



Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy

www.SHAREAlbany.org

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Contact: Merton Simpson, Co-chair, 518- 253-3536
Ruth Foster, Co-chair, 518-588-0187, rmfosterny@gmail.com

SHARE calls for legislators to include the Renewable Capitol Act and the decarbonization of all state facilities in the final budget

Funds must be included in the budget to develop plans for the transition the Capitol and Empire State Plaza to renewable energy

Albany -- SHARE (Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy) today called on the legislature to include the Renewable Capitol Act (RCA) (A5633 Fahy/S2689 Breslin) in the final budget along with the UpgradeNY funding proposal to develop plans to transition the top fifteen state-owned buildings including the Capitol and the Empire State Plaza (Plaza) to renewable energy. The RCA mandates powering, heating and cooling of the Plaza and Capitol buildings by 100% renewables within three years. Including the RCA in the budget will ensure that the Capitol and Plaza leads the pack in the decarbonization of state facilities and does so with a community led process and the fastest possible timeline.

“SHARE has been working to transition the Capitol and Plaza to renewables since 2017 when we stopped a proposal for a new fracked gas powerplant in Sheridan Hollow to heat and power the Capitol and Plaza. Currently, the funding for that project is being used for renewable projects including conservation measures and electrifying the cooling system for the Plaza,” said Ruth Foster, Co-chair of SHARE. “The UpGradeNY proposal to transition all state-owned facilities is welcome news and is in alignment with the RCA proposal.”

“Lawmakers every day go to work in buildings that are heated by polluting the residents of my neighborhood, Sheridan Hollow who suffer with high rates of asthma and cancer.” said Merton Simpson, an Albany County Legislator and Co-chair of SHARE. “This is contrary to New York’s environmental justice policy that provides that no group should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal and commercial operations. As the Capitol is transitioned to renewables, the Sheridan Avenue Steam Plant must be closed.” Sheridan Hollow is an environmental justice neighborhood in Albany just blocks from the Capitol that has been subjected to pollution for over a hundred years from a powerplant that has heated the Capitol.

Equally important, we are in the midst of an existential climate crisis that is devastating communities and lives around the world. New York should be a model of climate action, and transitioning the Capitol and other state-owned buildings to renewable energy should be a top priority to showcase the transition. The Renewable Capitol Act outlines a plan to transition Capitol-area buildings and can serve as a pilot project to inform the process of electrifying all state buildings and meeting the goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLPCA).