

**Establishing A Policy Requiring Consideration Of Use Of Hemp Insulation In Certain Ulster County Capital Construction Projects**

Referred to: The Energy, Environment and Sustainability Committee (Chairman Hewitt and Legislators Donaldson, Greene, Litts, Nolan, Stewart, and Walls), The Public Works, Capital Projects and Transportation Committee (Chair Nolan and Legislators Donaldson, Kovacs, Litts, and McCollough), and The Ways and Means Committee (Chairman Gavaris and Legislators Collins, Hansut, Kovacs, Nolan, and Roberts)

Chairman of the Energy, Environment and Sustainability Committee, Chris Hewitt, offers the following:

WHEREAS, with U.S. homes and commercial buildings consuming 27.6% of the country's total energy in 2023, government agencies have been working with partner agencies and organizations to develop unique approaches to improving building energy efficiency, and to produce healthier, more sustainable alternatives to conventional, toxic thermal insulation; and

WHEREAS, hemp plants have the ability of take carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, giving us cleaner air to breathe; and

WHEREAS, on average, hemp insulation requires 14 times less energy to produce than polyurethane that offers an identical level of thermal performance; and

WHEREAS, damage from the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in expanding polyurethane foam continues to cause concerns, with prolonged exposure to elevated levels of VOCs leading to a variety of health issues, ranging from respiratory problems to more severe conditions like organ damage and cancer; and

WHEREAS, hemp insulation is a renewable, biodegradable, and non-toxic material that absorbs more carbon than it consumes during construction; and

WHEREAS, hemp insulation is also waterproof and performs similar to a towel or sponge when exposed to water; and

WHEREAS, the advantages of hemp insulation are plentiful, including that it is not harmful to skin or lungs, and is repellent to mold, pests, and insects; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County, a Climate Smart leader, has a proven record of supporting successful green initiatives; now, therefore, be it

**Resolution No. 356      June 18, 2024**

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RESOLVED, it shall be the policy of Ulster County that prior to the allocation of any County funding toward any housing development projects in Ulster County, or toward Ulster County capital projects proposed after the effective date of this policy that require use of insulation for purposes of construction and development of space used for delivering a county service, it shall be required that such housing development projects and Ulster County capital projects include consideration of hemp insulation as a component of said project; and, be it further

RESOLVED, in furtherance of this policy, the determination that hemp insulation is or is not reasonable for use in any housing development or Ulster County capital project shall be included in the documentation accompanying the initial funding request for the project at the time the request is submitted to the Ulster County Legislature for consideration; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that no section of this resolution shall be interpreted as augmenting the existing legislative process for expenditures,  
  
and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:                      NOES:

Postponed in Committee: Energy, Environment and Sustainability on June 4, 2024

Passed Committee: Energy, Environment and Sustainability on \_\_\_\_\_.

Passed Committee: Public Works, Capital Projects and Transportation on \_\_\_\_\_.

Passed Committee: Ways and Means on \_\_\_\_\_.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:  
TBD