



Empowering Communities, Advocating Solutions.

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

ENHANCED PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACT

S.2510A – RAMOS

A.6584A – GALLAGHER

Description: Requires applicants for major projects located near a disadvantaged community to submit an enhanced public participation plan to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

Justification

Environmental justice communities exist because of the disproportionate siting of toxic polluting facilities within communities of color and low-income communities. Pollution caused by major projects (e.g., power plants, factories, waste treatment facilities, incinerators, transit depots) disproportionately affect communities of color, contributing to the highest rates of asthma in Black, Hispanic, and Native American communities.

Environmental justice communities are often kept out of the discussion when it comes to larger projects near their neighborhoods. Failure to provide equitable opportunity for community members to provide meaningful input during the permitting application process further perpetuates the injustice these communities continue to face.

This legislation would require enhanced public participation in and adjacent to environmental justice communities. While existing DEC policy provides guidance on public participation, this bill gives that guidance the force of law. The legislation will:

- Require the applicant to submit a plan for public participation.
- Require the applicant to engage public participation at multiple points throughout the application and approval process.
- Require the applicant to submit written certification to the DEC outlining how it engaged the public and addressed issues raised.

It is critical that New York State take action to protect public health and improve the quality of life in historically disadvantaged communities.

**CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS
(S.2510A/A.6584A)—Enhanced Public Participation Act**

CCE is a 120,000-member non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization that works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment

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