



**Statement from DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos Regarding the Approval of the Climate Action Council Scoping Plan**

**December 19, 2022**

I applaud my colleagues on the Climate Action Council, including my esteemed Council Co-Chair NYSERDA President and CEO Doreen Harris and Council Executive Director Sarah Osgood, as well as the over 100 members of the various advisory panels and working groups, in addition to over 300 agency staff, for their tireless work over the past three years to develop this Scoping Plan to serve as a roadmap to achieve the ambitious climate targets of New York State's nation-leading Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

I also want to thank the thousands of New Yorkers who participated in the 11 public hearings the Council held across the State and more than 35,000 New Yorkers who provided written comments during the public comment period on the draft Scoping Plan. Public input was vital to this process as the Council worked to finalize the Scoping Plan with public input and full transparency every step of the way.

I'd like to thank Governor Hochul for her unwavering commitment to combatting climate change as a fearless champion for the environment, and the State Legislature for passing the Climate Act in 2019 – including bill sponsors Senator Todd Kaminsky and Assemblymember Steve Englebright. The Climate Act was also the result of thousands of advocates, climate justice leaders, and everyday New Yorkers who are experiencing climate change and demanded climate action. Without you, we would not be where we are today.

New York's Climate Act represents one of the most aggressive climate and clean energy agendas in the nation and serves as a model for other states to follow in our fight against climate change. This hasn't been an easy or perfect process. We engaged in spirited discussions and respectful debates, in good faith, with shared values and we placed the greater good above competing and narrow interests. This Scoping Plan is a bold, monumental, and visionary achievement, not just for New York State, but for the nation and the world.

The framework of the Scoping Plan puts us on a path to net-zero by 2050, including an 85 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 from 1990 levels, 100 percent zero-emission electricity by 2040, and 70 percent renewable energy by 2030.

Together, we are advancing a cleaner and more reliable energy system to withstand extreme weather and severe storms, and working to reduce pollution, grow healthier communities, and

improve quality of life for all New Yorkers. For New Yorkers this means cleaner air, fewer hospital visits and reduced health care costs, and lives saved from premature death.

The Council's Scoping Plan centers on ensuring equity and climate justice across all sectors, building opportunities for all, especially those in underserved communities, and supporting and preparing a workforce that can transition as seamlessly as possible to our new clean energy economy. The Climate Act also contains important provisions that ensure agency decision-making does not disproportionately burden disadvantaged communities and prioritizes reductions of greenhouse gas emissions and co-pollutants in these communities.

To that end, New York is executing a comprehensive effort that covers all sectors of the economy prioritizing climate justice, with no less than 35 percent, with a goal of at least 40 percent of investments, in disadvantaged communities across the State. We are ensuring that climate investments and green jobs benefit all New Yorkers, particularly those communities that have borne the brunt of pollution for decades.

Implementation of this Plan will enable New Yorkers to help us realize our goals through actions including expanding electrification of buildings, increasing the use of electric vehicles, encouraging heat pumps to cool and heat our homes, installing solar, and much more.

New Yorkers will experience overall cost savings as a result of increased energy efficiency with electric technologies and reducing reliance on fossil fuels in a variety of sectors, including the two largest emitters of greenhouse gas emissions – buildings and transportation.

Electrification and efficiency improvements in buildings will help to increase resilience and ensure energy affordability. And electric vehicles will decrease costs for drivers with the elimination of conventional fueling and less vehicle maintenance – in addition to energy affordability that comes with a variety of other clean energy technologies.

Our analysis shows that the implementation of the Climate Act will result in the addition of 200,000 new jobs by 2030, and tens of thousands more jobs created through 2050. New York also stands to see ten jobs added in growing clean energy sectors for every job potentially lost in displaced subsectors.

The Scoping Plan prioritizes training workers for the growing clean energy sector, including residents of underserved communities and existing workers in conventional energy industries. The Plan also protects and expands jobs for New Yorkers, including good paying union jobs, and puts New York on the forefront of the booming clean energy economy.

The steps we are taking today will help us reduce the costly and life changing impacts of climate change. Because it's clear that the cost of inaction is far too great, with the cost of inaction exceeding the cost of action by more than \$115 billion.

New York currently has more than 120 renewable energy projects in active development and construction including large-scale solar, land-based and offshore wind, and has approved two

transmission projects to deliver renewable energy to all corners of the state and are the state's largest transmission projects in 50 years. Once these projects are completed, 66 percent of the state's electricity will come from renewable sources, well on the way to our goal of 70 percent by 2030.

This is not the beginning of our work, but it's also not the end. The steps we are taking today will help us reduce the costly and devastating impacts of climate change by ensuring affordability, equity, reliability, and a just transition.

We will continue to collaborate and engage with the public and stakeholders throughout this process, in addition to our federal, state, and local partners, along with hundreds of businesses and industries. I look forward to continuing to work with all of you and hearing from New Yorkers every step of the way throughout this ongoing process.

I'm more optimistic than ever that we can meet the charge of climate change. We have strong and unique alignment with federal, state, and local governments, we have the technologies, businesses, and private investments, we have commitments to organized labor, and we have binding pathways to address the historic problems faced by disadvantaged communities.

Significant policy developments at the national and state level are offering major new tools for New York State to utilize, adopt, and draw from. Most prominently, through the combination of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Inflation Reduction Act, and CHIPS and Science Act, there are now unprecedented levels of federal funding available to support the realization of a just transition.

This is one of the most consequential and challenging steps we will ever take. Our actions today will be felt for generations, and with this plan, we are leading the way to a cleaner, greener, and brighter future.