

# ***NYDEC Has Its Eyes on a Carbon-Free Prize***

Your editorial "Cuomo vs. New York" (May 18) laments the New York Department of Environmental Conservation's rejection of a permit to build the Williams gas pipeline under New York harbor, quoting low-income housing developers as saying: "alternative energy options are unavailable."

There is a cleaner, widely used alternative to heating with gas—heat pumps. Geothermal heat pumps capture the solar warmth stored in the ground, compress it to raise the temperature and distribute it throughout a building. Most developed countries have begun a rapid transition to heat pumps. The European Heat Pump Association notes that: "With 11.8 million units installed across Europe, heat-pump technology has quickly developed into a cornerstone of Europe's heat supply" showing double-digit growth over the past four years. Denmark outlawed fossil-fuel heating in new builds in 2013.

When ConEdison recently declared a gas moratorium in Westchester, the

Public Service Commission sprang into action, announcing a Clean Energy Action Plan. This measured plan effectively showcases heat pumps as a worthy alternative for developers and homeowners.

NY-GEO, our state geothermal trade association, has been meeting with Westchester elected officials and connecting developers with geothermal companies to help them complete even larger-scale developments seamlessly. The projects currently being negotiated provide heating, cooling and hot water, and are penciling out at about the same initial cost as the gas version. They will also cost less to operate, provide greater comfort, require less maintenance, last far longer and won't produce on-site emissions.

I am thankful the Cuomo administration is working toward the clean-energy future our children deserve.

**BILL NOWAK**  
*Executive Director*  
*New York Geothermal*  
*Energy Organization*  
*Buffalo, N.Y.*