TOWN OF WATSON
LOCAL LAW NO. [1] OF 2026
A LOCAL LAW ESTABLISHING A MORATORIUM ON UTILITY-SCALE ENERGY SYSTEMS (EXCLUDING ACAESS)

WHEREAS, the Town of Watson wishes to enact a twelve-month (12 m) moratorium on utility-scale energy storage systems(excluding ACAESS) to allow time to develop, review, and update the Town Code; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board finds that time is necessary to research, develop, review, amend, and update multiple sections of the Town Code to ensure consistency with the Town's existing Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest to halt the acceptance and approval of applications for all utility-scale energy storage systems (excluding ACAESS) for twelve (12) months to ensure orderly and effective planning and code updates;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED by the Town Board of the Town of Watson as follows:

Section I. Moratorium
The moratorium on the construction, installation, and operation of utility-scale energy storage systems (excluding ACAESS) is established for a period of twelve (12) months from the effective date of this Local Law. During this period, no permits, approvals, or other authorizations shall be issued for such systems.

Section 2. Purpose
The purpose of this moratorium is to provide the Town sufficient time to:

1. Review and amend the Town Code, including zoning and other regulations, to reflect the objectives of its Comprehensive Plan; and

2. Ensure that all utility-scale energy storage systems (excluding ACAESS) are properly regulated to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Section 3. Scope
This moratorium applies to all new applications or pending applications for permits, approvals, or authorizations related to Tier 1 and Tier 2 BESS, and other similar utility-scale storage systems within the Town of Watson.

Section 4. Enforcement
Any construction, installation, or operation of utility-scale energy storage systems (excluding ACAESS) during the moratorium period is prohibited and may result in enforcement actions under the Town Code.

Section 5. Definitions

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS):
One or more devices capable of storing energy for future electrical use, not to include a stand-alone 12-volt car battery or an electric motor vehicle. Battery energy storage systems are classified as follows:

A. Tier 1 — Small Battery Energy Storage Systems with an aggregate energy capacity less than or equal to 599 kWh or comprised of one storage battery technology in a room or enclosed area.

B. Tier 2 — Large Battery Energy Storage Systems with an aggregate energy capacity greater than 600 kWh or comprised of more than one storage battery technology in a room or enclosed area.

UTILITY-SCALE ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM:
A commercial, industrial, or grid-connected facility designed to store and discharge electrical or thermal energy at a scale intended to support the bulk power system, the utility distribution network, or wholesale market operations. This term includes, but is not limited to, battery energy storage systems (BESS), thermal storage, mechanical storage (including flywheels, compressed-air, or gravity-based systems), chemical storage, or any other technology capable of storing energy for later conversion to electrical power. Utility-scale energy storage systems do not include equipment used primarily for on-site consumption by individual property owners.

Section 6. Severability
If any part of this Local Law is held invalid, the remainder shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 7. Effective Date
This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon the Town Board's adoption and filing with the Secretary of State. It shall remain in effect for twelve (12) months unless amended or repealed by the Town Board.