



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanaugh

## Advocates, Legislators Urge NY Gov. Hochul to End Fossil Fuels in New Buildings Via Budget

BRIAN KAVANAGH January 12, 2022

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### For Immediate Release

Today, with one week until Governor Hochul is set to present her 2022 budget to the state legislature, more than 90 advocates and state legislators gathered to demand that she prioritize the phaseout of fossil fuels in new buildings through the budgetary process. Gov. Hochul announced her support for a statewide ban on fossil fuels in new buildings in her State of the State address, in a move **critiqued by advocates** for its slow timeline.

Senator Brian Kavanaugh and Assembly Member Emily Gallagher, prime bill sponsors of legislation to ban fossil fuels in new construction, S6843A/A8431, and other state legislators joined advocates today in a virtual press conference calling on Governor Hochul to incorporate the bill into her budget to expedite its passage. With **less than a decade** remaining to avoid a tipping point in the climate crisis, advocates and state legislators urged Governor Hochul to act quickly on the ban, taking concrete steps to shut down New York's market for climate-warming fossil fuels.

“Governor Hochul has laid out a timeline for a statewide gas ban that fails to meet the urgency of the climate crisis,” said **Assembly Member Emily Gallagher, Sponsor of A8431**. “This bill will put New York on course to building the green economy of the future, and reduce the air pollution that kills thousands of New Yorkers each year. Governor Hochul — thank you, but go further. It’s clear that you understand the need to stop fossil fuels in buildings, but we need to move faster. Put the Electric Buildings Act in your budget.”

“The CLCPA set ambitious climate emissions reductions goals for New York and is the strongest state legislation in the country, but we urge speed. We want as rapid as possible implementation and enactment of the Electric Buildings Act. We cannot wait until the last week of session — this is an urgent crisis,” said **Senator Brian Kavanagh, Sponsor of S6843A**. “As we engage in conversations about the budget, we need to include the electric buildings act and get it done.”

Should Governor Hochul ban fossil fuels in new construction, New York would be the first state in the country to do so. The push for action at the executive level comes weeks after New York City made history as the nation’s largest city to **pass a fossil fuel ban** in December.

**Food & Water Watch Senior New York Organizer Eric Weltman** said:

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*“New York is primed to make history as the first state to ban fossil fuels in new buildings — all we need is for Governor Hochul to rise to the task. With a stroke of her pen, she can cement New York as a leader in addressing the climate crisis head on, banning fossil fuels in new construction to crack down on greenhouse gas emissions and indoor air pollution. Governor Hochul must include the NY state gas ban in her budget.”*

“This winter’s exorbitant heating bills have exposed the lie that the fracking industry and its corporate utility partners claim that gas equals cheap energy,” said **Kim Fraczek, Director of**

**Sane Energy Project, member of the Renewable Heat Now campaign** “Passing the All Electric Buildings Act will not only help us lock in affordable and efficient electric heat pumps and geothermal, but help alleviate the dangers and poison that comes from gas in our buildings.”

“Continuing gas infrastructure expansion is not affordable for today’s gas customers and it’s not sustainable for the climate, which is why we must stop constructing new buildings with gas and other fossil fuel systems,” said **Avni Pravin, Deputy Policy Director of Alliance for a Green Economy**. “We call on Governor Hochul and the legislature to pass the All-Electric Buildings Act as soon as possible, without weakening the timeline or the affordability provisions.”

“Fossil fuels burned in buildings are the single biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions,” said **Lisa Marshall of Mothers Out Front NY**. “This is why the Renewable Heat Now Campaign is a priority for our organization. We fully support the All-Electric Building act and the rest of the bills that are part of the **Renewable Heat Now legislative package**. Including these bills in the 2022 budget will demonstrate unequivocally that New York is committed to meaningful climate solutions.”

“We all know that the technology to build electric buildings is there, that building electric will create jobs, and help push New York state into a fossil fuel free economy — it’s time to make it happen,” said **Sonal Jessel, Director of Policy at WE ACT for Environmental Justice**. “We believe that all people deserve to live in healthy housing that is free from pollution sources like gas stoves, and we believe that we must ensure that low-income people and people of color across New York state don’t bear the utility burden from continued fossil fuel expansion. S6843A/A843 will make that happen — Governor Hochul must enact a statewide gas ban in her budget.”

“When Sandy hit New York, I lost everything, and I almost lost my daughter. Then, Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, Ida hit New York, and we keep losing even more lives and compiling trauma,” said **Rachel Rivera, Hurricane Sandy survivor and NYCC member**. “I commend Governor Hochul for supporting a statewide gas ban, but waiting for 2027 is too long — we need to move faster. It’s just getting worse out here.”

“Going all electric for new buildings keeps fossil fuels out of buildings and keeps residents healthy. The students we work with will inherit more extreme weather and rising sea levels from the climate crisis. That’s why we are fighting for a future with breathable air and safer, more resilient communities. S6843A/A843 will help us get there and must be implemented immediately,” said **Megan Ahearn, Program Director for NYPIRG**.

“The All Electric Buildings Act is a no regrets solution. There is no reason to wait on a statewide gas ban,” said **Conor Bambrik, with Environmental Advocates NY**. “While this bill will have important impacts on climate emissions, it is also going to have a huge impact on public health. Fully electric new buildings will go a long way to helping the climate and the health of our communities.”

“Fossil fuels have no future in New York state,” said **Bill Nowak of NY-GEO, the New York Geothermal Energy Organization**. “I can’t see any self-respecting business setting up their customers with obsolete heating and cooling systems at this point. Governor Hochul’s announcement gets us part way there, but we need to move faster. Our industry is ready — put S6843A/A843 into law and we will make it happen.”

“BIPOC & low-income communities seeking opportunities for a new home or a new apartment should not have to sacrifice their health for a better place to live,” said **Daphany Rose Sanchez, Kinetic Communities**. “Equitably funding electrification in new construction and prioritizing disinvested communities is the only path forward for a just clean energy transition. Let’s shift our communities to center people and health first — make S6843A/A843

into law.”