



Help To Oppose New Legislation To Raise Energy Costs in New York State

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Westchester County Association's "Call to Action Campaign" Opposes Legislation That Would Increase Energy Costs for NYS Consumers

Urges Westchester Delegation Members to Vote Against Measure That Would Make Westchester and the State Less Competitive

White Plains, NY (June 4, 2010) Consistent with its principles to oppose legislation that negatively impacts the economic vitality of Westchester and the state, The Westchester County Association Call to Action Campaign today urged Assembly members of the Westchester Delegation to vote against a bill that would result in higher energy costs to consumers. The WCA was alerted yesterday that the bill had been passed by the Senate.

In a memo sent to the legislators, the WCA Call to Action coalition stated, "The proposed legislation will increase energy costs for all industries and property owners which will result in higher costs to consumers and tenants and one that we can ill afford. This is nothing more than a new "tax" on your constituents and one that we can ill afford. We urge you to take the actions that are best for your constituents and vote against this legislature."

Because the Assembly can vote on the measure in the near future, WCA President William Mooney said: "We urge all our members and supporters to immediately join in opposing this proposed bill by sending a message to their Assembly representatives." The easiest way to do this is to visit the website, www.CalltoActionCampaign.org which provides the names, e-mail addresses and other contact information for all Westchester Delegation members.

The WCA's immediate response to the proposed bill follows the successful rally with former NYC Mayor Ed Koch two weeks ago to launch its Call to Action Campaign to require incumbents and challengers to make a commitment to reform Albany. "Consistent with the goals of the Call to Action, we will let Westchester voters know the outcome," the memo stated.

Following is a transcript of the memo:

June 4, 2010

A. 10257-A (Gianaris)

Memorandum in Opposition

The Westchester County Association Call to Action Campaign, a broad based business and taxpayer group committed to structural government reform, opposes the enactment of the aforementioned bill. This bill would amend the Labor Law to extend wage mandate requirements to private businesses by extending the definition of a public agency to include electric and gas utilities. Ultimately, the legislation will translate into higher energy costs for all consumers including businesses, non-profits, hospitals, local governments, schools and individuals. This is nothing more than a new "tax" on your constituents and one that we can ill afford.

New York State consumers currently pay some of the highest power prices in the nation. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the average retail price of electricity across the State is more than 60% higher than the national average. New York utilities are already saddled with numerous taxes, fees, assessments and other mandates that put upward pressure on electricity and natural gas costs. This legislation only adds to New York's non competitive status vis-à-vis the rest of the country and world.

The proposed legislation will increase costs for all industries and property owners which will result in higher costs to consumers and tenants. Typically in Westchester, a tenant pays \$3.00 per square foot for unlimited electric consumption on the year. If an additional cost is put on the utilities, landlords will have to make up the difference. The increase in cost will often be passed through to the tenant, raising the cost of doing business in a state that ranks 49th out of 50th in terms of business friendly environment.

In addition to raising the cost of electricity, this type of legislation will reduce available resources for replacing and upgrading pipes, wires, transformers, substations and other critical pieces of New York's energy production and delivery apparatus needed to ensure that the state has an energy infrastructure capable of serving the needs of a 21st century economy. New York's inadequate energy infrastructure hurts consumers as insufficient transmission capacity leads to congestion charges that drive up the cost of power. When a serious blackout occurs, the full-blown economic losses are devastating.

Consistent with the principles of the Westchester County Association Call to Action Campaign, we oppose this legislation as it would make Westchester and New York less competitive relative to other states, counties and nations. New Yorkers need to see the costs of living and working in this state reduced, not increased. State policymakers need to take the actions necessary to ensure that reliable and affordable energy is available to all New Yorkers instead of allowing powerful special interest groups to dictate energy costs. Higher energy costs negatively affect all New York taxpayers and we urge you to take the actions that are best for your constituents and vote against this legislation. Also consistent with the goals of the Call to Action, we will let Westchester voters know the outcome.