



The League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
of New York State

January 20, 2022

The Honorable Kathleen C. Hochul
Governor of the State of New York
NYS State Capital Building.
Albany, NY 12224

Re: Request for Issuance of an Executive Order for a Moratorium on Blockchain Transactions that use Proof of Work Authentication Methods for Cryptocurrency Operations

Dear Governor Hochul:

This letter constitutes a request for issuance of an Executive Order for a moratorium on blockchain transactions that use Proof of Work authentication methods for cryptocurrency operations, until such time as a generic environmental impact statement (EIS) assessment is completed and fully considered. The need for an EIS is critical because of the expected serious negative impacts on the environment that the Proof of Work authentication process creates, which are described below.

As a non-partisan organization, the League of Women Voters (which is open to people of all gender identities) has registered voters and held candidate events for over 100 years. The League also educates voters and studies and creates positions on issues such as the need for clean air and clean water which we have sought to protect and preserve for decades. That is why we are writing to you.

The rapidly increasing interest in and use of cryptocurrency is exponential. However, all forms of cryptocurrency are not alike with respect to their impact upon the community where the plants are located and the surrounding regions. Those that use the Proof of Work authentication method to validate blockchain facilitated cryptocurrency transactions potentially have very serious negative environmental consequences. Here are five:

1) thousands of computers run 24/7/365, consuming an enormous amount of electrical energy from the grid, while not adding any energy back into the grid,

2) the electrical energy consumed comes primarily from exploration for and production and distribution of natural gas, which collectively contributes to a warming climate and creates air pollution harmful to human health and other life,

3) the process uses great volumes of water which, when returned to its source (such as Seneca Lake), is hot, causing harm to tourism, wildlife and the fishing and agricultural industries, including Finger Lakes wines,

4) the computers used in this process last only approximately two (2) years which results in the creation of voluminous amounts of e-waste requiring safe disposal,

5) the noise pollution that emanates from the huge fans running 24/7 used to cool the process is significant; so much so that neighboring communities are already complaining about it, including the harm caused by the noise to human health.

For these reasons, we respectfully request your leadership to help New York State meet the goals of the 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act which includes the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to 85% below 1990 levels by 2050. We also respectfully request your leadership to help facilitate the amendment to the New York State Constitution passed by voters in the 2021 election guaranteeing residents the right to clean air and clean water.

We respectfully submit that accomplishing these goals can be furthered by the issuance of an Executive Order implementing a moratorium on blockchain transactions that use Proof of Work authentication methods for cryptocurrency operations until an EIS is completed and fully considered by a company or agency with no vested interest in the results, followed by disclosure to the public of the EIS results of such study.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judie Gorenstein". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Judie Gorenstein
President