



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact: Audrey Schwartzberg at [aschwartzberg@adirondack.org](mailto:aschwartzberg@adirondack.org)**

**What:** Cryptocurrency Summit: Impacts, challenges and opportunities for our regional economy

**When:** Tuesday, June 5, 2018; 10:30 am to 3:30 pm

**Where:** Yocum Lecture Hall, SUNY Plattsburgh, 101 Broad Street, Plattsburgh, NY

**Registration fee:** \$25, and \$20 for ANCA members

### **Boom or Bust: Economic impacts of cryptocurrency**

*One-day summit will address challenges and opportunities for the North Country*

PLATTSBURGH — Inexpensive power—long one of our region’s biggest economic assets—is attracting cryptocurrency mining operations to North Country cities and towns. The hefty power consumption from cryptocurrency mining can drive up local energy costs while offering little in the way of economic benefit to host communities. Several municipal electric districts have recently placed a moratorium on this activity, and others are exploring the option.

According to Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA), a regional nonprofit that works on sustainable economic development, how municipalities manage this growing industry could have a significant impact on the economic future of our region.

To gain insight on the issue, ANCA is partnering with the office of State Senator Betty Little and SUNY Plattsburgh to host a daylong conversation on Tuesday, June 5th at SUNY Plattsburgh. Open to the public, the Cryptocurrency Summit will focus on the challenges and opportunities presented by cryptocurrency mining expansion as well as the potential impacts on northern New York communities.

“If cryptocurrency mining is to be a new and long-term feature in our region, how do we minimize the costs to our communities and increase the benefits?” asked Little (R-Queensbury). “How do we prepare for this shift so that we retain economic benefits for the region? Are there public policy implications such as building code changes or tax changes that we need to develop? We are looking forward to this Summit to help with these important decisions.”

“Our region needs economic models that don’t simply extract and export wealth from the region,” said

ANCA Executive Director Kate Fish. “We want to ensure that any new investment, whether large-scale solar developments or Bitcoin mining, brings tangible benefits to our communities.”

Fish believes it is important to understand the costs and benefits of this growing industry, particularly in a rural region like the North Country. “We’re eager to learn from the experts and have a candid conversation about this issue and how to best approach it,” she said.

The New York Times recently reported on a [growing problem](#) associated with Bitcoin miners in Plattsburgh and Massena. Both towns have experienced increased power costs as Bitcoin computer servers consume large amounts of local energy. According to Plattsburgh mayor Colin Read, who will be speaking at the event, Bitcoin miners currently consume about 10 percent of the municipality’s electricity, forcing the city to purchase more expensive electricity on the open market.

“I cannot think of another industry that has the potential to be as significant a tool for global commerce, yet asks for so much and potentially returns so little to the local communities that support it,” Read said. “Large cryptocurrency mines demand vast amounts of power but provide scant jobs. I’d much rather see our power going to companies that are providing jobs, products or services that benefit Plattsburgh area residents and the North Country region. Or tailor their industry so the waste heat they wish to dissipate can be returned to the communities which depend on that power to heat their homes.

“Our job as public policy practitioners is to turn liabilities into community assets,” he said.

In a letter to its customers, the New York Power Authority (NYPA) points out that while crypto mining computers take up very little space, they use a lot of electricity and produce a lot of heat. These units run 24 hours per day, seven days per week and 365 days a year. NYPA recently placed a moratorium on “high density loads (HDL)” and is working with municipalities, communities and state agencies to work out appropriate fees and rates for HDL customers.

Bitcoin mining operators have already set up shop in the [Pacific Northwest](#) where there is also low-cost hydropower. This experience is helping to help inform policy development in New York as municipal electric districts and low-cost power producers receive numerous requests for power allocations.

Is cryptocurrency here to stay? Global banking and investment firm [Goldman Sachs](#) recently became the first regulated financial institution to offer cryptocurrency trading services, allowing clients to trade Bitcoin futures through one of its New York offices. This move lends a new level of legitimacy and momentum for the use and trading of digital currency on a global scale.

“It’s important to have this conversation now,” said Fish. “Not when it’s too late to make a difference.”

For more information about the Cryptocurrency Summit, visit the event website at <https://www.adirondack.org/Cryptocurrency-Summit-2018>. Questions may be directed to Jacob Vennie-Vollrath at [jvennie-vollrath@adirondack.org](mailto:jvennie-vollrath@adirondack.org) or (518) 891-6200.

[ANCA](#) is an independent nonprofit organization growing the New Economy in northern New York. Using an integrated approach to sustainable economic development and prosperity where economic health, community vitality and ecological stewardship are equally important outcomes, ANCA focuses on creating opportunity for people with diverse backgrounds, experience and education levels.

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Attached: one (1) photo

**Photo:** Plattsburgh is one of the region's municipal electric districts that are experiencing an increase in energy costs, due in part to cryptocurrency mining's high power consumption.