



EANY SUPPORTS Removing Restrictions on Geothermal Technology



[A6949 \(Glick, et al.\)](#)

[S6604 \(Harckham\)](#)

Explanation:

In 2019, the New York State Legislature passed the groundbreaking Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), calling for a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and an 85% reduction by 2050. This past January, the Climate Action Council finalized their Scoping Plan, containing recommendations on how to implement the climate law. One of these recommendations is to reduce emissions from buildings by encouraging widespread adoption of geothermal heat pump technology by modifying obsolete restrictions for geothermal boreholes deeper than 500 feet, which is what this legislation seeks to accomplish.

Current requirements restricting the installation of geothermal systems deeper than 500 feet were originally designed for oil and gas drilling to protect the environment from contamination. These requirements are unnecessary for heat pump installations because closed-loop geothermal are not extractive, which means they do not pose the same risk to the environment as oil and gas drilling does.

[Geothermal technology](#) provides the least expensive operating costs of any heating and cooling technology, making it highly affordable for New York State residents and commercial building owners, reducing the price tag for statewide building decarbonization. This exemption will remove impediments to geothermal installations, while preserving installation quality and safety precautions through regulation by the Department of Environmental Conservation.

[Geothermal systems reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70-80%](#) when used in place of fuel oil, propane, or gas heating systems. The exemption made possible by this legislation will benefit New York's geothermal heating and cooling sector by lowering installation costs and expanding the number of houses that may employ geothermal systems.

Summary:

This legislation amends the environmental conservation law by exempting geothermal heating systems from restrictions on drilling boreholes deeper than 500 feet, which will remove an obstacle to geothermal heat pump adoptions.