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The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

I write to call to your attention a critically important issue to Northwest Queens families: environmental justice. As you may know, this section of our borough hosts a plurality of New York City's fossil-fired power generation facilities, earning the dubious nickname "Asthma Alley" in the process. That extraordinary burden, which disproportionately falls on the shoulders of the area's Black and brown communities, is not just tragic — it's completely avoidable.

With the passage of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and the subsequent Tier 4 renewable energy program, administered by NYSERDA, you now have at your disposal an invaluable resource in the fight to bring clean, affordable energy to our community. For these reasons, I urge you to join me in supporting the Catskills Renewable Connector — a new, clean energy infrastructure project proposed by Queens-based company Rise Light & Power.

The Catskills Renewable Connector represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform a fossil-fired power plant site into a clean energy hub, like the Rise Light & Power-owned Ravenswood Generation Station here in Queens. This critical project is supported by local leaders including myself and New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams. But more importantly, it has earned the support of the local community, including the leadership of the local NYCHA Tenant Associations, the local NAACP branch and our residents, as evidenced through thousands of signatures in support of the project — one I wholeheartedly believe can be a model for the nation.

Both as Queens Borough President and as the former Chairman of the New York City Council's Committee on Environmental Protection, I have long fought environmental injustice on behalf of the families I have had the honor to represent, like the ones who call Northwest Queens home. I am asking you, Governor, to join me in this fight, in service of these families who have, for far too long, gone unseen and unheard.

Sincerely,

Donovan Richards Jr.
Queens Borough President