



NEWS RELEASE

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NYPIRG REACTIONS TO STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESSES

Below are NYPIRG’s reactions to proposals advanced by Governor Cuomo in his regional State of the State addresses. We have identified issues of concern to NYPIRG – not all of the governor’s initiatives – and set out our preliminary reactions to his plans. Of course, the devil is in the details, particularly when it comes to the development of public policy. Once the governor’s plans are advanced in legislative form, we will have a clearer sense of the impacts.

GOVERNOR’S STATE OF THE STATE PROPOSALS	NYPIRG REACTION
Proposes tuition-free college at SUNY and CUNY schools and community colleges for students or families making up to \$125,000. That’s 80 percent of New Yorkers or one million families. Proposes that undocumented immigrant students be eligible for TAP.	NYPIRG supports measures to make college more affordable. The plan should be supplemented by efforts to increase affordability for the poorest students. NYPIRG supports financial aid for undocumented students.
Package of reforms: campaign finance, “pay to play” campaign restrictions on those receiving government contracts, and limits on lawmakers’ outside income.	Many good proposals; constitutional changes take years to enact, the package needs strengthening by the need for independent oversight of ethics laws and restoring powers of Comptroller.
Proposes early voting, same day voter registration and automatic voter registration.	New York is among the worst states when it comes to voter participation. The governor’s plans contain important reforms.
Proposes to tighten the RGGI cap to reduce regional power plant greenhouse gas emissions an additional 30 percent by 2030.	Climate change is real and the state must move away from the burning of fossil fuels and toward safe, renewable power. NYPIRG supports this step.
Announces a deal to close Indian Point nuclear power plant by 2021.	NYPIRG has long called for the closure of Indian Point, as well as other aging, unsafe nuclear plants.
Mandate of 50 percent renewable power by the year 2030. Goal of 2.4 gigawatts of offshore wind power by 2030 and proposes to move the state toward a 100 percent renewable power goal.	NYPIRG supports, but urges a faster, more aggressive transition to renewable energy.
Calls on LIPA to approve a 90 megawatt wind farm--enough to support 50,000 homes.	NYPIRG supports.
Proposes to spend \$2 billion dollars on water quality.	Clean drinking water is critical state resource, but one at risk due to environmental threats and a decaying infrastructure. The governor’s proposal should be the beginning of the debate; more resources are needed.
Commits to \$300 Million in the Environmental Protection Fund.	NYPIRG supports.

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