

It has been an honor to serve on this Council on behalf of Commissioner Bassett, and previously on behalf of Dr. Zucker when he was the Department of Health commissioner. The dedication of our Council Co-chairs, fellow members and agency staff who have supported the work of the council has been of the highest order and deeply appreciated.

In December 2021, the Council voted to release for public comment a forward-looking and comprehensive draft Scoping Plan that appropriately emphasized the adverse health effects of climate change and the public health benefits that will result from New York's recommended climate strategies and actions. The tremendous public response to the draft plan has been heartening, and it demonstrates the importance of climate change in the minds of all New Yorkers. Through the public comment process, many New Yorkers expressed their appreciation for the Scope's emphasis on public health and pointed to additional health benefits that are possible from mitigating the full impact of climate change. Through the concentrated efforts of the Council's subgroups such as the Alternative Fuels subgroup, as well as the Climate Justice Working Group, we have been able to create a plan that embraces multiple points of view and strives to reduce New York's health disparities. The diversity of perspectives represented on the Council, and the constructive dialog between members served to further strengthen the Scoping Plan. The recommended strategies in the Plan will provide key reductions of co-pollutants that are particularly concerning in vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and will provide health benefits across the board for all New Yorkers.

Climate Change has been described by the WHO as the single biggest health threat facing humanity

- with expected increases in respiratory and cardiovascular disease, injuries and premature deaths related to extreme weather, changes in prevalence and distribution of food- and water-borne illnesses and other infectious diseases, and threats to mental health.

The strategies in the CAC Scope provide a path forward to reduce these direct health impacts. The Scoping Plan blueprint for action will yield air pollution reductions and health benefits that are in line with the Department of Health's Prevention Agenda and New York's Health in all Policies Initiative. The time is now to move forward with this ambitious Scoping Plan and work on implementing its recommendations. On behalf of Dr. Bassett, I strongly endorse and vote to release the final Scope.