[ORGANIZATIONAL SIGN ON LETTER]
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Dear Governor Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Heastie:

As the nation approaches the 52nd Earth Day, our planet and health have never been so imperiled. The United Nations International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) international report[[1]](#footnote-0) resulted in a clarion call from the report’s co-chair: “*It’s now or never, if we want to limit global warming to 1.5°C (2.7°F); without immediate and deep emissions reductions across all sectors, it will be impossible*.”[[2]](#footnote-1)

Lack of action will cause the health of communities of color and low-income to be hit first and worst by the climate crisis: either by displacement from hurricanes, hospitalizations from heatwaves, or death from chronic air pollution. A recent EPA report found that Black/African American people are exposed to worse air quality regardless of income. A Harvard study in 2021 found that "worldwide, air pollution from burning fossil fuels is responsible for about 1 in 5 deaths—roughly the population of New York City." This isn't just about health - the UN reports that rising heat will lead to over 80 million jobs lost by 2030 - that is only *8 years* away.

With Washington mired in gridlock, the states must lead on climate. New York has the tools, know-how, and policy proposals to lead the nation with the implementation of its landmark Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). **The undersigned organizations, representing hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, call on you to pass an Earth Day package of four bills to Implement the *CLCPA for Buildings & Reduce Energy Costs*.** Buildings represent the state’s largest source of greenhouse gas emissions.**[[3]](#footnote-2)** These climate emissions are also accompanied by life threatening air pollution that results in the State leading the nation in premature deaths caused by burning fossil fuels in buildings.[[4]](#footnote-3)

These priority bills are grounded in the environmental justice principles at the heart of the CLCPA and based on Climate Action Council recommendations that must be passed this year:

* **All-Electric Building Act (S.6843-B Kavanagh / A.8341-A Gallagher)**
* **Improved Building, Appliance, & Equipment Standards Act (S.7176 Parker / A.8143 Fahy)**
* **Gas Transition & Affordable Energy Act (S. 8198 Krueger / A.9329 Fahy)**
* **Energy Efficiency Equity & Jobs Act (S.3126 Parker / A.3996 Hunter)**

Your delay will leave unchecked the deaths, human suffering, and staggering costs from flooding, storms and heatwaves. A recent federal report underscores why the State must take bold and assertive action now. From 2000 to 2021, the State experienced 51 billion-dollar climate disasters: 27 severe storms, 11 tropical cyclones, 6 winter storms, 4 droughts, and 3 floods.[[5]](#footnote-4) The cost of these disasters is up to $100 billion over the last 21 years, and in 2021 alone, up to $20 billion. Communities in New York City, and along the shores of Long Island, Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, the Hudson River and other water bodies are especially at risk. For instance, the Bronx has a “weather and climate combined risk” of 67% compared to the State’s 14% risk, and the nation’s 13% risk.[[6]](#footnote-5)

In a *New York Times* op ed, *“We Are Wasting Time on These Climate Debates. The Next Steps are Clear,”****[[7]](#footnote-6)*** three American IPCC report co-authors included this dire warning:“Rather than getting distracted by distant and likely irreducible uncertainties, let’s focus on what matters: deploying clean technologies we know we need, implementing a coherent climate policy, laying the groundwork for future progress and creating a just transition that shares the benefits of a sustainable energy system.”[[8]](#footnote-7)

The four landmark bills deploy existing and effective clean energy technologies and coherent policy to greatly reduce emissions from buildings, while helping New Yorkers lower their energy costs. Attached please find a memorandum with brief descriptions of the four bills, and for each bill the corresponding recommendation for such bill from the Climate Action Council’s Draft Scoping Plan.

**1. All-Electric Building Act** (S.6843-B Kavanagh / A.8341-A Gallagher): This common-sense first-step strategy for decarbonizing buildings requires that new buildings are all electric, starting with smaller buildings in 2024 and larger buildings by 2027—as New York City did in Local Law 19.[[9]](#footnote-8)

**2. Advanced Building, Appliance, & Equipment Standards Act** (S.7176 Parker / A.8143 Fahy)**:** This bill reduces energy costs and aligns the Energy Code with the CLCPA to improve energy efficiency standards for the construction, rehabilitation and operation of new buildings, products and appliances.

**3. Gas Transition and Affordable Energy Act** (S. 8198 Krueger / A.9329 Fahy)**:** This bill resolves contradictions between Public Service Law and the CLCPA and eliminates a major fossil fuel subsidy that drives gas expansion and increased gas bills (estimated to save $1 billion over 5 years).

4. **Energy Efficiency Equity and Jobs Act** (S.3126-B Parker / A.3996-B Hunter): This bill ensures that cost-saving energy efficiency measures and energy efficiency jobs are equitably deployed in disadvantaged communities.

We are relying on you to take these necessary steps to implement New York’s landmark climate law and ensure a healthier New York and more affordable energy bills. Though we must implement this transition in order to address existential threats to our lives, we stand to reap enormous economic and health benefits from this transition. The Climate Action Council (CAC) estimated that “decarbonizing New York can result in a substantial health benefits from improved air quality, on the order of $50 billion to $120 billion from 2020 through 2050 (based on reduced mortality and other health outcomes), plus $40 billion associated with the health benefits of increased active transportation, and $9 billion in health benefits associated with energy efficiency interventions in LMI homes.[[10]](#footnote-9) The Climate Action Council also projected 100,000 new jobs in energy-efficient construction and clean heating and cooling by 2030.[[11]](#footnote-10)

**We urge you to Implement the CLCPA for Buildings & Reduce Energy Costs through a package of bills as part of any action in recognition of Earth Day. We are out of time.**

 **Implement the CLCPA for Buildings & Reduce Energy Costs**

**1. All-Electric Building Act** (S.6843-B Kavanagh / A.8341-A Gallagher): This common-sense first-step strategy for decarbonizing buildings requires that new buildings are all electric, starting with smaller buildings in 2024 and larger buildings by 2027—as New York City did in Local Law 19. 1) Heat pumps perform well in cold climates to below -10°F, including successful tests in the Arctic;[[12]](#footnote-11) 2) The State has adequate electricity supply to handle the increased demand from new buildings relying on electric power through 2031;[[13]](#footnote-12) and 3) RMI found “a new all-electric, single-family home is less expensive than a new mixed-fuel home ...”[[14]](#footnote-13) The CAC Draft Scoping Plan states that a building code for highly efficient, all-electric new construction should be enacted through legislation early 2022.[[15]](#footnote-14)

**2. Advanced Building, Appliance, & Equipment Standards Act** (S.7176 Parker / A.8143 Fahy)**:** This bill reduces energy costs and aligns the Energy Code with the CLCPA to improve energy efficiency standards for the construction, rehabilitation and operation of new buildings, products and appliances. The bill’s product and appliance standards are estimated to result in $15 billion utility bill savings by 2035 for consumers, including an estimated $6 billion for low to moderate income families.[[16]](#footnote-15) The CAC Draft Scoping Plan states: “As soon as possible, the State should pass legislation that enables the establishment and enforcement of efficiency standards for appliances that are sold, leased, or installed in New York State....”[[17]](#footnote-16)

**3. Gas Transition and Affordable Energy Act** (S. 8198 Krueger / A.9329 Fahy)**:** This bill resolves contradictions between the Public Service Law and the CLCPA and eliminates a fossil fuel subsidy that drives gas expansion and increased gas bills (estimated to save $1 billion over 5 years). It requires the PSC to develop a statewide gas utility services decarbonization plan based on biannual gas sales reduction targets, robust analysis, and consideration of electrification pathways, including transition of gas utilities to geothermal utilities. It directs the PSC to ensure affordable access to electric heating and cooling services and protects low and moderate income families from undue burdens as they electrify their buildings. These legislative changes are identified in Chapter 18 of the CAC Draft Scoping Plan as needed “as soon as possible.”[[18]](#footnote-17)

4. **Energy Efficiency Equity and Jobs Act** (S.3126 Parker, A.3996 Hunter): This bill ensures that cost-saving energy efficiency measures and energy efficiency jobs are equitably deployed in disadvantaged communities. The bill will also improve indoor air quality and remove energy efficiency barriers by allowing NYSERDA to fund the removal of mold, lead, and asbestos from buildings as part of an energy efficiency retrofit. Finally, the bill ensures that health improvements and other benefits of energy efficiency are valued, tracked, and taken into account when NYSERDA determines its efficiency funding priorities. The CAC states: “Dedicated financial support programs for LMI households, affordable and public housing, and Disadvantaged Communities are essential to enable these households to make and benefit from energy upgrades, with careful attention to impacts on housing and energy affordability.”[[19]](#footnote-18)

1. IPCC Working Group III, *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change*, 4/4/2022,<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-3/>; [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1115452> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan page 119. <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. Jonathan J Buonocore *et al* 2021 *Environ. Res. Lett.* **16** 054030 <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/c-change/news/gas-biomass/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration, *U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather & Climate Disasters*, 1**/**2022,<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. New York Times, *We Are Wasting Time on These Climate Debates. The Next Steps are Clear*, 4/10/2022,<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=km#inbox/WhctKKXPlqvPBLLrpmMwhbjCskWKhcCWgqgKvZtnbWKmGFdFmxWWfKzXvBkdGGwrKHXHPRL> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. RMI analyzed the bill’s statewide impacts and found it would reduce 4 million metric tons of CO2 by 2040—the equivalent of keeping 870,000 cars off the road for one year. <https://rmi.org/new-york-set-to-pioneer-a-move-to-new-all-electric-buildings/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
10. Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan page 89 <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
11. Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan page 121 <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
12. RMI, “Heat Pumps: A Practical Solution for Cold Climates,” December 10, 2020, https://rmi.org/heat-pumps-a-practical-solution-for-cold-climates/ [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
13. 2021 Load & Capacity Data, A report by The NY Independent System Operator, Inc., Gold Book, April 2021,<https://www.nyiso.com/documents/20142/2226333/2021-Gold-Book-Final-Public.pdf/b08606d7-db88-c04b-b260-ab35c300ed64> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
14. RMI, October 2020 "All-Electric New Homes: A Win for the Climate and the Economy"

<https://rmi.org/all-electric-new-homes-a-win-for-the-climate-and-the-economy/> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
15. Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan page 124 <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
16. Assemblymember Patricia Fahy Memorandum of Support for A.8143, Feb. 2022,<https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default_fld=&leg_video=&bn=A08143&term=2021&Memo=Y> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
17. Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan page 128 <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
18. Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan page 264 <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
19. Climate Action Council Draft Scoping Plan page 132 <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-18)