



For Immediate Release

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NYPIRG's Earth Day Countdown of Ten Steps New York Must Take to be an Environmental Leader

Step 7: Increase Energy Efficiency Standards for Earth Day

(NY) – From now until Earth Day, NYPIRG is counting down ten steps that New York must take to be a national environmental leader. With climate deniers firmly in control of national policies, it will be up to the states to act.

In recent years, New York has unveiled ambitious environmental programs and actions. But, announcements must be backed up by achievements.

Step 7 is for Governor Cuomo to Make New York the nation's leader in energy efficiency in his Earth Day announcement.

Today, NYPIRG released a letter on energy efficiency signed by more than 100 organizations urging the Governor to match, if not surpass California and Massachusetts. NY's ranking on energy efficiency has slipped from 2011 through 2017, falling from 3rd in the nation to 7th. Massachusetts is a national leader. California recently passed legislation to double their efficiency standards, with a goal of 4% energy savings.

In his 2018 State of the State, the Governor announced a plan to create new energy efficiency targets, acknowledging that "much work remains to realize the full potential of energy efficiency for New Yorkers." He directed New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) to propose new 2025 energy efficiency targets by Earth Day, April 22, 2018.

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy estimates that New York achieved only 1.05 percent annual incremental savings in 2015, as compared to annual incremental savings of 2.91 percent in Rhode Island, 2.74 percent in Massachusetts, 2.01 percent in Vermont, and 1.95 percent in California.

Studies have found energy efficiency to be the most cost-effective way to curb global warming. NYSERDA's energy efficiency programs return \$3 for every \$1 invested (not including health benefits or reductions in climate change). Amory Lovins, co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Institute, says energy efficiency is "the largest, cheapest, safest, cleanest, fastest way to provide energy services."

Ahead of his Earth Day efficiency announcement, the over 100 community, environmental, and religious groups called on Governor Cuomo to commit New York to be the nation's leader on energy efficiency.

"When it comes to energy efficiency programs, New York must be a national leader, not slipping behind. It's time for the state to step up." – **Blair Horner, NYPIRG Executive Director**

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“For Governor Cuomo to be a true climate leader, he must establish ambitious goals to reduce the amount of energy that New York wastes. Cuomo must lead New York to 100 percent renewable power by 2030, and increasing energy efficiency is an important means of getting us there.” – **Eric Weltman, Brooklyn-based senior organizer with Food & Water Watch**

“Aggressive energy efficiency policies are not only key to mitigating climate change and achieving the goals of the Paris Climate Accord, but also critical in offsetting projected increases in residential energy demand that will result from climate change and extreme temperature shifts.” – **Lyna Hinkel, 350NYC**

"New York needs strong energy efficiency standards to reflect and achieve a goal of transitioning rapidly to 100% renewable energy. We must become a leader in this area, and set a positive example for other states as well. Energy savings goals for individual utilities should be mandated, and utilities should be required to embrace the principles of the state's REV program, especially with respect to distributed energy. Building codes should be updated to require zero emissions for new buildings and retrofits for existing buildings. It is also critical that new energy standards do not encourage reliance on natural gas (methane), or conversion to gas boilers; and that new initiatives do not create rate increases for low and middle income communities." – **Edie Kantrowitz, United for Action**

“Community Advocates for Sustainable Energy (CASE) is working hard to promote renewable alternatives to fossil fuels, but the first thing we should all be doing is reduce our energy needs and make sure that we use energy as efficiently as possible. NY State should be doing all it can by giving incentives to help in this regard. These measures are necessary to slow our climate warming and save our planet.” – **Becky Meier, Community Advocates for Sustainable Energy**

"Ramping up energy efficiency measures can redirect billions of dollars—currently spent by New Yorkers on out of state, dirty fossil fuels—into the creation of home-grown energy efficiency jobs in communities across the state. A focus on clean, renewable energy and efficiency measures will protect our families from breathing in dangerous combustion emissions, move us away from the dated, fossil fuel economy that is causing climate change, and can add to the bottom line of every business and household. That’s a win-win for all of us—and we need our leaders to make that happen.” – **Bob DiBenedetto, President/Executive Director, HealthyPlanet**

“Climate Crisis is a dire emergency now. There is practically no time to save all life and civilization on Earth. We must act now for 100% clean, renewable energy. No sort of delay is sensible. Going without electricity or conserving greatly while transitioning is necessary now. Fossil fuels must be kept in the ground unused and renewable energy developed with lightning speed.” – **Daniela Gioseffi, Editor/Director, Earthly Blessings**

Attached: Letter to Governor Cuomo

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BY HAND

April 18, 2018

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We are pleased that you will be making an Earth Day announcement as to what steps New York will take on energy efficiency by 2025.

We urge you to commit New York to be the nation's leader on energy efficiency. Over the last seven years New York's ranking has slipped from number 3 to number 7. Neighboring Massachusetts is now the national leader in energy efficiency, though California recently passed legislation to double their efficiency standards, with a goal of 4% energy savings New York should match if not surpass California and Massachusetts.

The most critical action is to mandate energy efficiency savings for individual utilities, which would ramp up over time. It is important that New York adopt clear, short-time timelines (e.g., annual) and benchmarks to guide our progress in meeting such goals.

Utilities need to play a leading role in buying energy saving programs and products. They must be required to embrace the goals of the state's Reform Energy Vision (REV) program, including supporting the development of renewable distributed energy resources (DER) (i.e., not natural gas).

The state should set aside 40% of energy efficiency investments for climate vulnerable and frontline communities, partnering with those communities in executing energy efficiency initiatives. Additionally, it is critical these targets prioritize equity by incorporating inclusive financing mandates for utilities, prevent rate increases for low- and moderate-income ratepayers, provide good-paying jobs, integrate public accountability measures, address the needs of multi-family housing, incentivize comprehensive in-unit improvements, and preserve housing affordability.

Methane is 80 times more potent short term as a greenhouse gas than carbon. Thus it is critical that our energy efficiency goals do not support the use of natural gas. The Governor's energy efficiency plan must seriously address heating but should do so by rejecting natural gas in favor of clean renewable energy such as geothermal and heat pumps. While the plan should set aggressive targets for fossil fuel use reductions, efficiency savings must not be achieved (or counted towards goals) by creating incentives for or promoting the conversion of heating oil furnaces to gas fired, or replacing less efficient gas furnaces to more efficient gas furnaces.

The Efficiency Initiative should grow additional opportunities for energy efficiency businesses in New York that currently employ 110,000 New Yorkers. Embracing the creation of sustainable financing mechanisms, the state should monetize the benefits of efficiency; compensate providers for those benefits; and, create a competitive procurement to get the most value for customers.

It should support Pay for Performance, an energy efficiency procurement approach which allows energy efficiency companies to compete for contracts that specify how much energy is expected to be saved, and then pays the price offered by the bidders for energy savings as they occur.

State energy building codes should be updated to require new buildings to have net zero carbon emissions. A mandatory program should be initiated requiring existing buildings to do cost-effective energy building retrofits.

Incentives to heat buildings with clean, renewable energy (geothermal, air heat pumps) should be increased and expanded. Existing energy retrofit programs (e.g., Green Jobs Green NY) should be reformed to achieve their stated goals.

The efficiency standards should reflect the goal of moving to 100% clean energy as soon as possible (i.e., much faster than the state's present goals). It needs to recognize that moving to 100% clean energy will involve electrifying energy uses that cannot otherwise be eliminated (e.g., electric cars and heating), which will likely increase overall electricity production especially in the near term (e.g., beneficial electrification). It should provide maximum credit for additional efficiency gained via beneficial electrification through heat pumps and electric vehicles.

We urge you to take bold action to make New York the national leader on energy efficiency.

Signed,

350NYC	New York City
Advocates for Springfield	Springfield Center
Alliance of New York Family Councils	New York
Aytzim: Ecological Judaism	New York
Bethlehem NY Indivisible	Delmar
Big Reuse	Brooklyn
Bronx Climate Justice North	Bronx
Brooklyn For Peace	Brooklyn
Campaign for Renewable Energy	Ithaca
Carbon Tax Center	New York
Carbon Xprint LLC	New York
Catskill Mountainkeeper	Livingston Manor
Central Park West CSA	New York
Church Women United in New York State	Rochester
Citizens Committee for New York City	New York
Citizens' Environmental Coalition	Cuddebackville
Citizens For Water	New York City
Coalition Against Nukes	Wainscott
Coalition to Protect New York	Elmira
Community Advocates for Sustainable Energy CASE	Canaan
CUNY Divest	New York City

Damascus Citizens for Sustainability	Narrowsburg
Daughters of Wisdom US Province	Ozone Park
Delmar Farmers' Market	Delmar
Democracy for New York City	Brooklyn
Dēmos	New York City
Dominican Sisters of Blauvelt	New Rochelle
Dryden Resource Awareness Coalition	Dryden
Earth Eden Sanctuary	North Rose
Eco-Logic, WBAI-FM	New York City
EldersClimateAction	Cohoes
Empire State Consumer Project, Inc.	Rochester
Empire State Indivisible	New York City
Environmental Justice Task Force of the WNY Peace Center	Buffalo
First Reformed Church of Schenectady	Schenectady
Food & Water Watch	Brooklyn
Fossil Free Tompkins	Brooktondale
Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement	Garrison
Full Potential Consulting	Lansing
Gas Free Seneca	Watkins Glen
Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition	New York
Green Education and Legal Fund	Poestenkill
Greene Rural Action Bloc	Athens
Greyrock Farm CSA LLC	Cazenovia
Hazon	New York
HealthyPlanet	Huntington
Hunger Action Network of NYS	Albany
Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition	Cortlandt Manor
Interfaith Peace Network	Buffalo
Long Beach Environmental Advisory Board	Long Beach

Mamaki	New Rochelle
Manhattan Central Medical Society, local affiliate of the National Medical Association	New York
Metro NY Catholic Climate Movement	New York City
National Jobs for All Coalition	Lynbrook
New Economy Project	New York
New York Heartwoods	Kingston
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest	New York
New York Progressive Action Network Enviro Committee	Athens
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)	Roosevelt
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation	New York
NW Bronx Indivisible	Bronx
NY Buddhist Climate Action Network	New York
NY Statewide Senior Action Council	Albany
NYC Friends of Clearwater	NYC
NYC Grassroots Alliance	New York
NYC H2O	New York City
NYC Safe Energy Campaign	New York City
NYH20	New York City
NYPIRG	New York
Pathway to Paris	New York
People for a Healthy Environment	Corning
People of Albany United for Safe Energy	Albany
People's Climate Movement	Albany
Plymouth Friends for Clean Water	South Plymouth
Rochester Pachamama Alliance	Rochester
Rochester People's Climate Coalition	Rochester
Save the Pine Bush	Albany
Sealed	New York

Serpentine Art and Nature Commons, Inc.	Staten Island
Sharon Springs Against Hydrofracking	Sharon Springs
Sierra Club Brooklyn	Brooklyn
Sierra Club Niagara	Buffalo
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York	Blauvelt
Sludge Stoppers Task Force	Long Beach
Solarize Albany	Bethlehem
Solidarity Committee of te Capital District	Albany
Solstice	Homer
South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)	Jamaica
Stone Quarry House	Ithaca
Stop NY Fracked Gas Pipeline	Canaan
Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion (SAPE)	North Salem
Surfrider Foundation NYC	New York
Surfrider Foundation, Eastern Long Island Chapter	East Hampton
Sustainable Tompkins	Ithaca
The YEARS Project	New York City
Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative	Ithaca
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills	Kingston
United for Action	Brooklyn
Upper Green Side.	New York
Weather Medic Inc.	North Tonawanda
WESPAC Foundation, Inc.	White Plains
Western New York Environmental Alliance	Buffalo
Western NY Drilling Defense	Buffalo
Western NY Peace Center, Inc.	Buffalo
WNY Peace Center, Environmental Justice Task Force	Buffalo
Women's Caucus for Art	New York City