

2026

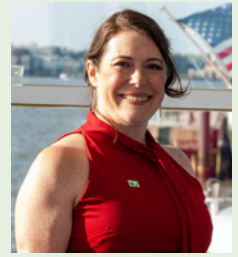
Federal Policy Agenda



NEW YORK LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS
NEW YORK LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS EDUCATION FUND

INTRODUCTION

Each year, NYLCV and the NYLCV Education Fund work to identify the most pressing issues on the environment, public health, quality of life, and equity for the people of New York. While much of this work is focused on the state and local level, these issues demand action from the federal government as well. New York’s congressional delegation includes leaders on both sides of the aisle who can play an important role in their respective caucuses in ensuring that New York does not get short-changed. Our 2026 Federal Agenda comprises issues that significantly impact New York where we believe our representatives can make a difference. We see space for achieving a bipartisan conservation agenda and look forward to advancing the dialogue to reach agreement on bold solutions. Protecting New York’s environment isn’t a partisan issue. It means protecting New Yorkers’ health from water and air pollution and supporting good paying, clean energy union jobs.



Julie Tighe
President, NYLCV

TOP PRIORITIES

CLEAN ENERGY

New York has made significant progress reducing air pollution from energy that harms human health and contributes to climate change, and it is vitally important that we do not roll back the laws, processes, permits, and regulations that have allowed us to reach this point. NYLCV strongly supports investing in clean energy, including offshore wind, that will reduce air and climate pollution, lower energy costs and create jobs in a globally competitive field. In 2025, we saw the nation’s most impactful clean energy incentives be rolled back. NYLCV advocates that these incentives and programs be restored and protected, as well as properly and quickly allocated so that the U.S. can transition to a clean energy economy.

CLEAN WATER

NYLCV supports increasing funding and maintaining current funding formulas for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, which provide financing that leverages state, local and private money for a wide variety of water projects, including wastewater treatment, green infrastructure, pipe replacement, addressing emerging contaminants in drinking water, and source water protection. In 2021, we saw the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), pass, which provides funds to improve water infrastructure and replace lead pipes in New York. This funding is up for reauthorization this year and NYLCV advocates that these programs be fully reauthorized and funded again.

FOOD AND FARMS

NYLCV strongly urges maintenance or increases in funding for conservation programs including the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, and Conservation Reserve Program. The short-term Farm Bill extension in 2025

lifted the income caps for conservation programs, making it harder for small farmers to access these important programs. NYLCV advocates for a full farm bill that reinstates these caps so big corporate farmers don’t receive all of the benefits.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Investment in mass transit pays dividends for both the environment and the economy, and expanded federal funding for projects, including the Gateway Tunnel and Second Avenue Subway, are vital to the economy of the entire region. It is essential that the Trump Administration not play politics with these or any projects being funded through Congress. Specifically, the federal budget must continue these projects, as well as maintaining adequate funding for public transportation through both operating and capital aid. The Trump administration should also cease its efforts to undermine standards that limit tailpipe pollution standards and improve vehicles’ efficiency. Further, a federal clean fuel standard is also a vital ingredient in decarbonizing the transportation sector by lowering the emissions of vehicles on the road right now as well as maintaining federal clean vehicle standards.

ADEQUATE FUNDING TO AGENCIES

NYLCV strongly supports restoring project grants and funding to departments, offices, and agencies that oversee rules, regulations, and programs pertaining to clean energy, clean air, clean water, and healthy food. This includes the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, the Department of the Interior, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Transportation, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Treasury Department (among other critical agencies). It is vital that the funding from these agencies be freely passed through to the states so that important programs can continue to function.

CLEAN ENERGY



CLEAN ENERGY TAX CREDITS: The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was the boldest climate law in the history of the United States. It allocated funds to combat the climate crisis and has launched a manufacturing renaissance across the country. Unfortunately, the majority of the clean energy tax credits and other incentives have been ended due to the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act in 2025 and the Trump administration's attempts to ban clean energy. We advocate for the restoration of the tax credits and funding that has been terminated to resume the progress that has been stalled including, but not limited to, the Advanced Manufacturing Tax Credit, the Investment Tax Credit, the Production Tax Credit, and the Advanced Energy Project Credit.

WIND POWER: Offshore wind presents enormous opportunities for New York both as a source of carbon-free energy, but also as a powerful economic engine for Long Island and the rest of New York. Congress must ensure that agencies timely issue permits for offshore wind development and do not retroactively and likely illegally cancel permits. Congress should pass legislation to spur the development of offshore wind and implement revenue sharing between the states and the federal treasury.

TRANSMISSION: Even before the Trump Administration's attempts to halt clean energy development, one of the major hurdles to clean energy development has been the lack of adequate transmission capacity on our regional grid and among regional grids. As a result, many projects are delayed years awaiting permission to connect to the grids, clean energy from developers cannot get to the communities that need it, and electricity prices

continue to rise in the face of increased demand from data centers. The federal, state, and local permitting processes for transmission lines are confusing, duplicative, and backlogged. They lack clear rules on cost-sharing, sometimes making development of necessary new lines prohibitive. We need grid operators to implement Order 1920 from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to improve regional transmission planning and clearer sole authority for the Department of Energy to site and FERC to permit interstate lines that are critical to delivering cheaper electricity and better reliability while also valuing input from state, tribal, and local governments and citizens.

THERMAL ENERGY NETWORKS: Thermal Energy Networks are utility-scale infrastructure projects that connect multiple buildings into a shared network with sources of thermal energy like geothermal boreholes, surface water, and wastewater. There are pilots in New York exploring these systems and federal support for this concept will help it to become mainstream, including support for transitioning municipal steam systems.

CLEAN FUEL STANDARD: A Clean Fuel Standard, sometimes also called a low carbon fuel standard (LCFS) or a clean transportation standard, is a market based system that results in producers of fuel with high carbon intensity, like fossil gasoline and diesel fuels, subsidizing fuels with lower carbon intensity such as electricity, hydrogen, and biofuels. Implementing this policy at the federal level would go a long way toward cutting pollution from the transportation sector.



CLEAN WATER

We have made tremendous progress in cleaning up our waterways and drinking water supplies due to decades of federal and state commitments, but recent crises have shown how far we still have to go.

CLEAN WATER AND DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING FUNDS (CWSRF & DWSRF):

The SRFs are federal-state partnership projects that provide zero or low-cost financing for water quality infrastructure projects to communities across the nation. Increased funding for these programs will help ensure safe, clean water for New Yorkers through improved drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater management projects and continue our progress in removing lead and emerging contaminants, such as PFAS and 1,4-dioxane, from drinking water. It is also important that the funding allotment formula for the SRFs continue to provide New York with an adequate share of federal funds.

Other important clean water bills, regulations, and funding:

- Maintaining the recently finalized Lead and Copper Rule that protects public health by mandating full lead service line replacement across the country in 10 years, prioritizing environmental justice communities who have been disproportionately impacted by lead contamination, and lowering the action level.
- In 2021, Congress allocated \$15 billion to replace lead service lines across the country. New York will most likely receive about \$645 million from that pot, with \$120 million going to New York City. Approximately 3.1 million people across the state or 15% receive their drinking water through pipes that are lead or possibly lead. In order to replace these with safe alternatives, Congress must allocate another \$30 billion to this cause.
 - NYLCVEF's report on Lead Pipes in NYS can be found here: <https://nylcvef.org/citizens-toolkit/state-lead-map-release/>
- Invest in our nation's water systems, including funds for the DWSRF, lead service line replacement, and PFAS remediation.
- Direct the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to research and develop new stabilization technology to prevent coastal erosion.
- Provide a tax credit for individuals to purchase water filtration systems.



FOOD AND FARMS

The Farm Bill is up for renewal and funds a wide variety of environmentally critical programs including land and water conservation, bio-energy, and nutrition. This Farm Bill must include funding guardrails to combat climate change through smart conservation agricultural policy.

A conservation-forward Farm Bill would focus conservation programs on climate mitigation and resilience, including dedicating 80% of Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds towards practices that reduce GHG emissions and prohibit EQIP funds for practices that increase emissions, and convert the Conservation Stewardship Program into a Climate Stewardship Program that is primarily focused on reducing emissions. It would also make accessibility a focus by ensuring that new and smaller farmers and others who have historically been excluded can access Farm Bill programs by reinstating the income cap on these programs.

Other important agricultural programs:

- **AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM (ACEP):**

ACEP provides technical and financial assistance to non-profit organizations and state, local, and tribal governments to conserve agricultural lands and wetlands. The continuation of funding for this program aids in New York's long-term sustainability of food supply, wildlife habitats, environmental quality, and related economic and recreational benefits by promoting sustainable use of these working lands.

- **CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP):**

This Farm Service Agency program pays an annual rental fee to farmers for removing environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production, instead planting flora that will improve ecosystem health. The CRP develops sustainable, ecologically-helpful land cover, and its continued funding is important to improve water and soil quality and wildlife habitat across New York. This funding must be increased and added into the Farm Bill baseline.

- Amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to address greenhouse gas emissions and carbon storage through conservation incentive contracts, contamination, and lowering the action level.



REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Federal environmental spending across a range of agencies protects local ecosystems, fosters interstate cooperation, and strengthens New York's economy.

- **DELAWARE RIVER BASIN CONSERVATION INITIATIVE:**

This multi-level program joins federal, state, and local agencies and organizations to promote watershed health and revitalize communities along the river that have historically suffered economic and environmental losses from river degradation. The Delaware River supplies valuable drinking water, habitat, and recreational opportunities. Any cuts to the program would negatively affect the health of the Delaware River, and consequently the New Yorkers that depend upon it. NYLCV advocates for Congress to allocate \$17 million to the program.
- **NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM (NEP):**

The EPA's National Estuary Program protects and restores 28 estuaries nationwide, including the New York/New Jersey Harbor. The continued funding of this program is important for coastal research and management programs and will improve New York's environmental health and coastal resiliency.
- **LONG ISLAND SOUND RESTORATION:**

NYLCV advocates for additional resources for restoration and stewardship programs for the Long Island Sound. The increased funding would help protect New York's recreation, tourism, and shipping industries, and ensure the long-term health of the Sound and the nine million inhabitants of its surrounding communities.
- **PLUM ISLAND PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION:**

New Yorkers have mobilized to take action to preserve undeveloped lands on the ecologically-significant Plum Island, an 840-acre island off the eastern coast of Long Island. The federal government must take steps to protect this valuable hub of biodiversity in perpetuity by making it a national monument.
- **GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE:**

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative accelerates efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes. Since 2010 this initiative has provided funding to 16 federal organizations to target the largest threats to the Great Lakes ecosystem. The 2023 and 2024 funding for this initiative were at \$368 million. This funding level should be maintained for the next fiscal year.
- Establish a program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and modeled on other successful regional watershed restoration programs, to coordinate restoration efforts.
- Establish a 30% tax credit for local governments to build out recycling infrastructure.



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Reliable, affordable, low-carbon transportation is important to both economic growth and environmental protection, and it requires federal investment to succeed.

- **HIGHWAY TRUST FUND (HTF):**

The HTF, sourced in part from a federal fuel tax that hasn't been adjusted for inflation in decades, is a Federal Highway Administration program that funds the development of highways and mass transit systems. Projects funded by the HTF could suffer if the Department of Transportation's budget were cut. Any changes to the HTF should reorient it towards increased mass transit projects and the development of more sustainable forms of transit, and adopt weight by vehicle miles traveled funding mechanisms to ensure the long-term sustainability of the HTF.

- **THE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT REAUTHORIZATION:**

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Reauthorization: In 2026, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is up for reauthorization. This funding has gone towards the rebuilding of America's infrastructure, investing in public transportation, electrifying transportation, and remediating dangerous and outdated infrastructure such as lead service lines. This funding must be reauthorized and properly distributed without political interference for clean water, public transit, and other clean transportation programs.

- **INVESTMENT IN TRANSIT:**

Mass transportation reduces congestion, fuel use, pollutant and GHG emissions, and commuter costs while creating jobs and benefiting local and regional economies. The continued prosperity of the entire northeastern corridor of the United States is dependent upon federal investment in projects including the Gateway Tunnel, the Second Avenue Subway, and other mass transit projects around New York.

- Congestion pricing is currently reducing the extreme levels of traffic we are seeing, as well as raising dedicated funding for the MTA to make improvements in our mass transit. NYLCV will strongly oppose any efforts to roll back this program.
- Create safety standards for lithium-ion batteries, especially for micromobility products.
- Reinstate the Clean Pass Program for electric vehicles and hybrids to use the HOV lane, thereby easing congestion on major thoroughfares and reducing localized air pollution.
- Provide grants under the State of Good Repair Grants Program to assist states and local governments in financing public transportation resilience improvement projects that increase the resilience of public transportation systems from the impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise, flooding, wildfires, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters.



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New York League of Conservation Voters

NYLCV is the only nonpartisan, statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy, and open space through political action.

New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund

NYLCVEF educates, engages and empowers New Yorkers to be effective advocates for the environment

