

---

[https://buffalonews.com/opinion/letters/letter-support-the-most-efficient-way-to-decarbonize-home-heating/article\\_74776390-9b05-11ec-8b5a-ffe01fde8b1f.html](https://buffalonews.com/opinion/letters/letter-support-the-most-efficient-way-to-decarbonize-home-heating/article_74776390-9b05-11ec-8b5a-ffe01fde8b1f.html)

## Letter: Support the most efficient way to decarbonize home heating

Mar 4, 2022

---

**S**ix years ago, the New York State Legislature had the right idea with the unanimous and bipartisan adoption of bills granting a tax credit and sales tax exemption for geothermal heat pump systems. These bills would have put the most efficient and carbon free form of space heating on par with solar panels, which have become affordable for many New Yorkers through these tax treatments. These bills are under consideration again now, sponsored by legislators Tim Kennedy, James Sanders, Jr. and Jon Rivera.

While pledging support for geothermal in 2016, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo vetoed the bills because they were passed outside the state budget process. This year Gov. Kathy Hochul and the Legislature have the chance to make things right by giving parity to geothermal systems as the annual budget is negotiated.

In six years much has changed. New York State has now recognized buildings as the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in New York – ahead of vehicles and power plants. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority has fully embraced decarbonizing the heating sector, using heat pumps as the primary replacement for burning fossil fuels. The Climate Action Council has released a plan projecting that heat pumps will be “the majority of new purchases for space and water heating by the late 2020s”, leading to the creation of 100,000 new clean energy jobs.

In moving forward with electrifying New York's heating sector, it will be crucial to be smart about the path forward. Efficient use of electricity will be crucial, otherwise it will be too expensive to maintain a reliable grid on the coldest and hottest days of the year when electricity use – and ratepayer costs – peak. Geothermal heat pump systems use the consistent temperature underground as their heat source and sink and are the most efficient technology for heating and cooling. As New Yorkers turn to heating without fossil fuels it will be crucial for them to have the proven incentives that have worked for solar available to them when they consider efficient carbon-free heating.

Bill Nowak

Executive Director

NY Geothermal Energy Organization

Buffalo