


May 1, 2023

TO: Hon. Nancy Barr, Acting Chair  
Hon. Christopher Johnson, Majority Leader  
Hon. Margaret Cunzio, Minority Leader

FROM: George Latimer   
Westchester County Executive

RE: Message Requesting Immediate Consideration: **Act – Renewable Energy Database Act.**

---

This will confirm my request that the Board of Legislators allow submission of the referenced communication to be submitted to the Board of Legislators May 1, 2023 Agenda.

Transmitted herewith for your consideration and approval is an Act establishing a municipal renewable energy system siting database, which may be referred to as the "Renewable Energy Database Act."

Therefore, since this communication is of the utmost importance, it is respectfully submitted that the County Board of Legislators accepts this submission for May 1, 2023 "blue sheet" calendar.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.



**George Latimer**  
**County Executive**

April 21, 2023

Westchester County Board of Legislators  
800 Michaelian Office Building  
148 Martine Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
White Plains, New York 10601

Dear Honorable Members of the Board:

I respectfully request that your Honorable Board adopt the attached Act establishing a municipal renewable energy system siting database, which may be referred to as the “Renewable Energy Database Act.”

The implementation of renewable energy systems is a critical step towards decreasing greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and reducing some types of air pollution. Renewable energy systems may also foster economic development by creating jobs in manufacturing and installation. Municipalities within the County have expressed interest in siting renewable energy systems within their boundaries, but some may need assistance with technical expertise or information to attract developers.

This Act will help municipalities within the County develop renewable energy projects, by establishing a database to promote the siting of renewable energy systems on municipal property. The County-hosted database would allow municipalities to publish information on a public-facing website, including their renewable energy goals, to help position renewable energy systems on municipal property. Consistent with the Act, the database would be actively managed and updated regularly by the Director of the County’s Office of Energy Conservation and Sustainability.

This legislation is patterned after proposed New York State legislation (S.9474, A.9602 of 2021-2022).<sup>1</sup> The State bill was endorsed for passage by Environmental Advocates NY, a nonprofit corporation dedicated to protecting the air, land, water and health of all New Yorkers.

This proposed project does not meet the definition of an action under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) and its implementing regulations 6 NYCRR Part 617. Please refer to the memorandum from the Department of Planning, dated January 12, 2023, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators.

---

<sup>1</sup> Neither the Senate bill nor the Assembly bill advanced out of committee.

In light of the aforementioned, I respectfully urge that your Honorable Board adopt the Renewable Energy Database Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Latimer", written in a cursive style.

GEORGE LATIMER  
County Executive

GL/nn  
Enclosure



# EANY SUPPORTS Renewable Energy Database



[S.9474 \(May\)](#)

[A.9602 \(Cusick, et al.\)](#)

## **Explanation:**

The 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) requires 70% renewable energy by 2030 and 100% zero-emission electricity by 2040. In order for New York State to meet these ambitious and vital mandates, it must be as easy as possible for municipalities across the state to deploy renewable energy systems.

This legislation directs NYSERDA to create and maintain a centralized, publicly accessible database where local governments can identify municipally owned parcels that are available to host renewable energy systems. The regularly updated database would include detailed information about the properties, the type of renewable systems desired by the municipality, and any local laws that would have to be considered in the state's Office of Renewable Energy Siting Permitting Process. These properties would also be eligible to participate in NYSERDA's Build Ready Program to expedite permitting for any would-be developers.

The database will serve as another tool the state can use to achieve the renewable energy and zero-emission mandates of the CLCPA. It will help provide certainty for renewable energy developers by acting as a one-stop shop to match developers with willing municipal partners. With technical and permitting assistance from NYSERDA, communities can repurpose otherwise undesirable land and be assured that they will be able to enjoy the health and economic benefits renewable energy systems deliver on their terms.

## **Summary:**

This bill would amend the public authorities law directing NYSERDA to create and manage a municipal renewable energy system siting database and to provide technical assistance to help promote renewable energy siting on municipally owned land. The bill would amend section 1902 of the public authorities law by adding municipally owned lands available for renewable siting to the list of properties prioritized by NYSERDA's Build Ready Program.

TO: HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS  
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Your Committee is in receipt of a communication from the County Executive urging the adoption of the attached “Act establishing a municipal renewable energy system siting database.” This Act may be referred to as the “Renewable Energy Database Act.”

Your Committee is aware that the implementation of renewable energy systems is a critical step towards decreasing greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and reducing some types of air pollution. Renewable energy systems may also foster economic development by creating jobs in manufacturing and installation.

Your Committee has been informed that municipalities within the County have expressed interest in siting renewable energy systems within their boundaries, but may need assistance with technical expertise or information to attract developers.

Your Committee is advised that this Act will help municipalities within the County develop renewable energy projects, by establishing a database to promote the siting of renewable energy systems on municipal property. The County-hosted database would allow municipalities to publish information on a public-facing website, including their renewable energy goals, to help position renewable energy systems on municipal property. The database would be actively managed and updated regularly by the Director of the County’s Office of Energy Conservation and Sustainability.

Your Committee acknowledges that this legislation is patterned after proposed New York State legislation (S.9474, A.9602 of 2021-2022).<sup>1</sup> The State bill was endorsed for passage by Environmental Advocates NY, a nonprofit corporation dedicated to protecting the air, land, water and health of all New Yorkers. *See* attached memo.

Your Committee is informed that the proposed project does not meet the definition of an action under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) and its implementing regulations 6 NYCRR Part 617. Please refer to the memorandum from the Department of Planning, dated January 12, 2023, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators. Your Committee concurs in this conclusion.

Based on the foregoing, your Committee recommends the passage of this Act.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_, 2023  
White Plains, New York

COMMITTEE ON

SCM—04/12/23

---

<sup>1</sup> Neither the Senate bill nor the Assembly bill advanced out of committee.

ACT NO.

-2023

An Act establishing a  
municipal renewable energy  
system siting database.

BE IT ENACTED by the County Board of the County of Westchester as follows:

**Section 1.** This Act establishes a database for municipalities within the County that are interested in siting renewable energy systems on available land within their boundaries. This database will allow municipalities to publish their renewable energy goals and will facilitate the development of renewable energy systems. Implementing renewable energy systems is a critical step towards decreasing greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and reducing some types of air pollution. Renewable energy systems may also foster economic development by creating jobs in manufacturing and installation.

§ 2. For the purposes of this Act, the term “renewable energy systems” means systems that generate electricity or thermal energy through the use of any of the following technologies: solar thermal, photovoltaics, on-land and offshore wind, hydroelectric, geothermal electric, geothermal ground source heat, tidal energy, wave energy, ocean thermal, and fuel cells which do not utilize a fossil fuel resource in the process of generating electricity.

§ 3. The Director of the County’s Office of Energy Conservation and Sustainability (the “Director”), or the Director’s designee, shall establish and manage a municipal renewable energy siting database to help municipalities within the County facilitate the deployment of renewable energy systems on municipal property within their boundaries.

§ 4. Any municipality seeking to participate in the database shall be entitled to provide information to the Director to be included in the database. The database shall be publicly available and, at a minimum, include the following information:

- a. the contact information for a designated municipal representative;
- b. the type or types of renewable energy systems that the municipality is interested in developing;
- c. an estimate of the amount and type of available municipal property;
- d. a summary of applicable municipal laws concerning the environment or public health safety to facilitate compliance with any applicable permitting process;
- e. any other information the Director deems relevant.

§ 5. The database shall be actively managed and updated regularly by the Director or the Director's designee.

§ 6. The County's Department of Planning shall provide any technical assistance to help promote siting.

§ 7. The Director is required to engage in outreach efforts to the municipalities within the County, in order to educate them about the existence and function of the database.

§ 8. This Act shall take effect 180 days after enactment.