

Opposing The Establishment Of A County-Wide Landfill Anywhere Within The Geographical Boundaries Of Ulster County, 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)

Minority Leader Kevin A. Roberts, and Legislators Corcoran, Hansut, Kitchen, Kovacs, Litts, Lopez, Maloney, and Walls:

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 has identified other potential locations of interest in Esopus, NY and Plattekill, NY; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature by Resolution 200 of June 13, 2023 opposed the establishment of a landfill at the subject locations within the Town of Plattekill and stated its commitment to seeking out a viable long term waste disposal solution; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County is home to many significant environmentally sensitive and protected sites including but not limited to the Hudson River and its many tributaries, a significant portion of the Catskill Park and Forest Preserve, the Shawangunk Ridge, Minnewaska State Park Preserve, Mohonk Preserve, and reservoirs such as the Ashokan and Rondout which supply drinking water to millions of people; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County also has many working farms throughout its boundaries which supply produce and other agricultural products to its citizens and beyond, many of which farms are managed in an environmentally sensitive manner to promote “organic” methods intended to limit the introduction of pesticides, herbicides and other toxic materials into the food supply; and

WHEREAS, the siting of a landfill anywhere within the County of Ulster presents significant concerns related to the potential environmental impact, particularly on local ecosystems, water sources, wildlife habitats, farming operations, and the significant geographic features noted above; and

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WHEREAS, a landfill established anywhere in Ulster County would have significant impacts on the many areas of natural beauty and ecological significance in the County including but not limited to contamination of water, soil, air, and other yet unknown 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 wherever situated; and

WHEREAS, while exploring advanced waste disposal technologies such as bio gasification and anaerobic digestion is a commendable goal, such methods do not justify siting a landfill in Ulster County with its many environmentally and agriculturally sensitive locations; and

WHEREAS, the community of Wawarsing and its surrounding areas, now under the closest consideration for a landfill siting by the UCRRA, 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 valid concerns expressed by the citizens of the Wawarsing area and those previously expressed by the citizens of the Plattekill area apply equally to any other township or region of Ulster County for the reasons hereinbefore stated; 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 including but not limited to regional solutions involving intermunicipal cooperation with nearby Counties; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature strongly opposes the siting of a landfill anywhere within the geographical boundaries of the County of Ulster, and calls for the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency to explore alternative locations and waste management solutions that prioritize environmental protection, community well-being, environmental justice, and sustainability; and, be it further

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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:

Postponed in Committee: Energy, Environment and Sustainability on June 3, 2025 with consent

Defeated in Committee: Energy, Environment and Sustainability on July 1, 2025

Petition to Discharge successfully executed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE

Legislator Hewitt motioned, seconded by Legislator Levine, to refer the Resolution back to the Energy, Environment and Sustainability Committee.

MOTION ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 22 NOES: 0

(Absent: Legislator Lopez)

***REFERRED TO ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY
COMMITTEE***