



**Sign on Letter to NY Senators and Assembly Members for the Passage of S278A / A1559A
2023- 2024 Legislative Session**

The Climate and Resilience Education Task Force, its partner organizations, and community members across New York State write together in strong support of **Bill S278A/A1559A**, to establish a course of instruction and learning expectations on climate education in all of New York State’s public elementary and secondary schools. We recognize that **comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and age-appropriate climate education is essential for New York to fulfill its ambitious decarbonization goals put forth in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)** at the scale that is required across sectors.

The CLCPA commits the state to 100% zero-emission electricity by 2040, and a reduction of at least 85% below 1990-level GHG emissions by 2050. The Scoping Plan for implementation of the CLCPA explicitly recognizes "the need for P-12 curricula to include climate change education," as well as "a coordinated effort on outreach and education across all sectors of the economy," (p.427).

As stated in an article from the Columbia Climate School,¹ **“Young people recognize that climate change is going to shape their futures—where they live, the work they will do, and their quality of life. They need climate education in order to develop green skills, adapt to the harsh reality of a warming world, and understand how to combat climate change. In the U.S., more than 86 percent of teachers and 84 percent of parents support climate change education in schools.** Progress is being made in some states, but on the whole students are not learning enough about climate science quickly enough to give them the knowledge and tools they will need to cope with the impacts of climate change.”

Putting New York on a path toward carbon neutrality will only be possible if its students, workers, and communities are given the necessary tools to participate in a just transition. By providing a meaningful climate education for New York’s P-12 students, Bill S278A/A1559A, will lay the foundation for supporting that just and equitable transition for New York’s existing and emerging workforce.

Bill S278A/A1559A was co-drafted by an intergenerational team made up of high school students, teachers, college professors, and education professionals, who stand as the primary stakeholders in New York’s education system. By promoting the inclusion of climate change education in schools, we empower the very individuals who will shape the future: teachers, as mentors of influence and students, as the recipients of knowledge. **New York’s youngest citizens deserve a comprehensive education**

¹ Renee Cho, “Climate Education in the U.S.: Where It Stands, and Why It Matters,” *State of the Planet*, Columbia Climate School:<https://news.climate.columbia.edu/2023/02/09/climate-education-in-the-u-s-where-it-stands-and-why-it-matters/>

that equips them with the understanding and skills needed to navigate the complex challenges of our time.

As such, we strongly endorse the passage of Bill S278A /A1559A in the 2024 Legislative Session and recognize its potential to foster a more informed, prepared, and empowered generation of New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

- United University Professions (42,000 members)
- Jeffrey Shaman, PhD, Interim Dean, Columbia Climate School
- Communities for Local Power (393,000 members)
- NY Renews Coalition (representing 400 organizations and more than 200,000 New Yorkers)
- ALIGN
- Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter (50,000 NYS wide)
- 350NYC
- Sunrise Movement NYC
- EarthDay.org (millions of members)
- National Wildlife Federation (6 million members nationally, 100,000 New Yorkers)
- Environmental Advocates of New York
- WE ACT for Environmental Justice
- EcoRise (100,000)
- Environmental Education Exchange (100,000+)
- The Climate Museum
- Solar One (representing 65 staff members, serving 5,000 students and 200+ teachers)
- Take Action Global (4 million members)
- The Climate Reality Project, New York State Coalition (10,000 members)
- NY Sun Works (120,000 members)
- Coney Island Beautification Project (50,000 members)
- ClimateMama (30,000 members)
- National Center for Science Education (25,000 members)
- Climate Generation (10,000 members)
- Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation
- Schools for Climate Action (10,000+ engaged)
- Network for a Sustainable Tomorrow (Rep. Broome, Tioga, Chenango and Delaware Counties)
- The Paleontological Research Institution (1,100 members)
- North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)
- Hudson River Sloop Clearwater (6,000 members)
- NESTm EJC (school) (500)
- Clean Air Coalition of Westchester (200 members)
- Rivers & Mountains Green Faith Circle (150+ members)
- The Peace Education Center (100+ members)
- Subject to Climate
- Kwauk & Associates
- Third Act NYC (400+)

- City Atlas
- Yorktown 100 (100 members)
- Gaia Scholastic
- Globe From Home (50)
- Rootprint Games, LLC
- The Living City Project
- Transformative Educational Leadership (200)
- Start:Empowerment
- Brooklyn SolarWorks
- Richard Scheutzow, Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse
- Seneca Nation Emergency Management

. . . . and growing!