March 16, 2015

A.6072 Englebright

Title: An act to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to global warming pollution control.

Purpose: The purpose of this bill is to require the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to promulgate rules and regulations establishing limits on greenhouse gas emissions.

Statement of Support: The impact of global climate change is eminent by the severity of this catastrophe hinges upon our immediate efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions. The Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter is gravely concerned with the consequences of inaction and strongly supports this legislation that mandates a minimum 80% reduction in New York’s greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. 20% reductions are targeted in 10-year intervals, beginning with a reduction of 20% by 2020 (as compared to 1990 levels). This bill would codify Executive Order #24, an initiative that has begun the process of reducing the state’s greenhouse gas emissions through the Climate Action Plan.

If enacted, this legislation will put New York in line with other northeastern states working to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydro fluorocarbons, per fluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride, and other gases, from all sources, that significantly contribute to global warming. Much of the success of this objective lies in the creation of rules and regulations, accurate reporting and strict enforcement. This is a massive undertaking and we are especially gratified to see that this legislation has taken into consideration that many expedient solutions to global warming may come at the expense of economically disadvantaged communities. This law will ensure that environmental justice issues are addressed as offset programs are implemented.

We also applaud this legislation’s commitment to studying the needs of our natural world as it struggles to adapt with climate change. Careful consideration of critical habitat corridors and features will allow both wilderness and our human environment to transition better through the global warming trend.

Ultimately, this bill will make New York one of the leading states in addressing climate change, a move that comes with great economic benefits attached to the renewable energy technology market. States that choose leadership roles now will reap the benefits of being ahead of the curve. States that wait for a federal climate change mandate may suffer the costs of playing catch up.

Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Strongly Urges Your Support Of A.6072