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The Finger Lakes Community Preservation Act to Protect Region's Environment, Quality of Life and \$3 Billion Wine and Tourism Industry Incinerators Opposed by 500+ Businesses, Environmental Organizations and Local Governments

Romulus, NY – Two months after the New York State Senate and Assembly both unanimously passed the legislation to stop toxic incinerators in the Finger Lakes, Governor Cuomo has officially signed the Finger Lakes Community Preservation Act into law, showing how committed the Governor is to protecting the environment and local businesses of the region.

The community came together following a proposal by Circular enerG to build a \$365 million trash incinerator in Romulus, NY, between Seneca and Cayuga lakes. Led by Seneca Lake Guardian, a groundswell of opposition to incinerators in the region from elected officials, business owners, local and regional groups and the Governor himself, prompted New York State lawmakers to introduce bills 5029A and S2270 to stop developers from building garbage incinerators within the Finger Lakes Watershed. The Senate bill (S2270) was sponsored by Senator Rachel May and co-sponsored by Senators Pam Helming, Tom O'Mara, Brad Hoylman, Rich Funke, Robert E. Antonacci, David Carlucci and Jen Metzger. In the Assembly (5029A), it was sponsored by Assemblymember Michael Cuisick and co-sponsored by Assemblymembers Barbara Lifton, Phil Palmesano, Brian Kolb, Carrier Woerner, Donna Lupardo, Fred Thiele, Deborah Glick, Gary Finch, Linda Rosenthal, Felix Ortiz and Steven Englebright.

"Governor Cuomo has once again shown us that he plans to remain a staunch advocate for the Finger Lakes region," said **Joseph Campbell, President of Seneca Lake Guardian**. "We are thankful to the bill sponsors and co-sponsors for championing this bill. With the Finger Lakes Community Preservation Act becoming law, communities should now be able to refocus their energies on growing the Finger Lakes economy without the looming fear of an environmental or economic disruption. While we are relieved that this polluting incinerator will not be built in Romulus, we believe it should not be built anywhere. Seneca Lake Guardian stands ready to assist any other community that may be facing a similar threat of an incinerator proposal from Circular enerG or any other incinerator company."

"We can't count our chickens before they hatch, however", said **Yvonne Taylor, Vice President of Seneca Lake Guardian**. "Alan Knauf, the attorney for this predatory corporation, Circular enerG, has threatened to take this decision up with the NY State Attorney General, should the law get passed. It would be shameful to do so and it would drag the company and the community down for years. Circular enerG would simply be throwing good money after bad, and continuing to be the big bad bully in the

region. We are thankful to Governor Cuomo, our champions in the legislature like Senators Rachel May and Pam Helming, Assemblymembers Michael Cusick, Barbara Lifton, Phil Palmesano and Brian Kolb, as well as the hundreds of Finger Lakes residents who spent countless hours mobilizing against this incinerator.” Taylor said.

“As Town Supervisor of Romulus, I have the extreme pleasure of representing hundreds of families and residents who believe in the future of our small yet thriving town. With the passage of the Finger Lakes Community Preservation Act, we now have a truly bright future,” said **David Kaiser, Town Supervisor of the Town of Romulus**. “Our town is grateful to Governor Cuomo, our local representatives in the legislature and the bill co-sponsors for championing this bill to protect our region from dangerous trash incinerators. Over the past couple years, through the hard work of local activists and everyday residents, we were able to defend ourselves from a greedy corporation looking to exploit us and we will continue to do so to ensure we maintain our pristine natural resources and quality of life.”

“As the New York wine industry continues to grow and our vineyards produce some of the nation’s finest wine – we are immensely proud of our governing bodies, Governor Cuomo and the State Senate and Assembly and their swift efforts to stand against big corporations that threaten our land. Our vineyards are our livelihood and help fuel the burgeoning local tourism business,” said **Will Ouweleen, Secretary of the Finger Lakes Wine Business Coalition and Vintner at O-Neh-Da & Eagle Crest Vineyards**. “The Finger Lakes Community Preservation Act gives us a chance to continue making our small community a world-class wine producing and tourism destination.”

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Background

A recently formed company named Circular enerG LLC proposed to build a large garbage incinerator or “Waste to Energy” facility in Romulus, New York, squarely between Seneca and Cayuga lakes, the two largest of the Finger Lakes and just 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 Center. The proposed facility would burn 2,640 tons of garbage, withdraw 445,000 gallons of water from Seneca Lake every day and bring 238 trucks through the region six days a week. A 260-foot smoke stack would emit dioxins, furans, lead, mercury, arsenic, chromium, particulates, hydrochloric acid, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides.

Over 30 local governments (including the Town of Romulus) and school boards and over 500 local, environmental and business organizations have come out in opposition to the project because it is not compatible with current or future economic development goals of the region, or with New York State’s renewable energy standards. Seneca Lake Guardian is the organization that led the opposition against the proposal, as well as other efforts to ensure the Finger Lakes region maintains its pristine quality of life.