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County & Local Elected Officials Join 180+ Organizations to Urge Governor Hochul & Assembly Speaker Heastie to End \$265M of Fossil Fuel Subsidies in the Final NYS Budget

Local, municipal, and county elected officials represented by the bipartisan group Elected Officials to Protect America, along with a coalition of 183 climate groups, deliver letters to the Governor & Assembly Speaker to underscore the enormous revenue opportunity provided by the Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act, and urge them to include the bill in the state budget.

ALBANY, NY — This week, local, municipal, and county elected officials took a stand against using taxpayer dollars to subsidize the highly profitable fossil fuel industry with \$1.6 billion worth of tax exemptions, credits, and other benefits each year. Elected Officials to Protect America (EOPA), representing a bipartisan network of local elected officials, [submitted a letter to Governor Kathy Hochul](#) urging her to include the Stop Climate Polluters Handout Act in the final SFY 2024-25 budget.

EOPA joins over 180 community, youth, and climate organizations across the state who made a similar demand last week. Those organizations [urged the Governor and the Speaker](#) to end fossil fuel tax breaks and reappropriate that money to urgent community needs. The State Senate has already included the bill in their one-house budget proposal.

The bill's Senate sponsor, **Senator Liz Krueger**, said: "The climate crisis is here, and we are already seeing its devastating impacts all across our state. New York set nation-leading clean energy mandates when we passed the CLCPA in 2019, and we have the opportunity to lead again by moving to end taxpayer-funded subsidies that support the very industry driving the crisis. The Senate is not alone in believing that we cannot continue to place the burgeoning costs of the climate crisis upon the shoulders of everyday New Yorkers. Local elected officials and organizations across our state agree too: it's time that we change course from bolstering fossil fuel profits to ending polluter handouts and redirecting that revenue to support programs that serve our communities."

New York State law exempts the fossil fuel industry from paying over \$1.6 billion in annual taxes. That's an average of nearly \$26 million forfeited by every county in the state every year—while at the same time, counties and municipalities spend millions to clean up superstorms and mitigate climate destruction. The Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act ([S3389/A7949A](#), Krueger/Simon) repeals these outdated provisions, pinpointing incentives that benefit the most highly polluting fuels and their most unreasonable uses, including high-emission commercial airline fuel and low-grade shipping "bunker" fuel, the operation of

fracked gas infrastructure, industry research and development, and others. This would generate an estimated \$265 million annually in much-needed revenue for the state and subsequently, its municipalities.

Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon, the bill's Assembly sponsor, said, "It's unfathomable that New York State is subsidizing the fossil fuel industry that is causing the climate crisis. We cannot in good conscience continue to line the industry's pockets while everyday New Yorkers struggle to make ends meet. Including the Stop Climate Polluters Handouts Act in the state budget is a no-brainer -- it generates revenue and is easy to implement. Local elected officials and environmental groups across the state have joined our call because they could desperately use this revenue for critical community needs."

"Every year, New York taxpayers are footing the bill for \$265 million in giveaways to oil and gas companies – the very companies who are responsible for fueling the current climate crisis and threatening the health of communities with dangerous pollution. The New York Senate has shown it wants to end these subsidies by including the Stop Climate Polluters' Handouts Act in the budget," said **Rich Schrader Director, New York Government Affairs at NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)**. "Tax exemptions should be reserved for businesses that provide clear public benefits, and should not be provided to the world's wealthiest industry that causes substantial harm – particularly to low-income communities and communities of color."

EOPA also highlights potential ways to reappropriate the reclaimed \$265 million, pointing to programs of nearly equal value that the Governor's own budget has proposed financing. One such program is the \$250 million County Partnership Grants Program, which directs funding back to counties. The funds could also restore proposed funding cuts to municipal priorities including Aid & Incentives for Municipalities (AIM), Consolidated Local Street & Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS), and NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities Program.

"As we confront the ever worsening consequences of climate change, the Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act stands as a pivotal step towards reducing our dependence on climate change-causing fossil fuels and transitioning towards cleaner, renewable energy sources," said **Assemblymember Anna Kelles**. "By imposing limits on the use of fossil fuels for the production of energy, prohibiting fossil fuel businesses from eligibility in tax-credit programs, and eliminating tax benefits for fossil fuel-related activities, New York is clearly signaling our commitment to addressing climate pollution in a way that safeguards our economy and our ecosystem. We must prioritize environmental sustainability and pave the way for a greener, more resilient future for generations to come by passing and enacting impactful legislation like the Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act."

"This revenue generating bill helps close the budget deficit gap and signals that it is no longer business-as-usual for the fossil fuel industry. New York State has determined that continuing to subsidize the industry is not only unjustifiable, but is also in direct conflict with the 2019 Climate Act. We applaud the bill's inclusion in the Senate One-House budget and recognize that this is sea-change. We hope the Governor and Assembly follow the Senate's lead. This is exactly the right time for this piece of legislation," said **Suzie Ross, The Climate Reality Project New York State Chapters Coalition, Advocacy Team Lead**.

“We applaud the State Senate for taking a decisive stance against the fossil fuel industry and for the people of New York by including the Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act in their One-House budget,” said **Marisa Guerrero, Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Coalition Co-Lead and Policy Consultant to NRDC**. “This step is financially significant, freeing up \$265 million that can be put towards uses that are far more responsible than lining the pockets of the very industry that fuels the global climate crisis. It is also symbolically significant, signifying a turning point in New York State fossil fuel policy with an important rejection of the industry by way of landmark, first-of-its-kind legislation that begins to end their preferential treatment.”

"While NYPIRG is happy to see the inclusion of S.3389 in the New York State Senate's FYI 2024-25 budget proposal, we would like to see the original bill with no exemptions considered as the State leadership narrows in on the looming budget deadline," said **Eric Wood, Hudson Valley Regional Coordinator for the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)**. He added, "\$265 million of taxpayer money can be used for far more productive initiatives than aiding the aging fossil fuel industry."

“By supporting the inclusion of language based on the Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act in its one-house budget, the State Senate has demonstrated its commitment to making the transition to a clean energy economy,” said **Peter Bardaglio, coordinator of the Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative**. “We are fortunate to have such forward-leaning leadership in that body of the legislature.”

Anshul Gupta, Policy & Research Director at New Yorkers for Clean Power said, “From aviation and shipping fuels to ‘research and development’ to pipeline replacements funded by gas customers – New Yorkers continue to be forced to fill the coffers of polluting oil and gas profiteers with subsidies and other freebies. This has disastrous consequences for the climate, clean air, and affordability that all New Yorkers care about. The Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act reclaims a mere \$265 million of the billions of dollars in handouts New Yorkers give away each year to the fossil fuel industry, which profits from harming us with products that are bad for our environment as well as our pocketbooks. We call on our leaders to put New Yorkers above greedy oil and gas companies and support this bill.”

“We fund the climate crisis directly through our \$1.6bn dollars of fossil fuel subsidies in New York State. It’s past time to stop enabling the destruction of our future with our very own taxpayer dollars,” said **Keanu Arpels-Josiah, 18, Policy Co-Lead, Fridays For Future NYC and a lead organizer of the 9/17 March To End Fossil Fuels**. “We and over 180 New York organizations are looking at Governor Hochul and Speaker Heastie: stop giving handouts to the fossil fuel industry, and instead follow the Senate’s lead and end almost \$300M of fossil fuel subsidies by including the Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act in the final budget; our values, generation’s future, and our communities’ livelihoods are all on the line.”

“Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and the Senate Democratic Conference have once again demonstrated their dedication to fighting the climate crisis by including the Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act in their One-House Budget,” said **Adriana Vink, Electoral-Legislative Lead for Sunrise Movement NYC**. “Assembly Speaker Heastie and Governor Hochul must now take a stand: Will they continue making New Yorkers foot an almost \$300M bill each year in handouts to the companies destroying our communities? Or will they put people over politics and end fossil fuel subsidies? Time will tell—and we will be watching.”

"NY Renews applauds the Senate for including the Stop Climate Polluters Handout Act in their budget proposal. In addition to saving households money with the NY HEAT Act and making polluters pay with

the Climate Change Superfund Act, it's common sense to stop subsidizing fossil fuels. Our communities deserve more than to be poisoned with our own tax dollars. We look forward to working with the Senate to include this bill in the final budget along with the entire Climate, Jobs, and Justice Package," **said Stephan Edel, Executive Director of NY Renews.**

"At this point in the climate crisis it is totally unacceptable for New York to subsidize the fossil fuel industry that is destroying our planet," said **Ruth Foster of Divest NY.** "New York needs to enact the Stop Climate Polluter Handouts Act. We call on the Assembly to follow the leadership of the Senate and include this important bill in the final FY 2024-2025 budget. The next generation is depending on us to act with the urgency that is needed to preserve life on this planet."

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