Memorandum in Support

A.3996A (Hunter) / S.3126A (Parker) — Energy Efficiency Equity and Jobs Act

Summary of Legislation
This bill will amend the public service law and the energy law to ensure that energy efficiency measures and jobs are equitably deployed in communities of color and low income communities. The bill will also require NYSERDA to track the non-energy benefits that accrue as a result of deploying energy efficiency measures, establish a stronger Benefit Cost Analysis for energy efficiency measures that incorporates equity and health metrics, fund non-energy measures such as mold remediation and lead abatement, and require utility funding follow these standards.

Statement in Support
Among the most cost effective and equitable approaches to meeting New York States Climate goals is making energy efficiency resources available to communities of color and/or low-income communities. New Yorkers in these communities pay a disproportionately higher percentage of their income on energy, which is often their largest expense after housing costs such as rent or a mortgage. Many must decide between paying their energy bill or purchasing necessities like food and medicine. In addition to the financial burden, living in a home that is not energy efficient or potentially riddled with mold and lead harms their health and well-being, especially as climate change exacerbates extreme weather conditions. Energy efficiency and building electrification is also going to provide one-third of the emissions reductions we need to achieve the state's 40 percent by 2030 goal under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). To ensure that all New Yorkers have access to energy efficiency programs, regardless of race, income or zip code, we ask for your support for the Energy Efficiency Equity & Jobs Act. This proposed legislation will:

- Require that building energy efficiency retrofit funds are deployed where needed most: in low-income communities and communities of color;
- Adjust the utility benefit-cost analysis so that people's health and well-being are the primary consideration for targeting building retrofits;
- Allow NYSERDA to fund non-energy measures in order to fix underlying conditions, such as lead and mold, that would otherwise prohibit the implementation of efficiency measures;
- Require that low-income communities and communities of color receive worker training funding for energy efficiency jobs;
- Require that utilities hire and train employees who are living in areas designated as environmental justice areas, and;
- Require NYSERDA and the Department of Health to track actual benefits of energy efficiency retrofit work.

Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, and our 52,000 members across NY, strongly supports the passage of A.3996A / S.3126A.