

THE BUFFALO NEWS

Letter: State must get to work on tackling climate change

By Staff

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Borrowing from Hamlet, To NIMBY or not to NIMBY, that is the question.

NYMBYism, “Not In My Back Yardism” labels some of us selfish, others bullies and both sides, hypocrites. It has created a stalemate in construction of wind turbines and solar arrays.

Two recent contributors to the editorial page reject locating renewable energy sources in green fields or on sandy beaches of their own beloved places.

I agree with them. There are forests that I’d rather not have turned into solar arrays.

But if we don’t put solar panels and wind turbines somewhere, we may never again visit a beach not slimed with algae, or find a wood thrush that hasn’t been driven north to Canada.

We cannot continue to burn gasoline, coal and methane without driving the Earth’s temperature out of the very narrow range where we can survive. Under the current

New York State regulations for siting, pro and anti-renewable forces are deadlocked.

The situation is comparable to World War II. Hitler's war in Europe was a threat almost as bad as climate change. He had to be stopped. My 12 uncles all agreed but none were enthusiastic about leaving home and doing the fighting. We Americans adopted the Selective Service System which shared out the fighting burden fairly. Four of those uncles went over and did the job.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo has such a plan that shares the siting of renewable energy facilities, fairly. The New York State "Office of Renewable Energy Permitting" will make permitting decisions that are predictable, responsible and delivered at a pace that by 2050 will reduce greenhouse gas emissions 85 percent, from 1990 levels. Municipalities will advise and public commentary be taken. "Build-ready" projects favoring old industrial and brownfields are part of the project.

New York State, let's stop soliloquizing and go to war on climate change.

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