

A GREEN NEW DEAL FOR NEW YORK

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FOR GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK

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From rising sea levels and temperatures, to water contamination, to unhealthy air, to rising utility costs, to the impacts of extreme weather events, the climate crisis is no longer a hypothetical. It is here and affecting communities across New York State—disproportionately low-income communities and communities of color—in profound ways. We must meet this crisis with the urgency and scale it demands, including by slashing pollution from fossil fuels and ultimately achieving a fully renewable-powered economy, and investing in historic climate mitigation projects, green infrastructure, and public utilities and transit across the state.

To ensure that our children and grandchildren have a livable state and liveable planet, we need to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels toward a clean energy economy that reduces emissions that cause climate change; creates good, union jobs; and lowers energy costs for families through greater public control over utilities and energy production. We must ensure that our water is free of contamination, our buildings are free of harmful emissions, and that we create over a million family-sustaining green jobs over the next decade in the process. We can make those who caused and are profiting from the climate crisis pay for new, fossil-free housing, renewable energy, and mass transit that is affordable and accessible to all.

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Even in the wake of rapidly rising temperatures and sea levels, and an increase in the number of extreme weather events, the current administration is flaunting New York's visionary climate law by refusing to commit the resources necessary to achieve the law's critical targets. We do not have a minute to spare.

***Meeting the climate crisis
with the full force of state
resources and bold policies,
and transition New York to
a green economy powered
by union jobs.***

As Governor and Lieutenant Governor, we will meet the moment with the urgency, focus, and boldness we need our leaders to demonstrate in this perilous moment.

- 1. Investing in our Future**
- 2. Public Power & Clean Energy Now**
- 3. No Fossil Fuel Pledge**
- 4. Green Infrastructure**
- 5. Green Transportation & Public Transit**
- 6. A Just Transition**

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1. INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

New York must rapidly put into place requirements to transition off fossil fuels while subsidizing up-front costs and maximizing good, union jobs and ensuring justice for all. As Governor and Lt. Governor, we will make sure that the state provides at least \$10 billion in climate action funding annually until we meet our climate goals – based on what both state agencies and outside experts agree is necessary to jumpstart our state's transition to a green energy economy – by raising taxes on the highest incomes, extreme wealth, and corporations, including those involved in the extraction and distribution of fossil fuels.

This funding will invest in projects that reduce emissions, target assistance to low-income communities and communities of color, help displaced fossil fuel workers and impacted communities, modernize our public transit system, and provide funding to residents, small businesses and non-profit organizations to reduce energy burdens – while creating well over 100,000 new, quality jobs each year and raise living standards throughout the state.

In 2019, advocates fought hard to pass the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), which established strong mechanisms to address the climate crisis, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions in all sectors of the economy, and helping low income communities and communities of color that have been disproportionately harmed by fossil fuels and other sources of pollution.

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But the CLCPA will not achieve its goals unless we have a strong pro-climate administration that directs all state agencies to work together to ensure that industry complies, and provides the funding to move our state off fossil fuels.

***At least \$10 billion in
climate funding every year
until we meet our goals.***

As Governor and Lieutenant Governor, we will make sure that the Climate Action Council and the state agencies write strong rules to actually implement the CLCPA, including legally enforceable timelines for greenhouse gas reductions, ensuring that 40% of energy funds be directly invested in disadvantaged communities, and avoiding “false solutions” like waste incineration and so-called renewable natural gas that maintain the status quo, allowing for the continued extraction and production of fossil fuels and harming of our communities.

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2. PUBLIC POWER & CLEAN ENERGY NOW

New Yorkers are facing rising heating, electricity, and gas prices for a number of reasons, including our overreliance on fossil fuels, and oil and gas company price gouging. New York State and utility companies must address the crushing costs and debt consumers are experiencing. We must ensure energy is independent from corporate interests to bring down costs for working families and to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.

***People should have a
say over their utilities,
not shareholders.***

As Governor and Lieutenant Governor, we will ensure New York exercises control over utilities so that they serve the interests of the people, not the interests of corporate backers, including ending the practice of insider negotiations where climate, environmental and consumer concerns are pitted against the needs of utilities for greater revenue.

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To address the crushing and rising costs of energy New Yorkers are experiencing, we should:

- 1.** Send a \$200 rebate check to every low and middle income NY tax filer and their dependent. Governor Hochul could allocate at least \$1.25 billion for helping low-income New Yorkers in arrears (which would represent just 10% of the American Rescue Plan money that New York received from the federal government).
- 2.** Extend the moratorium on utility shutoffs. This is particularly important to prevent elderly residents from suffering heat stroke during the coming summer months.
- 3.** Call on utility companies to forgive utility bill debt, given the tremendous impacts of the pandemic and crisis in Ukraine
- 4.** Create a state-level independent utility consumer advocate, which would help address all of these challenges in three ways. Governor Hochul's veto of this office was a significant mistake that has continued to hurt working families. First, a consumer advocate would be able to fight for New Yorkers who file a complaint against utility companies for rising utility bills and unfair penalties. Second, a well-resourced consumer advocate could conduct research into the practices of utility companies and the distribution of utility debt in our state. Finally, a consumer advocate could serve as a zealous advocate for New York families in policy discussions about whether to approve rate increases in the first instance.
- 5.** Provide tax credits and state subsidies for energy efficiency retrofits to low and moderate income households, which would immediately lower energy costs for both homeowners and tenants.

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People, not corporate shareholders, should have a say over their utilities. Long-term, we should move towards an energy system that is 100% renewable, democratically controlled, and publicly owned. One key step towards public power would be to pass the NY Build Public Renewables Act, which would help expand the ability of the state to own and generate renewable power, as well as provide renewable energy directly to state and municipal-leased and -owned properties and transportation.

Stopping environmentally-damaging bitcoin mining.

Electricity-generating plants that rely on fossil fuels are a major cause of public health issues and a contributor to the climate crisis through their large greenhouse gas emissions. We must pass the Clean Futures Act, which would prohibit the development of any new major electric generating facilities that would be powered in whole or in part by fossil fuels. We should be making bold investments in our energy infrastructure to scale renewables by more than eight times their current market size by 2030. We also must implement a moratorium on environmentally damaging Proof-of-Work bitcoin mining in the state and ensure a rigorous study of the environmental impacts of existing and potential future cryptocurrency mining operations. Finally, we must halt the development of other types of fossil fuel infrastructure in New York, including dangerous pipelines.

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Critical to our roles as governor and lieutenant governor would be to ensure the agencies we oversee are doing everything in their power to ensure they're reducing carbon emissions. From requiring state vehicles to be electric to assisting and funding local governments to reduce the carbon footprint in their operations, the state can lead by example in getting all New Yorkers to work to reduce carbon emissions. All state facilities can and should be rapidly transitioned to run on clean energy rather than fossil fuels, and we will pass the Renewable Capitol Act, which would mandate several state facilities in downtown Albany, including the State Capitol and Empire State Plaza, be powered by renewable energy. We will ensure that state agencies do not approve new fossil fuel facilities, and establish a plan to rapidly shut down all existing fossil fuels facilities in the state.

3. NO FOSSIL FUEL MONEY PLEDGE

We don't take donations from fossil fuel interests. Utility companies, many based out of state, use their influence to stop climate action in order to maximize their profits from selling fossil fuels. These fossil fuel companies are also fighting against the policies that would protect our communities from the effects of climate change and rising costs. People who represent fossil fuel interests currently sit on the state's Climate Action Council, which is tasked with creating the plan to meet our state's emissions targets. With these influences, New York will never meet our climate goals.

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4. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

After decades of austerity budgeting, disinvestment, and privatization, infrastructure across New York is in desperate need of major upgrades and public investment. The climate crisis and increasing economic inequality has only exacerbated these problems. We must finally make serious investments in green infrastructure so that New York's transit, agriculture, and energy systems can serve our state for the future and as a model for the nation.

First, we must pass the All Electric Buildings Act, which would ensure that new buildings constructed in New York do not use gas or oil. Every new fossil fuel boiler locks in decades of future air pollution. This is a critical step towards addressing both air pollution and its impacts on public health, including childhood asthma, as well as addressing the climate crisis. Building energy use is the top source of climate pollution in New York State. Making New York gas-free would cut pollution, fight climate change, reduce utility bills and create good living wage union jobs in the process. New York City just enacted this vital policy and the state should stop lagging behind.

Working closely with farmers, gardeners, and consumer groups, we must make substantial investments in sustainable agriculture models that improve health and promote carbon sequestration, conserve on-farm energy and water, reduce food waste and greenhouse gas emissions, reduce synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, and protect wildlife habitats and biodiversity.

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Our public schools have long been in need of sustained and increased funding, including capital funding to improve buildings, technology, and to ensure our spaces of learning are resilient and environmentally sound. The pandemic and climate crisis have only heightened the need for massive infrastructure support and climate friendly retrofits for our schools. Working with federal and local partners, our administration would prioritize greening NY's Public Schools through a multi-year process that would create thousands of living wage jobs, deliver racial equity, improve health outcomes, slash carbon emissions, and improve school resilience to extreme weather.

Major upgrades and public investment after decades of austerity budgeting and privatization.

We must also work closely with federal and local partners to realize a Green New Deal for Public Housing, that's good for tenants, sustainable for the planet, and creates quality jobs. We must finally update and build out New York's public housing for the 21st century and beyond. New York has neglected public housing for far too long and its residents, our neighbors, and our communities deserve better.

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5. GREEN TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC TRANSIT

Expensive, yet insufficient transportation and utilities hinder the economic mobility of middle class and low-income New Yorkers. Our subways, bridges, and tunnels are stuck in the early 20th century and the pollution that crowded roads and highways produce worsen our families' health and quality of life. Climate change is already causing increased extreme weather events, and recent storms demonstrate the clear and present danger our crumbling and underinvested infrastructure represents. These issues demand systemic solutions—it is clear that the time for piecemeal reforms has passed. We need a fully modernized public transit system that prioritizes affordability, accessibility, safety, and equity.

In New York City, we must continue to fix, upgrade, modernize, and renew our subway system that serves as a lifeline for millions of New Yorkers every day. Ridership continues to grow and return after the pandemic, and we must do all we can to continue that trajectory, especially in the midst of our climate crisis. Flooding events over the last year have revealed the need for dramatic and sweeping investments to update subway infrastructure. We must continue to upgrade signal lines, increase accessibility, increase service, create safety structures for workers and riders, deliver regular train maintenance, and continue to address fare affordability—both for the subway and our suburban commuter rails.

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Across the state, in the wake of climate impacts and crushing gasoline prices, we must invest heavily in public transit, including electrifying our fleets of buses, increasing bus service, funding a high speed rail, and creating rapid transit lanes on our roads., We should also reduce and ultimately eliminate public transit fares for low-income New Yorkers to ensure equity and encourage ridership on low-carbon emitting transit systems.

A fully modernized public transit system that prioritizes affordability, accessibility, safety, and equity.

We must also vastly increase the number of fast charging stations for electric vehicles, and provide financing to make these electric vehicles more affordable for low and moderate income New Yorkers. In order to improve safety, health and environmental efforts, and commute times, we must also invest state and federal dollars in alternative transportation, including developing greater bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. 124 pedestrians and 19 cyclists were killed in New York City alone in 2021—this is a matter of public safety as well. We can dramatically expand protected bike lanes, reduce road vehicles, and scale bikeshare programs in cities across the state.

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In order to reduce pollution and carbon emissions and improve safety and quality of life, large cities in New York must implement policies that limit car congestion and create a more pedestrian-friendly landscape in our streets. A tentpole of these efforts must be an expeditious and efficient rollout of the New York City congestion pricing plan that was approved by the State in 2019. The federal government must cease its administrative delays of this critical program, which will reduce the gridlock plaguing the City and raise critical funds for MTA capital plans.

6. A JUST TRANSITION

We must support communities in shifting to a green economy by ensuring workers who have been making a living in the carbon-based industries are not left behind. With clear leadership and adequate funding, we will ensure that there is a plan for displaced workers and that the jobs created through our climate plan offer comparable, if not better, wages and benefits. We can do this by:

- Giving direct economic relief to workers temporarily displaced by the transition
- Offering retraining programs for displaced workers to transition to green jobs, working with local unions where applicable
- Mandating prevailing wage and benefits to all workers on all projects using state funds
- Implementing local hiring standards to ensure jobs support local economies
- Passing statewide single-payer healthcare so quality coverage is not attached to employment status
- Employing a community engagement model to ensure the people and communities most impacted by policy change are influencing the direction of and decisions about our collective green futures.