



A.3945 (WEPRIN, ET AL.)

Summary

This bill would amend New York State's Urban Development Corporation Act by establishing a small business energy loan program. Under the program, eligible small businesses in economically distressed areas could receive either zero percent or reduced-interest rate loans of up to \$100,000 to finance the cost of improvements which would reduce energy use. The corporation would also be authorized to buy down a participating lender's interest rate. In order to be eligible for such assistance, small businesses would undergo an energy audit to identify strategies to conserve energy.

Explanation

Despite successes achieved by the state's energy efficiency programs, a 2003 study commissioned by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) found that six out of seven kilowatt hours of cost-effective and achievable energy efficiency savings remain unrealized. This bill would make additional capital available to small businesses in economically distressed areas to help reduce energy consumption.

Reducing energy consumption will result in decreased local and statewide electricity demand, place less of a strain on New York's aging transmission system—which caused outages for more than 120,000 Queens residents in 2006—and protect New York residents from the harmful effects of air pollution created by fossil fuel-fired power plants.

These harmful effects include respiratory problems for people suffering from asthma, increased levels of mercury contamination, destruction of our forest ecosystems by acid rain, as well as wide ranging negative effects associated with climate change.

Environmental Advocates of New York supports this bill.

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