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SENATOR DAPHNE JORDAN AND SENATE REPUBLICAN COLLEAGUES URGE PUBLIC TO REJECT ALBANY'S PLAN TO HIKE ENERGY COSTS

As Inflation, Gas Prices, & Energy Bills Hit Record Highs & Climate Action Council Pursues Natural Gas Bans, Republicans Urge the Public to Get Involved in Comment Process

ALBANY, NY – New York State Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I-Halfmoon) and her Senate Republican colleagues today called on all New Yorkers to get involved and submit official public comment on the Climate Action Council's (CAC) draft Scoping Plan and radical efforts to eliminate reliable, affordable sources of energy. Natural gas hookups and services, as well as those from propane and heating oil, are vital for New Yorkers – especially in rural communities and during harsh winters – and cutting off these dependable sources of energy would be costly to residents and businesses and ineffective on a global scale.

"While I strongly support the use and expansion of renewable green energy, many families across upstate New York currently rely on propane, heating oil, and natural gas to heat their homes during the bitter winter cold. Families need these reliable fuels to supply the gaps that exist with new, green energies. We cannot deny families access to traditional and plentiful fuel options. Albany's push to eliminate New Yorkers' access to critical energy sources at the very time families are being squeezed by inflation, rising home heating costs, soaring electric bills, and gas prices 39 percent higher than a year ago, is a bad idea. These proposals pose unrealistic economic challenges and raise serious questions as to who will pay for the new, required heating systems and appliances. Families would shoulder these higher costs while facing fewer energy choices. Neither outcome is acceptable," **said Senator Daphne Jordan.**

"The New York state budget proposal, a must-pass piece of legislation that keeps the Empire State's government operating through the next fiscal year, is no place for a non-germane amendment that bans fossil fuels, and is yet again an attempt to force these policies under the radar and with little regard to what the ultimate aim of these policies will cost consumers. This is a proposal that needs to be debated on its own and in a transparent manner that ensures all

New Yorkers have an opportunity to truly understand the implications of limiting their access to natural gas utilities," **said Mark Valentini, Plumbing-Heating Cooling Contractors—National Association.**

"New York State's pursuit of a zero-carbon future is a worthy goal, but the overall strategy and legislative mandates taken so far need a reality check. Over the past several years, the path taken has been fraught with severe risks to working New Yorkers and consumers, particularly the poor and elderly, who will continue to see escalating utility bills and less reliability. Legislation that's been approved, and other bills pending, are creating a dangerous energy supply gap, causing prices to soar, and costing the state thousands of middle-class jobs," **said John J. Murphy, International Representative of the United Association of Journeymen & Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry of the United States and Canada.**

"New Yorkers for Affordable Energy is a not-for-profit organization that supports greater access to clean, reliable and affordable sources of energy for residential and business consumers. It is abundantly clear to our members that many New Yorkers aren't aware of the State's energy proposals aimed at eliminating access to natural gas. If New York outlaws gas equipment, many New Yorkers will soon get an unbearable financial shock. Replacing a gas furnace or water heater will no longer be affordable, leaving residents with a \$30,000 price tag to revamp their entire home energy system. This comes in the wake of already-skyrocketing energy costs, which are directly related to the state's efforts to limit use of natural gas. There must be a pragmatic, economic justice component to the State's plan to address climate change for the overall wellbeing of New York residents," **said Michelle Hook, Executive Director, New Yorkers for Affordable Energy.**

"Now it is critical that New Yorkers across the state comment on the Draft Scoping Plan so that climate policy recommendations can be made that are fair and balanced. The recent world events demonstrate that New York's energy resources must be abundant, clean, and affordable into the future. New Yorkers have the chance for their voices to be heard about how these policy recommendations will impact our daily lives," **said Gavin Donohue, President & CEO, IPPNY.**

"The fact is, New York's climate goals can be reached with a balanced approach that uses a mix of energy sources without banning reliable and affordable natural gas and abandoning the natural gas system altogether, as advocated by many of the Plan's proponents. By using an 'all of the above' approach – that is, renewables, efficient use of the natural gas delivery system for low and no-carbon fuels, and other technologies – we can meet the state's emissions targets without causing the disruptions in reliability and resiliency that current studies show would occur if we cutover to electric power alone," **said Donna L. DeCarolus, President of National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation.**

The CAC has released a blueprint to alter the state's energy plans, which includes:

- No new gas service to existing buildings, beginning in 2024;

- No natural gas within newly constructed buildings, beginning in 2024;
- No new natural gas appliances for home heating, cooking, water heating, clothes drying beginning in 2030;
- No gasoline-automobile sales by 2035;
- Installing onsite solar or joining a community renewables program by 2040; and
- Installing geothermal heating by 2040.

New Yorkers have through April 30, 2022 to submit formal public comments on the proposed energy plan. Senate Republicans today encouraged hard-working residents and business owners to make their voices heard on these disastrous policies. New Yorkers can use this link to submit public comments: <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan>.

In the meantime, New Yorkers continues to face extreme short- and long-term economic challenges, including:

- Inflation – a 7.5 percent spike in consumer prices over last year, the highest since 1982 – including skyrocketing costs for transportation, food, and other essential goods and services;
- Pain at the Pumps – average gas prices in the state have gone up by more than a dollar-per-gallon, or an estimated 39 percent increase from a year ago;
- Rising Home Heating Costs – monthly average home heating oil prices have also risen by more than a dollar per gallon from a year ago, or an estimated 39 percent increase from a year ago;
- Soaring Electric Bills – electric bills and rates have also gone through-the-roof across the state, with the price of electricity rising about 26% on Long Island from a year ago, an expected 46% increase this winter in the Hudson Valley, and some New York State Electric & Gas ratepayers have reported bills spiking 121% higher than the month before, for example. These skyrocketing increases in costs come from the rising cost of fuels internationally and follow the recent shutdown of the Indian Point Power Plant, which provided up to 25% of New York City’s electricity;
- Declining Consumer Sentiment – since 2018, New Yorkers have become less optimistic about overall and future economic conditions, with recent concerns spiking over food and gas prices;
- Overall Tax Burden – New York has the highest tax burden in the nation at 14.1 percent – without factoring in a plethora of other burdensome fees; and
- Economic Freedom – New York has ranked last in the nation in terms of “economic and overall freedom” for years.

As the global energy crisis rages on, Senate Republicans have a multi-pronged approach geared toward providing relief, especially to low and middle income class New York families. Senate Republicans have proposed solutions to help mitigate the unaffordable costs being placed on New Yorkers in their “Take Back New York” 2022 agenda.

To cut energy costs and tame the energy affordability crisis, Senate Republicans are proposing:

- Mitigating the Impact of the Global Energy Crisis by providing nearly \$300 million in energy tax relief by eliminating the two-percent gross receipts tax and removing the underlying 18-A Assessment on utility bills;
- Suspending the State's Gas Tax to provide instant economic relief for hard-working, commuting New Yorkers – which Senate Republicans called for months ago;
- Rejecting the Democrats' Proposed Carbon Tax that would raise prices at the pump by 55 cents per-gallon and on home heating bills by more than 25 percent; and
- No New Tax or Fee Increases in this year's New York State Budget.

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