

To the Planning Committee,

Congratulations on a comprehensive and forward-looking investment plan for reducing carbon emissions in NY. Even though I would like to write extensively on what is RIGHT about this plan (and there is a LOT that is right about it) I imagine you will be spending more of your time focused on what needs to be changed. So I'll keep my attention focused on what changes should be made. And i'll keep it solely focused on ONE change that should be made:

The most important change you could make would be to focus resources on promoting the development of biomass as a solid fuel for residential and commercial building heating. The paper discusses converting biomass to liquid fuels but the prospects for cellulosic ethanol being produced on a large scale in the near term are relatively small. On the other hand converting biomass to heat energy to heat homes is a highly energy efficient, near term solution that, in addition to reducing fossil fuel carbon emissions within the first fiscal year, would generate lots of local semi-skilled jobs and also would promote the development of the biomass production and pre-processing infrastructure that is going to be needed for cellulosic ethanol production once large-scale processing is perfected.

Already there are large numbers of entrepreneurs in NY working on pelleting or briquetting biomass for use as a wood pellet or firewood substitute, so this approach would actually build on and promote the efforts of NY entrepreneurs. The very fact that wood pellets and the wood pellet industry were only recently developed in the state means that we have recent experience on how to develop an entire sector devoted to biomass production and processing for heat energy sources, and would make it easier to replicate with other biomass sources.

In terms of carbon tonnage reductions Tompkins County can serve as a representative example for Central NY; We have 9,000 homes that are heated with liquid propane or heating oil. These are the houses that would be prime candidates for convering to a solid fuel. e also have between 25,000 and 40,000 acres of marginal grassland and marginal agricultural land that already produce about 1.3 to 1.5 Tons/acre of biomass (no planting required). This translates to approximately 35,000 to 50,000 T of biomass. The average home would use approximately 6 T of biomass so we produce enough biomass (with no planting required) to heat about 6,000-8,000 homes. I'll leave the carbon calculations to you, but the dollar savings in fossil fuel not purchased would be well over \$8 million/year, and the expenditures on energy use would therefore contribute to the LOCAL economy. Multiply that number times the number of counties in central and upstate NY and the impact on the economies as well as the carbon budgets of NY would be significant.

I hope you'll take this argument into consideration when you write your next draft. Good luck, and thank you.

Sincerely,
Ken Schlather

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