Comments for Legislative Roundtable on Meeting New York's Climate Goals
Sept. 26, 2025

Thank you Chair Krueger, Chair Harckham, Chair Parker, and other members of the legislature who are here today. My name is Alisha Deen-Steindler and I am the legislative advocate for the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV), a statewide environmental advocacy organization dedicated to fighting climate change, conserving land and water, and protecting public health through political action. We are honored to contribute to this timely roundtable to figure out how to get the CLCPA back on track.

In 2015, most countries across the globe came together to sign the Paris Climate Agreement, recognizing greenhouse gas emissions were creating irreversible harm to future generations. Quantifying, then reducing climate pollutants was the agreed upon course of action. A full decade later, in 2025, political winds have managed to confuse the issue, creating delay, stalling renewable energy projects and an overall slower pace in reducing climate pollution, especially at the federal level. In 2019, New York State passed the Community Leadership and Climate Protection Act (CLCPA), setting nation-leading goals in greenhouse gas reduction across sectors. Despite the tumultuous times we find ourselves in, New York State is still poised to lead the nation on climate policy, by working toward the goals of the CLCPA, using proven policy mechanisms, passing supporting laws, and ensuring we invest adequately in renewable energy and battery storage.

<u>Executive</u>
Cap and invest is a proven policy mechanism that works! It gradually ratchets down emissions in a way that is not disruptive to the economy. Cap and invest is the strongest, most cost effective tool at the State's disposal to tackle the climate crisis, using a market based approach to both incentivize economy-wide emissions reductions while generating billions of dollars in recurring revenue from polluters for investments in deeper carbon reductions, and in climate justice. Cap and invest will deliver cleaner air for our communities which will result in better health, and create family sustaining union jobs not on the backs of taxpayers but from polluters. And it would be the most significant climate action in the country in 2025. Launching an effective Cap and Invest program will generate revenue for the state while significantly reducing Greenhouse gas emissions. Draft cap and invest regulations, which by law were supposed to be published no later than 2023 have been delayed. Further delay will not result in greater affordability, cut the pollution causing so much damage to our communities, provide certainty for the business community nor support the jobs of the future. We urge Governor Hochul to direct DEC and NYSERDA to advance the rules for public comment.

We were pleased to see the Governor and Legislature commit $1 Billion for the Sustainable Future Program in the NYS Budget for climate mitigation and adaptation with more details of the fund coming into focus just this week, and hope to see an additional $1 billion in next year's budget. However, we want to ensure that the Sustainable Future Program is additive to Cap & Invest, not a substitute.

Legislation

NY HEAT A. 4870-A/S. 4158 (Simon/Krueger) or Customer Savings and Reliability Act (CSRA) A. 8889/S. 8421 (Simon/Krueger) While we applaud the repeal of the 100-ft rule this year, passing the full NY HEAT Act or CSRA is still necessary to align gas utilities and the Public Service Commission with the CLCPA. The New York League of Conservation Voters supports both of these bills, which would align utility regulation with state climate justice and emission reduction targets and begin the process of transitioning off of natural gas where feasible.

Fossil fuels burned in New York's building stock for heating, hot water, and cooking account for nearly 1/3 of all greenhouse gas emissions in the State. These fossil fuels impact both public health broadly and indoor air quality, contributing to cases of asthma and heart disease. Currently, the Public Service Law promotes gas system expansion by establishing a gas utility obligation to serve any customer upon request. This is in contrast to the CLCPA and the goals set under the final scoping plan.

These bills would help to better align the rules and business practices of utility rate case proceedings with the reduced reliance on fossil fuels, sustainable utility planning processes, and protection for low-income ratepayers required by the CLCPA

Clean Fuel Standard A. 472-A/S. 1343-A (Woerner/Parker) would create a clean fuel standard to reduce carbon intensity of on-road transportation fuels by at least 20% by 2033.
Transportation is New York's largest source of GHG emissions and particulate matter pollution, contributing to both climate change and public health problems like asthma - and these harms are disproportionately borne by New Yorkers of color. A clean fuel standard (CFS) would require transportation fuel providers in New York to invest in low-carbon intensity fuels such that the total carbon intensity of transportation fuels declines by at least 20% by 2033.

ASAP Accelerate Solar for Affordable Power Act: S.6570/A. 8758 (Harkham/Barrett) would increase the State's distributed solar goal, streamline regulations and incentivize solar development by reforming the interconnection process for distributed resources, and ensure that the distributed solar market in New York continues to grow.

Automatic Solar Permitting A. 6270-A/S. 5781 (Cunningham/Harckham) would require municipalities with a population of 5,000 or more to implement automatic online permitting for code-compliant permits for residential solar systems and residential energy storage systems paired with solar systems by January 1, 2026.

New York State's ambitious climate goals include the already-surpassed distributed solar generation goal of 6 GW by 2025. We are on track to exceed an updated 10 GW by 2030 goal, leading NYLCV and other advocates to call for a new solar goal of 20 GW by 2035. To meet these goals and realize their benefits in the form of cleaner air and lower power bills, the State must make it easier for interested New Yorkers to install solar systems and energy storage systems on their residential properties.

A. 3675-A/S. 3606-A (Simon/Krueger) would amend the tax code to remove $330 million in tax breaks for fossil fuels. The Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act would end certain tax breaks given to the fossil fuel industry in New York, saving money for taxpayers and protecting people and communities across New York. The current New York State tax code incentivizes the use of fossil fuels by subsidizing their costs. This includes tax breaks for jet fuel, bunker fuel for marine shipping, transportation fuel used by the State government, and heating oil that is not used for home-heating purposes. These are not just fossil fuels that do not require a subsidy; they are some of the most polluting fossil fuels on the market. Fiscal incentives for fossil fuels are misaligned and incompatible with the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and slow our progress in reaching our goals for a cleaner, environmentally friendly state for all New Yorkers. We must stop incentivising the fuels that exacerbate environmental injustices, especially in low-income communities and communities of color.

As a result we are also failing New Yorkers who are struggling with air pollution and the health problems it causes, who are vulnerable to rising sea levels and extreme weather caused by climate change, and who are struggling with rising and unpredictable energy costs because of our reliance on a volatile fossil fuel market.

New York can still be the leader we need on climate change in this moment. But we need Governor Hochul and the Legislature to have the courage to seize that mantle and prove to New Yorkers that this is still a state where we take environmental protection and climate change seriously.

HEADQUARTERS 30 Broad Street, 30th Floor | New York, NY 10004
T 212.361.6350 **F** 212.361.6363 | **WWW.NYLCV.ORG** info@nylcv.org