



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Orleans' Russell Martino Appointed to Lighthouse Wind LLC Siting Board

ANTOINETTE DELBEL March 4, 2016

Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) today thanked Governor Cuomo for responding to his pressing request to appoint a representative from Orleans County to the Lighthouse Wind LLC Siting Board. The Governor's Appointments Office has announced the appointment of Russell Martino, a Town of Yates resident and former Yates town supervisor.

The seven-member Siting Board will review the final application by Apex Clean Energy in its project proposal to construct up to 70 wind turbines in the towns of Yates and Somerset. The turbines would be as tall as 600 feet.

"I commend Governor Cuomo for fulfilling the role that Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie failed to follow through on," **said Senator Ortt**. "Russ was a wise decision for this appointment. When Russ was the town supervisor, he was instrumental in drawing up the wind ordinance laws in 2008. He is well-versed in this issue. I have no doubt he will honorably voice the serious concerns raised by property owners, businesses, farmers and local representatives."

Russ Martino said, "I've lived in the Town of Yates for 50 years now and am very invested and involved in my community. I've seen what this issue is doing to our community; residents don't feel they're being heard. I hope to be the voice of my community members who don't want this project to move forward in our town."

Assemblyman Steve Hawley (R,C,I – Batavia) said, “I would like to congratulate Russell Martino on his appointment as an ad hoc member of the board of the Yates Wind Project. I am pleased to see that Orleans County will be fairly represented in this process and that the board is allowing ordinary citizens to voice concerns about local projects. As I’ve said before, this is a local project that would greatly impact the Yates community and I fully support the decision to oppose the APEX Clean Energy Lighthouse, LLC. Local citizens know what is best for their community and this appointment is a great example of transparent and inclusive government.”

State Senate Majority leader John Flanagan and State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie were required to appoint a siting board member from nominations approved by host municipalities of where the project is being proposed. Senator Flanagan chose his representative from the Town of Somerset in Niagara County. Assemblyman Heastie, however, failed to meet his obligation, and the responsibility to select a board member fell on the governor.

Senator Ortt wrote a letter to Governor Cuomo (attached) immediately following Assemblyman Heastie’s shortcomings. In the letter sent in January, Senator Ortt advocated for greater local involvement by moving siting decisions away from politicians and bureaucrats in Albany and giving back to local officials.

Apex Clean Energy has not formally submitted an application for the project.