



**Written Testimony: Public Budget Hearing on Environmental Conservation
February 1, Tuesday 9:30 AM**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the 2022 New York State Budget in regards to Environmental Conservation.

Sane Energy Project is a non-profit going into its 11th year as an organization that works to move New York State from a fossil fuel economy to a publicly owned renewable economy to support our climate goals, and the health, safety, and democracy of all New York State residents.

While we're encouraged to see the Governor's budget include some of the aspects of the Renewable Heat Now Campaign [Legislative Package](#), including changes to our buildings code system and a proposal to ban fossil fuels in new construction, the overall budget fails to meet the dire climate moment we are in and to get us to where we can meet New York's own greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals mandated by the CLCPA.

The climate science is clear. And the Governor's budget does not get us there.

That is why we are asking the State Legislature to include the Build Public Renewables Act, All-Electric Building Act, and the other bills in the Renewable Heat Now Legislative Package into their one-house budgets.

Where Sane Energy Project wants to see addendums to the budget:

- **The inclusion of the Build Public Renewable Act**, a budget-neutral bill that will empower New York to lead in the development and implementation of renewable energy. To us, this is a no-brainer. New York is only at 6% wind and solar and has failed to meet its own renewable energy development and greenhouse gas reduction targets year after year. Right now the New York Power Authority is limited to building 6 renewable energy projects a year. Allowing NYPA to build renewable energy at the scale the climate crisis demands will create tens of thousands of good paying, union jobs. New York City just banned the use of fossil fuel in new construction and it is clear the trajectory will be that more homes will be all electric. We have the opportunity to make sure that the renewable energy coming online to power those homes is owned by the people of New York.
- **The inclusion of the All-Electric Building Act**, a bill that would prohibit the use of gas and oil in new buildings statewide beginning January 1, 2024. A recent [report](#) found that gas stoves

are leaking more methane and creating more indoor air pollution in our homes than previously thought. New York led the country by banning fracking and can lead the country in transitioning our homes off of dirty gas for heating and cooking.

- If New York is serious about being a leader in renewable energy, we have to fund it. Governor Hochul made a commitment in the State of the State to electrify and weatherize 1-2 million homes by 2030 (as identified by the Climate Action Council), but the money allocated in the budget doesn't come close. **We need at least \$1 billion annually to fund all-electric affordable housing** in and for Disadvantaged Communities.
- Including the **Fossil-Free Heating Tax Credit and Sales Tax Exemption bills** as part of the budget process to encourage the swift adoption of geothermal energy in lieu of fossil fuels. We are so encouraged to see geothermal development forthcoming in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, NY, but let's imagine if this could be all NYS-owned properties circling back to the importance of the Build Public Renewables Act.

What we support in Governor Hochul's Budget:

- The inclusion of the Advanced Building Codes, Appliance and Equipment Efficiency Standards Act, and the Building Benchmarking Act of 2022 to save New Yorkers money on their energy bills, slash greenhouse gas emissions, remove current barriers to building decarbonization **by authorizing the NYS Codes Council to improve the codes** by considering greenhouse gas emissions reductions and adopting energy savings measures.
- The proposal to **ban on fossil fuels** in new construction. However, Governor Hochul's time frame is too slow and does not align with similar legislation passed recently in New York City.
- Weakening the "100-foot rule," a requirement for all gas customers to subsidize the first 100 feet of pipeline needed to connect new buildings to the gas system, and **shifting the cost burden to the developer**.
- Modifying the Public Service Law to enable gas and electric utilities to own, operate, and manage geothermal loop systems and **transition away from a fossil-fueled business model**.

We identify that there is a surplus of \$21 billion in our budget in the next four years, and we support preparedness for emergencies such as COVID, climate-change storms, or any number of unexpected tragedies that could come our way, **but climate science gives us fact-based evidence that we can no longer turn back from expecting mass changes to the way we live our lives due to the past two centuries of a fossil fuel economy**. We know that the fossil fuel industry will do everything to squeeze the last pennies out of us burns and drowns, and it is our duty as leaders in New York to push for this, and your duty as state employees with direct access to the decision making tables to ensure we spend this money on what science tells us WILL happen.