

# Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy

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## Memorandum of Support

### **Renewable Capitol Act** S8221 (Breslin) – A9341 (McDonald)

AN ACT to amend the executive law and the public authorities law, in relation to the utilization of renewable energy at state-owned facilities in Albany

This legislation requires the New York State Capitol, Empire State Plaza (ESP) and other state-owned buildings in downtown Albany to move to 100% clean renewable energy within three years.

**The Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy (SHARE) strongly supports the Renewable Capitol Act** as an important first step in bringing New York into our renewable energy future and to begin the process of shutting down fossil fuel facilities that destroy our climate and pollute our communities.

New York State passed the landmark Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) in 2019 which requires New York to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 85% by 2050. However, the building that the governor and legislature meet in everyday continues to be powered by burning fracked gas in a low-income, primarily people of color neighborhood just blocks from the Capitol.

The Sheridan Avenue Steam Plant (SASP), which heats and cools the ESP complex, has polluted the low-income Sheridan Hollow, Arbor Hill and West Hill neighborhoods for more than a century, first burning coal, then oil, then garbage, and now fracked gas. Residents of Sheridan Hollow have high rates of health problems including asthma and cancer. Continued operation of the SASP is contrary to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Environmental Justice Policy (DEC Commissioner Policy 29), which provides that: "No group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations."

Four years ago, the state legislature rejected a proposed \$88 million appropriation to add two new fracked gas turbines on Sheridan Avenue. Due to the actions of SHARE and other community groups, that project was defeated. The funds for that project are now being used for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects for the ESP. However, there are still six gas boilers at the SASP that heat and cool the Capitol and ESP.

The states of Oklahoma, Michigan and Colorado heat and cool their state capitol buildings with geothermal energy and so does St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Renewable options are available now. If we are to transition our state to renewable energy, we must teach our state agencies how it is done. NYPA can use the Plaza as a training center for future projects. A renewable energy solution incorporating geothermal technology for the Plaza would showcase New York as a climate leader and serve as a model for the nation.

**For more information: [SHAREAlbany.org](http://SHAREAlbany.org) or [rmfosterny@gmail.com](mailto:rmfosterny@gmail.com)  
SHARE is a member of [ClimateCantWait.org](http://ClimateCantWait.org). We support the Climate Can't Wait bill package**