MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF
A.9508-A / S.7508-A (Part JJJ) - Executive Budget
in relation to accelerating the growth of renewable energy facilities to meet New York’s climate action and clean energy goals

March 4, 2020

Apex Clean Energy strongly supports legislation that would improve and accelerate the siting of renewable energy projects, knowing that without additional renewable electricity generation capacity in the state, New York will never meet the nation-leading goals established in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act enacted by the Legislature in 2019. New York has 10 years to achieve the 70% renewable electricity mandate, and it now takes 5 to 10 years to develop a solar or wind project and complete the permitting process.

Part JJJ of the proposed Executive Budget would create a permitting process for renewable energy projects (greater than 25 MW, or greater than 10 MW if a project opts in) with similar strong protections for the environment as the state has currently. Proposed projects would still have to abide by local laws or obtain a waiver based on a local law being “unreasonably burdensome,” as is the case under the current Article 10 process. Part JJJ expands economic development and community benefits for renewable energy. In addition, the state will make ready underutilized properties for development by renewable energy companies, and the Bill addresses electricity transmission bottlenecks.

Well-sited wind and solar projects are far better for the environment and public health than fossil fuel facilities. Part JJJ recognizes this by improving the efficiency of the review and permitting process without sacrificing environmental protection. The Proposal has similar environmental protections as the current permitting process. Local governments can weigh in during the process; it has the same provision for projects to comply with local laws as Article 10, and it sets aside intervenor funds for municipal governments to hire the experts they may need to review projects.

Apex Clean Energy was founded in 2009 with the mission to accelerate the shift to clean energy. Since then, we have originated over 3 GW of renewable energy facilities that are now operating across the country, and we have additional projects in development in more than a dozen states. We support this bill because our company’s primary mission is to help realize the clean energy future of our nation. The scale of New York’s energy goals and the urgency of decarbonizing our energy sector necessitate fixing the state’s stalled permitting process. With these new regulations, clean energy projects will have a clearer path forward, creating more jobs, local investment, and environmental benefits for New Yorkers.

We urge you to support New York’s shift to clean energy by supporting Part JJJ of the Executive Budget.

For more information on our company’s support of this Bill, contact Kevin Chandler at 434-270-7481.