

Albany Update Empire State Water Well Drillers Association



2022 Annual Meeting

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Introduction

- Review of 2021/What to expect in 2022
 - The Governor
 - State Agencies
 - The Legislature
- Proposed Legislation
 - Summary of the proposed legislation
 - Discussion
- Questions and Wrap-up



A look back at 2021

- 2021 was dominated by 3 major issues:
 - Sexual harassment charges against Governor Cuomo, Covid-19 and the elevation of Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul to Governor
 - The year began with Governor Cuomo firmly in control...
 - his daily Covid briefings were must-see TV across the country
- During the first quarter of the year, new sexual harassment allegations surfaced.
- On February 28th, Attorney General Tish James announced she had launched an investigation into the allegations.



A look back at 2021

- Shortly, thereafter, on March 11th, the Assembly announced that it had launched an impeachment investigation
- In early August, the Attorney General released her report, finding the allegations against Governor Cuomo credible
 - The political impact on the Governor was devastating....
- On August 10th, Governor Cuomo and his legal team vociferously denied the charges, but announced he would resign
- The Assembly subsequently announced that it would not bring impeachment proceedings because the State Constitution did not allow for impeachment of a former Governor. Nevertheless, the Assembly continued its investigation, and on November 22, released its impeachment report, reaffirming the Attorney General's findings and including new allegations

A look back at 2021

- On August 24th, Lt. Governor Hochul was sworn in as the 57th Governor of New York. Over the next several weeks she revamped the Governor's staff, named many new Commissioners and has been relentless in announcing new policy decisions and traveling across the State.
- The 2021 legislative session was focused on Covid-related issues, housing and landlord tenant issues, economic recovery and also included \$1.84 million in environmental funding, including \$300 million for the State's Environmental Protection Fund.
- The 2021 budget also included a \$3 Billion environmental bond act, but was postponed until 2022, when it is expected that a bond act for \$4 Billion in environmental spending will be enacted and put before the voters in November.

The Executive Branch

- Governor Hochul
 - From Hamburg, NY
 - First elected as Town Clerk, then on to Congress and, after being reapportioned out of the seat (just barely), she went on to become Lt. Governor
 - In the run-up to the 2016 election, Governor Cuomo tried to drop her from the ticket, but eventually supported her candidacy
 - In the last election she was primaried by Jumaane Williams, but held on to the seat. Williams is now challenging her for Governor
 - In addition to Williams, Governor Hochul is facing a primary from Tom Suozzi of Nassau County
 - Recent polls show Governor Hochul with a substantial lead



The Legislature

- The State Assembly remains solidly Democratic:

- 104 Democrats
- 43 Republicans
- 3 vacancies
- Speaker Carl Heastie



- Environmental Conservation Committee Chairman Steve Engelbright



The Legislature – The Senate



- Democrats hold 2/3 of the seats:
 - 43 Democrats; 20 Republicans;
- Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins
- Environmental Conservation Committee Chair Todd Kaminsky



2021 legislature and outlook for 2022

- The 2021 session, like the 2020 session, was dominated by COVID 19 related matters;
- COVID 19-related issues remain a concern, but other issues will also be front and center:
 - Reapportionment – Every 10 years, the State is required to redraw legislative districts. The legislature rejected the proposals from the “independent” Redistricting Commission and is expected to propose its own plan soon.
 - The Governor’s State of the State presentation included over 200 proposals covering workforce issues, particularly for the healthcare sector, ethics reforms, middle-class tax reform, child care, public education reforms and wind energy, to name just a few.

Well Drilling-related Legislation

- Tax Credit for Geothermal energy systems
 - A. 7493/S. 386 provides for a tax credit equal to 25% of the cost of a geothermal energy system, up to \$5,000
 - A. 1608 would provide for a real property tax credit over a period of 4 years, equal to 10% of the cost of the geothermal system per year, up to a total of \$62,500.
- The “Well Water and Water Supply Education Act”
 - S. 47 requires the Department of Health to prepare materials to “educate” the public of the “potential health effects of consuming water that does not meet State drinking water standards. The bill requires that when the source of drinking water for a home is a private well, realtors and home inspectors must distribute the DOH materials to homeowners and prospective homeowners.
- The “Private Well Testing Act”
 - S. 48 requires testing of wells upon sale of homes where water wells are the primary source of potable water, among other things.

Questions?



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