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March 22, 2024

Basil Seggos, Commissioner

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

625 Broadway, 14th Fl

Albany, NY 12233

Dear Commissioner Seggos,

On behalf of the Regional Plan Association, this letter serves to express support for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) application to the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program, tentatively titled "Building Community Resilience through Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions". With this Proposal, DEC, in partnership with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) will implement programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions from facilities and services that play key resiliency roles for New York's communities. The programs included in this proposal will not only address greenhouse gas emissions in the near- and long-term, but will also provide substantial co-benefits such as air quality improvements and health benefits, with a particular focus on public services and disadvantaged communities.

RPA, located at 1 Whitehall St, New York, NY 10004, is an independent, non-profit organization, whose mission is to research urban planning and policy issues of regional and statewide importance and to improve the New York City metropolitan region's economic health, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. Our regional planning recommendations emphasize the significance of bolstering resilience efforts within our communities. Furthermore, a significant portion of our research and analysis validates the correlation between community health and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Each component of this application has the potential to transform New York's communities and create lasting reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. These proposed programs, when implemented together, will ensure that investments in emissions reductions also support more resilient public services and buildings. RPA is supportive of the integration of resilience into the measures undertaken by DEC and NYSERDA to diminish greenhouse gas emissions. Such focus will guarantee stability for the places where New Yorkers get their food or access public services, and ensure that disadvantaged communities receive investments. Additionally, allocating funds for heating and cooling centers mitigates carbon emissions, enhances air quality, and addresses a critical public health requirement in light of the escalating temperatures resulting from climate change.

We strongly endorse this application and look forward to seeing these programs implemented in New York State.

Best,

Vanessa Pascual Barrios

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