects. Local control is paramount, and the RAPID Act tramples on the autonomy of our communities by centralizing decision-making power.

The RAPID Act will also undermine sound environmental review of major electric transmission facilities by imposing an unrealistic timeline for permit decisions. The act requires the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) to render a permit decision within a single year, in failing to do so, the facility shall be automatically approved, irrespective of its size or potential impact on the community.

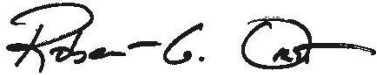
Furthermore, the RAPID Act extends the power of eminent domain to the construction of major electric transmission facilities by large-scale solar and wind developers, thereby constituting a significant deprivation of private property rights. It also grants ORES the authority to exempt applicants from complying with municipal requirements, undermining the carefully crafted local legislation adopted in the best interest of our communities.

Under the proposed RAPID Act, host municipalities would face significant hurdles to be considered parties to the siting process, and even then, their participation would be limited. This undermines the current process under Public Service Law Article 7, which allows host municipalities to participate fully in the siting process and ensure that the interests of their communities are adequately represented.

We strongly oppose the RAPID Act and would urge you to consider legislation that we have proposed (S.1411 / A.2365) which prioritizes safeguarding the interests and autonomy of our local communities by given them a voice in energy siting projects. It is essential that any legislation concerning renewable energy expansion in New York reflects a balanced and community-focused approach.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Robert G. Ort
Minority Leader, NYS Senate
62nd District



Michael J. Norris
Member of Assembly
144th District



Angelo J. Morinello
Member of Assembly
145th District