



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham and Galef Job Protection and Local Funding Bills at Indian Point Signed into Law by Governor Cuomo

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ISSUE:

- [Indian Point Power Plant](#)
- [Buchanan](#)
- [hendrick hudson school district](#)



Buchanan, NY – Three bills sponsored by New York State Senator Pete Harckham and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef ensuring workforce protections and financial assistance to local municipalities and taxpayers while the Indian Point Energy Center (IPEC) undergoes its decommissioning process have been signed into law by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo.

Effective immediately, the new laws pertaining to IPEC signal strong support to the communities surrounding the nuclear energy plant, whose third and last operating reactor is scheduled to be shut down in April 2021. New Jersey-based Holtec International was approved by the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to decommission the facility.

“With the closing of Indian Point less than four months away, it was imperative that statutory protections were put in place for the existing workforce and their families, along with guaranteed revenue for local municipalities and schools,” said Harckham. “Now, the changes ahead will be tempered and more readily dealt with. I am thankful that Governor Cuomo signed this legislation, and appreciate all the hard so many people, including Sandy Galef, my legislative partner in this regard, put into making sure our residents received the help and consideration they deserve.”

“What a perfect beginning to the New Year with the signing of these three bills to protect the taxpayers of the village, town and school district, as well as the employees of the Indian Point nuclear facility,” said Galef. “Working together with

the Governor's Office, local officials and union representatives, our goal to put these bills into New York State law was achieved last night. It was my pleasure to work with Senator Harckham to get this important legislation passed, and we will continue to partner on other issues arising from the closure and decommissioning of the nuclear plants in Buchanan."

The new laws include S.7846, which addresses the possible negative impact to the workforce during the decommissioning by keeping workers at Indian Point at the prevailing wages commensurate with the wages being paid for the same work in this area. This stays in effect after the plant's present corporate owner, Entergy, officially hands the property over to Holtec to enact the decommissioning and is in control of operations. The new law also recognizes the need for professional maintenance of the Indian Point facility during its decommissioning, and requires that new hires are selected from a list of qualified employees at the plant.

"I applaud the concerted efforts of Senator Pete Harckham and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef in ensuring worker protections and the safety of our community during the decommissioning of Indian Point Nuclear Power Plants Units 1, 2 and 3," said Thomas Carey, President of the Westchester/Putnam Central Labor Body. "Together, Senator Harckham, Assemblywoman Galef and plus labor and community leaders have worked tirelessly to craft these bills that fully understand the concerns of our school districts, fire districts, small businesses and, most importantly, our residents. They were genuinely engaged in all aspects of this massive undertaking, and the dialogue went well into the late evenings on many occasions. A big thank you to both of our legislative officials once again."

Ron Diaz, business manager of UA Local 21 Plumbers, Steamfitters and Service Technicians, added, "The hard-working men and women of Local 21 and affiliate building trades unions are eternally appreciative of the efforts of securing prevailing wage and worker protections with this Indian Point bill. Senator Harckham and Assemblywoman Galef are true champions of organized labor."

The financial implications to the local community from Indian Point's closing are expected to be sizable. The municipal tax base and local school district funding have long been supported by the energy facility, and maintaining a good portion of that support is crucial, especially in light of unforeseen municipal costs incurred during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

To steady tax revenues for the Town of Cortlandt, Village of Buchanan and Hendrick Hudson School District during the transition, S. 8075 will include now spent fuel and the fuel casks at the nuclear facility as part of its real property tax assessment. Otherwise, market value of the non-operating plant will adversely affect the assessment and create an unmanageable revenue gap for these tax-funded entities.

The third new law, S.8204, concerns Indian Point's PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreement, which is set to expire in April 2021. The law simply allows "formerly generating" energy plants to make these payments as well.