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Letter: Rural communities overrun with large energy projects

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Your recent editorial that New Yorkers need to learn to live with solar and wind power unfortunately continues to perpetuate the myth that there are only two positions on the renewable energy issues: either being for it or against it. This is wrong.

Communities that have risen up against New York State's effort to override local zoning laws and site these industrial wind and solar projects in their communities are not against renewable energy and they are not a bunch of "not in my backyard" activists either. Rather, they are concerned citizens who disagree with a policy that will see thousands of acres of agriculture land lost forever to these massive projects – most likely in violation of the state's Constitution, which makes preservation of agriculture land a priority. Their concerns should be given due consideration, not pushed aside by Albany bureaucrats who have no stake in the long-term impacts of these projects.

A better alternative would be to put these projects in industrial parks, former brownfield sites, landfills and other locations where they can make land productive again. This would include sites in our own communities. To this end, we believe every county, including those downstate, should have to produce a portfolio of sites to New York State where renewable projects would be welcome. Every community in the state should be doing its part and no one community should bear a disproportionate burden.

Instead, rural communities are being overrun with proposals for large renewable projects that will forever change the character of their town and nobody in Albany really seems to care.

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