

# **FORMAL REQUEST FOR INDEPENDENT SAFETY REVIEW AND PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY**

## **Proposed Hauppauge BESS Hauppauge Community Action Committee – Community Letter**

To the Members of the Town of Islip Planning Board,

On behalf of the Hauppauge Community Action Committee and residents of the Hauppauge School District community, we formally call for an independent, transparent, and comprehensive safety review of the proposed 220 Rabro Drive Lithium-Ion BESS facility.

The significant public safety, environmental, and procedural concerns surrounding this project demand heightened scrutiny before any further approvals are granted.

### **1. Current Town of Islip BESS Code (68-456) Deficiencies**

Following comparative review of established Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) code recommendations, and consultation with subject matter experts, it is evident that the current Town of Islip Code §68-456 lacks critical safeguards necessary to protect public safety, environmental integrity, and community welfare.

Deficiencies include, but are not limited to:

- Battery supply chain verification requirements, consistent with growing federal national security concerns regarding the sourcing of Chinese-manufactured battery components and associated system safety implications
- Codified battery recall protocols, including mandatory notification of appropriate federal, state, and local authorities, and clearly defined decommissioning and replacement procedures in the event of a recall
- Cybersecurity requirements which align with Federal and State best practices, including an incident response plan, and compliance with the North American Electric Reliability Critical Infrastructure Protection standards
- Independent baseline sampling of soil, groundwater, and air quality to establish a documented pre-construction environmental baseline
- Absence of required on-site water containment and treatment plan
- No Atmospheric Assessment and Modeling (AAM) requirements to evaluate potential plume migration risks
- Sufficient property line setback requirements, in line with AAM results, for toxicity mitigation

- Continuous air monitoring stations placed along the perimeter of the BESS and at high-risk locations, including schools, care facilities, and residential areas
- Ownership transfer without prior notice to the Town
- No mandated failure analysis reporting or independent post-incident review requirements

The Hauppauge Community Action Committee is actively collaborating with subject matter experts to develop a comprehensive draft amendment to BESS Code §68-456 addressing the deficiencies identified above and incorporating additional protective safeguards. Following expert review, this draft will be formally submitted to Town of Islip Officials and its Planning Board for consideration and public record.

## **2. Proximity to Schools and Residential Areas**

Siting this facility near homes and schools increases risk exposure to children, families, and educators.

The Hauppauge School District should be formally afforded meaningful input prior to approval. We formally request in coordination with the Hauppauge School District,

- An emergency response plan including evacuation plans for school community and surrounding residents
- Transparent documentation of how setback distances were calculated, including all modeling inputs, risk assumptions, and underlying data used to justify the determination
- A comprehensive site suitability analysis that fully accounts for the physical conditions, surrounding development, and infrastructure constraints of the area.
- A determination as to whether the school district's current air filtration system is sufficient, and if not, identification of who will bear the cost of necessary upgrades.

## **3. Fire Safety and Emergency Response Capacity**

Local fire officials have outlined serious concerns regarding lithium-ion battery storage facilities, including thermal runaway risks, prolonged suppression challenges, toxic off-gassing, and water contamination.

The fire departments that would respond to any incident must be formally engaged in this process. We formally request in coordination with the Hauppauge Fire Department,

- A site-specific emergency response plan
- Written confirmation of coordination with all responding volunteer fire districts
- Independent third-party review of fire and smoke modeling as well as fire suppression strategies

- Documentation of adequate water supply and infrastructure for containment and treatment of firewater
- Decontamination plan for firefighters' gear and trucks

#### **4. Environmental Impact and Long-Term Safeguards**

Residents are entitled to full transparency regarding this project. We formally request that the applicant provide comprehensive documentation addressing the following,

- Environmental impact assessments that consider an actual fire breaking out
- Engineered stormwater and groundwater safeguards to prevent contaminant migration into soil or aquifers
- Hazardous material storage protocols, including secure containment, segregation standards, and routine inspection requirements
- Detailed remediation plans including enforceable financial assurance mechanisms to ensure full funding of potential hazardous material cleanup covering any affected community properties

With the current moratorium set to expire this year, any action taken by Town of Islip Officials and/or the Town of Islip Planning Board must be grounded in independent analysis, objective data, and full public transparency.

Battery Energy Storage System fires in other municipalities demonstrate that the risks associated with utility-scale lithium-ion facilities are not theoretical — they are documented and recurring. These are not isolated anomalies. They are real-world incidents that have resulted in emergency response challenges, environmental contamination concerns, and prolonged community disruption.

Accordingly, Town of Islip Officials and its Planning Board have a duty to formally review incident reports, after-action findings, failure analyses, and lessons learned from these events before determining the suitability of this proposed facility near residential neighborhoods and schools. A determination made without incorporating documented incident data would represent an incomplete and insufficient evaluation of risk.

The residents of Hauppauge expect diligence, transparency, and a clear commitment to public safety.

We respectfully request written confirmation that this letter has been received and entered into the public record.

Public safety must not be presumed. It must be demonstrated.

Sincerely,

Hauppauge Community Action Committee