

Resolution in Opposition to the Proposed Garbage Incinerator in the Town of Romulus, Seneca County

WHEREAS, a recently formed company named Circular EnerG, LLC, has proposed building the largest garbage incinerator in New York State in the Town of Romulus, Seneca County, squarely between Seneca and Cayuga lakes, the two largest of the Finger Lakes and just north of Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, the company has never operated a solid waste facility and has proposed burning 2,640 tons of garbage every day, and

WHEREAS, a 260-foot smoke stack will emit dioxins, furans, lead, mercury, arsenic, chromium, particulates, hydrochloric acid, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides, associated with increased levels of health outcomes such as asthma, respiratory tract infections, cardiovascular disease, and some cancers, and

WHEREAS, the incinerator will be located 3,200 feet from the K-12 Romulus Central School, and in close proximity to the Hillside Children's Center (a residential facility that houses troubled youth), the Five Points Correctional Facility, the Seneca County Jail, and the Willard Drug Treatment Campus putting those populations at risk, and

WHEREAS, the Circular EnerG trash incinerator will bring 238 trucks per day transporting garbage from long distances that will clog local county roads six days a week, which equates to 148,512 additional trucks per year ultimately entering and leaving the facility, and

WHEREAS, diesel exhaust from trucks and locomotives contain compounds that contribute to ground level ozone that irritates the respiratory system aggravating asthma and some which are known human carcinogens, and

WHEREAS, the incinerator will withdraw 445,000 gallons of water from Seneca Lake every day, and

WHEREAS, the wine, craft beverage, agriculture, and agri-tourism industry is driving job creation and economic growth in the Finger Lakes, which is home to hundreds of family vineyards and wineries that generate \$2.9 billion in economic activity and supports 60,000 jobs in the Finger Lakes alone, and

WHEREAS, the Finger Lakes has recently become a nationally recognized tourist destination that now attracts millions of visitors annually to its local wineries, breweries, restaurants, farms, and other tourist attractions, with businesses located on and around Seneca Lake at the center of this activity, and

WHEREAS, tourists travel to the area attracted to the natural beauty and rural, unindustrialized, character of the Seneca Lake communities and the surrounding Finger Lakes area, and

WHEREAS, garbage disposal, including trash incineration, is not compatible with current or future economic development goals of the region, and

WHEREAS, the Finger Lakes region is already the dump for half of New York State's municipal solid waste, and

WHEREAS, the Seneca Meadows Landfill in Seneca County is the largest landfill in New York State and Seneca County already receives a disproportionate share of the State's garbage to manage with containment efforts to minimize the impact on the environment, local communities, and the tourist industry, and

WHEREAS, reduced reliance on landfilling through aggressive waste reduction, recycling, and composting should be pursued as a solid waste disposal strategy for the Finger Lakes and New York State, and

WHEREAS, incineration does not eliminate the need for landfills, as for every 3 tons of waste that is burned, 1 ton of highly toxic ash is created requiring 52 trucks per day to handle the ash alone that also requires landfilling, and

WHEREAS, the Circular EnerG trash incinerator is antithetical to local and regional goals to reduce the amount of trash that travels through and is disposed in the Finger Lakes, and

WHEREAS, the State of New York has adopted aggressive greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) reduction goals of 40% by 2030 and 80% by 2050 and the combination of emissions from trucking garbage long distances and the incinerator process will counter these State efforts, and

WHEREAS, the State of New York has established a goal of 50% energy generation from renewable energy technologies by 2030 and the New York Public Service Commission's Clean Energy Standard does not recognize burning garbage as a form of renewable energy generation such that the Circular EnerG trash incinerator will not help New York State meet these renewable energy goals, and

WHEREAS, energy technologies that are recognized as renewable under New York State law and that are compatible with local and regional economic development goals and local zoning requirements can meet additional energy demands without putting public health, the environment, and public infrastructure at risk, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on the recommendation of the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee, That Tompkins County opposes the garbage incinerator proposed by Circular EnerG in the heart of the Finger Lakes in the Town of Romulus, Seneca County, urges the Town of Romulus to stand in opposition to the Circular EnerG proposal, and calls on Governor Andrew Cuomo to reject the Circular EnerG trash incinerator proposal,

RESOLVED, further, That copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, New York State Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb, New York State Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan, New York State Senate Democratic Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, New York State Senate Independent Democratic Conference Leader Jeffrey Klein, State Senators Pam Helming, Tom O'Mara, and James Seward, Assembly members Phil Palmesano and Barbara Lifton, Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Congress member Tom Reed, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos, New York State Public Service Commissioner Chair John Rhodes, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Commissioner Richard Ball, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority Chair Richard L. Kaufman, New York State Empire State Development Commissioner Howard Zensky, New York State Department of Health Commissioner Howard Zucker, Romulus Town Supervisor David Kaiser, Romulus Planning Board Chair Tom Bouchard, and Seneca County Board of Supervisors Chair Robert Shipley.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20