

ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION

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For Immediate Release:

July 2, 2024

Ulster County Legislature Deputy Minority Leader Lopez Opposes Landfill Siting in Town of Wawarsing

(*Wawarsing, NY*) – Deputy Minority Leader Craig Lopez (District 14 – Town of Wawarsing), has circulated a memorializing letter to the body to oppose the potential siting of a landfill in Town of Wawarsing.

“Any potential landfill in the Town of Wawarsing will disrupt daily life, impact our local waterways and ecosystems and hamper our vital tourism industry. It is imperative that we prioritize the preservation of our natural resources and the well-being of our residents over expedient waste management solutions,” **said Deputy Minority Leader Lopez.**

This letter follows the latest news on Thursday June 27 that the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency is pursuing the siting of a landfill on two different parcels in the Town of Wawarsing. Both locations are adjacent to areas of natural beauty and ecological significance and placing a landfill here has the potential to jeopardize local ecosystems, including water sources and wildlife habitats. Further hydrological study is needed to determine the extent of the impact to the local ecosystem and community.

Deputy Minority Leader Lopez has been in communication with the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency, and nearly a quarter of the Legislature has voiced their opposition within twenty-four hours of this news. A copy of the memorializing letter is attached below.

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ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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July 2, 2024

Regis Obijiski, Chair
Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency Board of Directors
Post Office Box 6219
Kingston, New York 12401

Dear Chair Obijiski:

We write to express our strong opposition to the proposal put forth by the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency regarding the establishment of a countywide landfill at either of the two identified locations in the Town of Wawarsing.

First, the potential environmental impact of siting a landfill in Wawarsing cannot be overstated. Both the Milk Road and Brown Road sites are adjacent to areas of natural beauty and ecological significance. Placing a landfill here would jeopardize local ecosystems, including water sources and wildlife habitats. The hydrology and soil studies proposed by the agency are inadequate to fully assess the long-term consequences on these sensitive environments.

Furthermore, the assertion that these locations are suitable because of their proximity to state routes does not mitigate the substantial traffic impact that would accompany landfill operations. Increased heavy truck traffic on smaller local roads not built to sustain such loads would degrade road quality, compromise safety for residents, and disrupt daily life in the surrounding communities.

The notion of exploring advanced waste disposal technologies such as bio gasification and anaerobic digestion is commendable, but it does not justify the selection of environmentally precarious locations like those in Wawarsing. There are alternative methods and locations that should be explored more thoroughly before committing to a landfill in such a critical area.

Additionally, we are deeply concerned about the potential designation of the Brown Road site as an "environmental justice area." This classification necessitates a rigorous evaluation to ensure that placing a landfill there would not disproportionately burden vulnerable communities nearby. The agency must demonstrate unequivocally that all state requirements regarding environmental justice will be met before any further steps are taken.

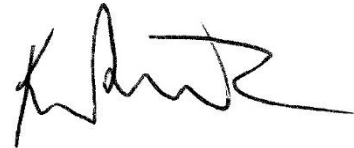
Lastly, the past controversy surrounding previous landfill proposals in Ulster County underscores a clear community sentiment against such projects. Local residents have consistently opposed the establishment of landfills in their vicinity due to valid concerns about health, environment, and property values.

On behalf of the residents in the Town of Wawarsing we urge the board to reconsider its recommendation and to explore more sustainable and less environmentally disruptive solutions for solid waste management in Ulster County. Siting a landfill in Wawarsing would be detrimental to the environment, local communities, and the future of our region. It is imperative that we prioritize the preservation of our natural resources and the well-being of our residents over expedient waste management solutions.

Sincerely,



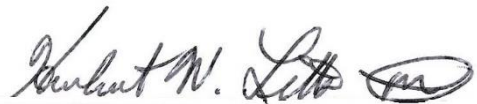
Deputy Minority Leader Craig V. Lopez



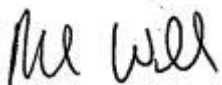
Minority Leader Kevin Roberts



Legislator John Gavaris



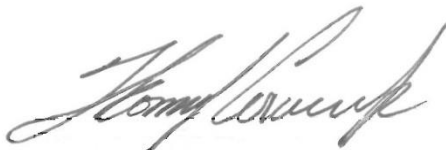
Legislator Herbert Litts, III



Legislator Richard T. Walls



Legislator Jason Kovacs



Legislator Thomas Corcoran



Legislator Gina Hansut

Cc: Jim Gordan, Vice Chair, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency Board of Directors
Marc Rider, Executive Director, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency