

**Alliance for Clean Energy New York • Citizens Campaign for the Environment •
Environmental Advocates of New York • Natural Resources Defense Council •
New York League of Conservation Voters • New York Public Interest Research
Group • Pace Energy and Climate Center • Renewable Energy Long Island •
Sierra Club**

December 4, 2013

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We commend you for the progress made during your governorship to ensure that New York continues to be a proven leader in clean energy and energy efficiency. In keeping with our commitment – and yours – to address our changing climate and move New York towards a cleaner energy future, we support your NY-Sun program and many aspects of your Energy Highway Initiative and new Green Bank. These programs will enable the state to remain a national clean energy leader while providing New Yorkers with a more resilient grid, cleaner air, jobs, and stable-priced energy.

We believe now is the time to deepen the commitment to wind energy resources, both onshore and off. New wind energy development will not only enable New York to get back on track in meeting our renewable energy targets, but will also provide emission-free power, help us guard against volatile fossil fuel prices, and contribute substantially to local economic development. New York is currently lagging behind other states in developing wind energy resources and is foregoing the myriad benefits this development could provide.

As NYSERDA's recent progress report on the Main Tier of the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) program demonstrates, there are tremendous benefits from investment in wind energy. The report found that every dollar spent on an RPS contract results in three dollars of *direct* investment alone in New York. Furthermore, the report's analyses found that RPS program costs are less than 0.2% of total retail electric sales, have no rate impact, and lower the wholesale cost of power via the price suppression effect. These economic benefits are on top of the proven environmental and public health benefits of reduced emissions.

We commend your NY-Sun program and urge a similar statewide commitment to wind energy. Given our excellent wind resources and the benefits wind energy clearly provides, we are confident that establishing goals of doubling the installed land-based wind capacity and investing in offshore wind off of New

York's coastlines are realistic and achievable. Many companies stand ready to invest millions of dollars in struggling upstate communities, including those with uneconomic fossil fuel plants, through project development that will deliver jobs and tax dollars where they are most needed. Offshore development will help downstate ports and supply-sector industries statewide thrive.

We believe these goals are attainable with some revisions to the current RPS and the support of the forthcoming Green Bank. We strongly support an extension of the clean energy fund collections beyond 2015 and changes to contracting with RPS Main Tier resources to adjust to new market realities. Wind energy is increasingly competitive on a levelized cost of energy basis but requires support because of high upfront capital costs.

We believe New York energy users can reap the full benefits of wind energy by adopting changes to the state's current RPS program design, including reconsideration of a "contracts for difference" approach or bundled energy contracts so that the state can use its in-state resources at lowest cost, and benefit when fossil fuel prices increase. We believe it is essential to support the development of wind energy on behalf of New York consumers, and that this must continue to be done on a competitive basis but with a full commitment to annual additions to our wind generation capacity. Using our in-state wind resources is the perfect complement to continued investments in efficiency and distributed generation in order to create a truly sustainable energy infrastructure.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your staff to fully explore the opportunities to continue your strong leadership on clean energy and economic development, and to ensure we reap all the benefits of our in-state renewable resources.

Sincerely,

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