

Opposing The Establishment Of A County-Wide Landfill In Wawarsing, NY, And Urging The Exploration Of Alternative Locations And Waste Management Solutions

Referred to: The Energy, Environment and Sustainability Committee (Chairman Hewitt and Legislators Donaldson, Greene, Litts, Nolan, Stewart, and Walls)

Legislator Craig V. Lopez, and Legislators Corcoran, Hansut, Kitchen, Kovacs, Litts, Maloney, Roberts and Walls offer the following:

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature is committed to protecting the environment, the well-being of its residents, and the long-term sustainability of our communities; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA) has proposed the establishment of a countywide landfill at one of two identified locations in Wawarsing, NY, specifically Milk Road and Brown Road; and

WHEREAS, the siting of a landfill in these locations presents significant concerns related to the potential environmental impact, particularly on local ecosystems, water sources, and wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, the proposed sites are in close proximity to areas of natural beauty and ecological significance, and the hydrology and soil studies conducted by the agency have been deemed inadequate to fully assess the long-term environmental consequences; and

WHEREAS, the increased heavy truck traffic that would accompany landfill operations is a serious concern, as it would negatively impact local roads not designed to handle such traffic, degrade road quality, compromise safety, and disrupt daily life in surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, while exploring advanced waste disposal technologies such as bio gasification and anaerobic digestion is a commendable goal, such methods do not justify selecting environmentally sensitive locations like those in Wawarsing for landfill siting; and

WHEREAS, the Brown Road site has been identified as an "environmental justice area," which necessitates a thorough evaluation to ensure that placing a landfill there would not disproportionately burden vulnerable communities in the surrounding area; and

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WHEREAS, the community of Wawarsing and surrounding areas have consistently expressed strong opposition to the establishment of a landfill in their vicinity due to valid concerns over health, environmental degradation, and property values; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature is dedicated to exploring more sustainable and less environmentally disruptive solutions for solid waste management, with an emphasis on long-term, responsible waste diversion strategies; and

WHEREAS, in solidarity with the Ulster County Legislature the Sullivan County Legislature also strongly opposes the proposal by the UCRRA to establish a countywide landfill at either of the two identified locations in the Town of Wawarsing; and urges the UCRRA to abandon the proposed sites in Wawarsing and to prioritize siting a landfill in an area of Ulster County more suited to industrial-type development; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature strongly opposes the siting of a landfill at either Milk Road or Brown Road in Wawarsing, NY, and calls for the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency to explore alternative locations and waste management solutions that prioritize environmental protection, community well-being, and sustainability; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature reaffirms its commitment to responsible environmental stewardship, sustainable waste management practices, and the protection of the health, safety, and quality of life of its residents”; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Legislature shall forward a copy of this resolution to the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

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Postponed in Committee: Energy, Environment and Sustainability on February 4, 2025 without consent

Defeated in Committee: Energy, Environment and Sustainability on March 4, 2025

Petition to Discharge successfully executed.

Referred back to the Energy, Environment and Sustainability Committee at Legislative Session on April 15, 2025.

Defeated in Committee: Energy, Environment and Sustainability on May 6, 2025

Second Petition to Discharge successfully executed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE