

1259 Dryden Road
Ithaca, NY 14850
April 6, 2005

Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton
106 East Court Street
Ithaca, NY 14850

Dear Assemblywoman Lifton,

While I was pleased to see that the state legislature had passed a budget, or reasonable parts of a budget on time this year, I was deeply disturbed to find this language in S.3669/A.6843:

to provide for the transfer of moneys from the New York state energy research and development authority (Part M);

31 S 2. Commencing with the 2006-2007 state fiscal year, and each fiscal
32 year thereafter, the governor shall, in his or her executive budget, as
33 submitted pursuant to article VII of the state constitution, provide
34 appropriations for currently non-appropriated moneys received by the New
35 York state energy research and development authority, under the direct
36 oversight of the department of public service, related to assessments,
37 collected for the purpose of funding public policy energy programs.

I was further disappointed to see your colleague Richard Brodsky describing this provision "for the transfer of moneys from NYSERDA" as "asserting the principle that decisions on spending not be decided by a Soviet style bureaucracy." While I can't say I'm thrilled with some of New York's authority system and would like to see broad reforms, this looks far too much like a grab for cash from a program that's been independently funded.

NYSERDA is one of the brighter aspects of New York State government, and I've written about it repeatedly at Living in Dryden, with their involvement in projects from a rebate for work done on my own house to a solar panel project at Dryden High School to upcoming design and implementation work for energy efficiency in our eventual new Town Hall. While I appreciate the Assembly's lack of patience for the Governor's management style, the language above requires me to put far more trust in the legislature's fiscal discipline than I currently find plausible.

I hope that you and other Assembly members will move to ensure that this provision does not appear in future budgets.

Sincerely,

Simon St.Laurent
<http://livingindryden.org>