

Initial Statement of Concern

Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Proposal – Hauppauge

The Hauppauge Community Action Committee was formed in response to a proposed utility-scale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project within close proximity to residential neighborhoods, schools, and critical community infrastructure in Hauppauge.

While we recognize the importance of advancing clean energy solutions and supporting grid reliability, we have serious concerns regarding the siting of lithium-ion battery energy storage facilities in densely populated areas. Lithium-ion BESS installations have a documented history of thermal runaway events, fires that are difficult to extinguish, toxic smoke release, and long-term environmental impacts. Current emergency response protocols often rely on a “let it burn” approach, raising significant questions about public safety, evacuation planning, and first responder risk.

Of particular concern is the lack of clarity surrounding emergency response readiness, including whether local fire departments are equipped, trained, and adequately resourced to respond to a lithium-ion battery incident. Additionally, there are unresolved questions related to groundwater contamination, air quality impacts, long-term environmental remediation, and the cumulative risk posed to nearby homes, schools, and vulnerable populations.

The committee is also concerned that existing local regulations governing BESS projects may not fully account for the unique risks associated with lithium-ion technology, especially when proposed in close proximity to residential communities. We believe that residents, first responders, and local institutions deserve clear, transparent, and evidence-based information before decisions of this magnitude are made.

Our position is not opposition to energy storage or renewable energy advancement as a whole. Rather, we advocate for responsible planning, safer technology choices, appropriate siting, and stronger regulatory oversight that prioritizes public safety, environmental protection, and community well-being.

The Hauppauge Community Action Committee is committed to engaging collaboratively with residents, local officials, first responders, and subject-matter experts to ensure that any decisions regarding BESS development are made transparently, responsibly, and with the full understanding of potential risks and long-term impacts on our community.