



NY Renews  
50 Broadway, 29th Floor  
New York, NY 10004

**September 8, 2021**

Hon. Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
Executive Chamber  
New York State Capitol  
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

The NY Renews coalition congratulates you on your elevation to the office of governor. Since our formation in December 2015, NY Renews has grown from 40 organizations to 300 today. Our members represent hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers from every part and constituency in the state, including community groups, environmental justice groups, labor unions, environmental organizations, businesses, and faith organizations. Grounded in [the Jemez Principles and in our coalition's own Points of Unity](#), we are a multi-sector climate, jobs and justice coalition creating a path to a 100% clean energy economy.

As Governor, you have already witnessed that the climate crisis is here, now. You have an opportunity to make New York the leader for climate, jobs, and justice. The nation and, indeed, the world need New York State to center the creation of good family-sustaining jobs, support communities that have been most impacted by disinvestment and climate change, and be a real world leader on a just transition to a thriving sustainable economy.

With the enactment of the **Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)** in 2019, New York set a new standard that is already having positive impacts on policy making across the country. The law requires that all sectors of New York's economy move off of combustion of fuels as an energy source and includes the Disadvantaged Community Investment Mandate (DCIM), an environmental justice provision requiring a minimum of 35%, and a goal of 40% of state clean energy funding to benefit low-income communities and communities of color. We stand ready to work with you on implementation of the law, development of the regulatory and operations efforts that will make that law meaningful on the ground for all New Yorkers, and any necessary additional legislation to effectuate its purposes. NY Renews was the driving force behind the legislation that became law and we are actively engaged in making sure it is implemented in a way that lives up to its intent: centering a just transition as we tackle the climate crisis, including assuring that harmful false solutions are not incorporated into the draft scoping plan.

On the path to making New York a global climate leader, the CLCPA was the first step; it created the framework and some of the key rules needed to move us off of toxic combustion energy sources and onto a path to a thriving sustainable New York State. In this moment, implementing its vision fully means not only a robust and transparent process at the Climate Action Council, Climate Justice Working Group, and Just Transition Working Groups created by the CLCPA, but an all hands on deck approach by government to truly align state policy with what science and our communities know we need.

Section 7 of the law is clear that every agency and every authority including the Executive office, the Division of Budget and more are legally bound to consider both the equity provisions and climate change impacts of all decisions. It is critical that this process is not pro forma. As you build your team, we urge you to appoint only those who fully appreciate that it is their job to address climate change and improve equity outcomes. This is a weighty responsibility and the law was intended to make very clear that this has to be a key priority for all of our Government. We stand ready to be a partner and a resource, to work with you to implement a progressive and

proactive vision for a just transition of New York to a clean renewable economy as envisioned by the legislators and supporters of the CLCPA.

To ensure that the CLCPA is both equitably and rapidly implemented, NY Renews knows that it is important for this transition to be adequately funded. Thus, we have drafted the **Climate and Community Investment Act (CCIA)**, as the next step in New York's leadership journey. This bill provides billions of dollars annually to fund the just transition mandated by the CLCPA through new and existing programs with a dedicated funding mechanism. In this moment the support of your office for this landmark legislation is vital and can set the tenor of your administration as a leader who not only cares about rhetoric of climate action but the funding to make things happen in our communities. The CCIA will make a tremendous difference in the lives of all New Yorkers.

In this moment where communities face so many intersecting crises the CLCPA and CCIA are not the whole agenda of our members or our movement.

- As the Federal Recovery and infrastructure funding proceed, you must ensure that 40 percent of climate and clean infrastructure investments are directed to disadvantaged communities as required by law, and that New York State invest in rural communities and communities impacted by the market-based transition to clean energy.
- New York needs to address the lasting health and economic impacts of the Covid-19 crisis including the failure of the Public Service Commission to address the imminent utility shut off crisis that will jeopardize public safety and lead to lost lives and economic devastation for thousands of New Yorkers. A robust public response that does not solely rely on the slow roll out of federal funds is needed urgently.
- This fall New Yorkers will have a once in a generation opportunity to vote on a ballot measure giving them a right to a healthy environment. Many of our members have actively campaigned for this for years and like the CLCPA it offers an opportunity to set the table for transformations that the state clearly needs. You can also be the governor who proactively steps in to make sure that our communities have a just transition. On the same ballot, New Yorkers must be asked to approve the environmental bond act, a key

tool to fund an array of related programs that complement the efforts of our coalition to create dedicated climate funding and infrastructure.

- As you begin working on your budget expanding on the practical victories that communities and labor have won through investments in clean energy funds, the application of labor standards and community benefits agreements to more of that work, and an expansion of the agencies staffing and funding so that they can fully implement these laws and respond to the climate and covid-19 crises are needed. Too many agencies are already overworked and understaffed, preventing them from adequately addressing and implementing new climate and equity mandates in the CLCPA.
- The landmark Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act requires New York State to completely cut human induced climate pollution emitted in our state by 2050 and mandates a zero-emissions electricity sector by 2040. Further, Section 7 of the law mandates that even the State Budget process comply with the mandate to consider “whether such decisions are inconsistent with or will interfere with the attainment of the statewide greenhouse gas emissions limits established in article 75 of the environmental conservation law.” Fossil fuel subsidies are antithetical to these ambitious climate goals, and eliminating as many of these subsidies as possible is critical in forging the clean energy economy of the future. Additionally, the elimination of these subsidies would provide hundreds of millions of dollars annually in needed revenue. Reviewing and eliminating fossil fuel subsidies is critical to both addressing our state’s budget shortfall and combating the climate crisis.
- It’s time to take the common sense approach and fully municipalize LIPA. LIPA can save nearly \$1 billion over the next decade through municipalization. Instead of bonuses to unaccountable managers and dividends to distant stockholders, LIPA could reinvest profits to enhance resiliency, improve service to customers with special needs, update its crisis management system, and lower utility rates for low income households, seniors, and small businesses. Municipalization, paired with democratization can ensure a system that is actually accountable to the region’s communities. We call on your administration to ensure this happens in partnership with the LI state legislative delegation, the LIPA Board, and the organized community groups working on this issue.

We are excited to work with you and your staff to move New York forward in this pivotal time.

Sincerely,

NY Renews

Full list of coalition members at [www.nyrenews.org](http://www.nyrenews.org)

Submitted by Stephan Edel, Coalition Coordinator, for the New York Renews Steering Committee:

- 32BJ SEIU
- ALIGN
- Communications Workers of America, District 1
- Catskill Mountainkeeper
- Citizen Action of New York
- Environmental Advocates NY
- GreenFaith
- Long Island Progressive Coalition
- New York Working Families
- NYC Environmental Justice Alliance
- NYS Nurses Association
- Our Climate
- People's Climate Movement-NY
- The POINT CDC
- PUSH Buffalo
- Sierra Club
- UPROSE