

Opposing The Proposal To Establish Several Additional Anchorage Grounds For Commercial Vessels In The Hudson River

Referred to: The Energy and Environment Committee (Chairman Richard Parete and Legislators Bartels, Heppner, Lapp and Wawro)

Legislator Jennifer Schwartz Berky offers the following:

WHEREAS, the Hudson River is vitally important to Ulster County and all of New York because of its unique ecosystem, its notable history and its scenic beauty that brings in thousands of tourists who recreate and shop at local businesses, farms, and wineries; and

WHEREAS, the Hudson River holds the unique distinction of being one of the few American Heritage Rivers established by Congress in 1996; and

WHEREAS, there are currently two official anchorage grounds in the Hudson River located at Yonkers and Hyde Park; and

WHEREAS, in June 2016, the U.S. Coast Guard announced that it was soliciting comments and concerns from the public in an Advanced Notice of Public Rulemaking (ANPRM), Docket #USCG-2016-0132, on a proposal to establish a large number of anchorage grounds for commercial vessels in the Hudson River – 43 berths in 10 locations from Yonkers to Kingston – at the request of shipping industry; and

WHEREAS, several of these anchorages are proposed for Ulster County locations which include, Kingston Flats South, Port Ewen, Big Rock Point, Milton, and Marlboro; and

WHEREAS, the proposal poses many risks to the ecology of the river, as research shows that the habitats of some fish have been affected by previous anchorage sites; and

WHEREAS, an anchored boat containing volatile crude oil and petroleum products could catch fire or spill toxic fuel in the river, which it has taken more than 40 years to clean up; and

WHEREAS, the water supplies of communities that use the Hudson River for drinking water, including the Towns of Lloyd and Esopus, will be threatened; and

WHEREAS, the proposal is inconsistent with the vision our communities share for the future of the Hudson River, as the anchorage sites would take a toll on the scenic beauty of our region, blocking the view from riverfront restaurants and other businesses that support tourism and Ulster County's economy; and

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WHEREAS, the proposal could result in detrimental impacts on the surrounding communities, as many of the proposed sites are located near homes and businesses that are concerned about the impact of constant noise, light and smoke from anchored boats; and

WHEREAS, having unmanned, unlit barges parked on the river creates the potential for navigational, environmental and homeland security hazards that will be damaging to the ecological health of the river and wildlife and the economic health of our tourism and fishing industries; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature highly values the aesthetic beauty and commercial importance of the Hudson River; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature opposes the United States Coast Guard's Proposed Rule to establish new anchorages between Kingston and Yonkers, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature hereby requests that the Coast Guard reconsider the current Proposal Rule before deciding on a future official proposal; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Craig Lapiejko, Waterways Management Branch, Coast Guard First District, U.S. Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Congressman Chris Gibson, and Governor Andrew Cuomo,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

Passed Committee: Energy and Environment on _____.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE