

BILL NUMBER: S4608

SPONSOR: ALESI

TITLE OF BILL: An act in relation to establishing the New York state task force on wind generating facilities siting and permitting policies

PURPOSE: Establishes the New York state task force on wind generating facilities siting and permitting policies.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS: Section 1: An 18-month moratorium on the siting and permitting of wind energy production facilities is established. Section 2: Establishes the New York State task force on wind generating facilities siting and permitting policy and establishes its role. The task force shall issue a report by December 31, 2008. Section 3: The task force will study the need for a uniform statewide policy regarding the siting and permitting of wind energy facilities. The task force will have 15 members including the commissioners of Agriculture and Markets, Department of Economic Development, Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of Health, chairperson of the Public Service Commission, chairperson New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, or a designee of any such officer. Of the remaining 9 at-large members, 3 will be appointed by the Governor, 2 by the Temporary President of the Senate, 2 by the Speaker of the Assembly and 1 each by the minority leader of the Senate and Assembly according to the parameter set by this section. Section 4: The chairperson of the take force is the chairperson New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, Section 5: Task force members shall serve without actual compensation except the at-large members are allowed their necessary and actual expenses incurred in performance of their duties under this act. Section 6: The task force expires December Section 7: The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority will provide the task force with such facilities, assistance, and data that will allow the task force to carry out its duty. All other departments, agencies or state subdivisions will provide the task force with such facilities, assistance, and data at the request of the chairperson. Section 8: Effective date.

EXISTING LAW: None.

JUSTIFICATION: Recently there has been renewed interest in wind energy development in New York. Although the recent growth of the wind industry is welcomed by many in New York, local authorities and residents in wind-rich counties are concerned about their ability to address existing or anticipated proposals from wind energy developers interested in installing projects within their jurisdiction. With modern wind turbines standing between 200-400 feet tall, wind energy projects can have a major impact on the surrounding area. These wind energy production facilities have the potential of causing a significant negative impact on the scenic and historic character of our highways and byways. Furthermore, wind energy facilities could have a negative impact upon residential areas and adjacent communities.

Wind energy is an important renewable energy source, however, it is very important to have a comprehensive plan for siting these high-tech wind facilities across New York in order to avoid any negative impacts upon the surrounding areas. This legislation seeks to study the need for a statewide comprehensive plan for siting wind facilities and places an 18 month moratorium on any new construction or issuing of new permits for the construction of wind energy facilities so the task force can complete its study and make recommendations.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY: New Bill.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: None.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act shall take effect immediately.