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MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF
S.373 (Parker) / A.751 (Hunter)
In relation to the safe and efficient delivery of materials for the
timely construction of major renewable energy facilities

April 2023

The Alliance for Clean Energy New York (ACE NY) supports S.373/A.751. This bill would permit vehicles carrying materials intended for the construction of any major renewable energy facility, including oversize and superload transport vehicles, to travel on the Thruway and state highways, on any day of the week, including Saturdays and Sundays. It also expands the listing of qualified escorts entities and requires an annual inspection of transportation vehicles.

New York's Climate and Leadership Community Protection Act (CLCPA) sets an ambitious goal of 70% renewable electricity generation by 2030. In order to achieve this target, the state needs to reduce delays on the construction of renewable energy projects. Current policies pose impediments for the timely delivery of construction materials used for these projects, including large loads such as wind turbines.

At present, Department of Transportation guidance recognizes State Troopers as the only entities allowed to escort these "superloads" for renewable energy generation facilities, and there is a high likelihood there will not be enough State Troopers available to escort materials at the scale of deliveries forecasted for the next several years. This bill would permit Environmental Conservation Officers, Parks Police, County Sheriff, the National Guard, and private security escorts to act as escort vehicles for superload hauls.

The bill would also expand the permissible hauling days for these materials to include Saturdays and Sundays, which will provide more flexibility in the developers' construction timelines. In addition, it will further streamline processes by requiring state agencies and public authorities to prioritize permitting and requests for approval for such travel.

The bill will provide benefits to the construction of major renewable energy facilities with increased transportation flexibility. The legislation will not increase highway risks or affect public safety since superloads will still be required to have certified escorts and undergo the same permitting and inspection processes.

Action is needed now to avoid the very real risk of construction delays for land-based wind energy projects due to future limitations in the available number of State Police escorts for oversized loads, as well as due to the potential for future bottlenecks related to the pace of inspections conducted by NY State Department of Transportation and the State Police.

For the above reasons, the Alliance for Clean Energy New York supports this legislation. For more information contact Deb Peck Kelleher, Deputy Director, at (c) 518-698-3211. All of ACE NY's memos on legislation are available at <https://www.aceny.org/legislative-actions>.