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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Youth, Faith & Environmental Groups Join with Legislators to Call for “Make Polluters Pay” Bill Requiring Big Oil to Fund Climate Crisis Costs to be Included in Senate and Assembly One-House Budgets**

**NYS taxpayers paid over \$2 billion for climate crisis damages and resilience last year; Climate Change Superfund Act would require Big Oil to pony up**

**Video Release: [Click Here](#) to View NYPIRG’s New Video Illustrating the Need to Make Corporate Polluters Pay**

**Albany, NY** — Today, state legislators and environmental, faith, and youth group leaders called on the legislative leadership to include the Climate Change Superfund Act in the Senate and Assembly one-house budgets. The Act would make Big Oil companies pay their fair share of the skyrocketing bill for climate change and resiliency, currently borne 100% by local governments and state taxpayers.

In 2023, New York taxpayers paid \$2.1 billion for climate repair and resiliency efforts; the Climate Change Superfund Act would raise \$3 billion annually from the state’s largest oil and gas polluters.

[National polling](#) by Data for Progress found an overwhelming majority of American voters support making oil and gas companies pay a share of climate costs caused by their pollution. Over 100 [local elected officials](#), 250 [environmental, labor, and faith organizations](#), and 180 youth [organizations](#) support passage of the Climate Change Superfund Act. The bill is a priority in the BPHA Caucus [Peoples’ Budget](#) and NYRenews [Climate, Jobs & Justice package](#).

[Photos available here.](#) Livestream available at: <https://www.facebook.com/NYPIRG/>

**State Senator Liz Krueger**, the prime sponsor of the bill, said: "The costs of adapting to the climate crisis are not going to disappear anytime soon. In fact, they're going to skyrocket, and placing the entire burden of paying those costs on the backs of New York taxpayers, businesses, and individuals is simply not responsible governing. I was pleased to see the Governor include important adaptation programs in the budget. But without the Climate Change Superfund Act, the Governor and the Legislature are choosing to have New Yorkers continue to foot 100% of the bill. That simply doesn't make sense. Let's get the Climate Superfund in the budget and make Big Oil & Gas pay their fair share for the mess they made."

**Senator Lea Webb** said, "Hardworking New York families should not have to pay for the

damage caused by corporate climate polluters. That's why I am fighting to include the Climate Change Superfund Act in the FY2025 NYS Budget to ensure that climate polluters bear responsibility for years of damaging greenhouse gas emissions. This legislation will provide the revenue we need to create green jobs, repair climate damage to our infrastructure, and build resilience across the state."

**Assembly Energy Committee Chair Didi Barrett** said: "Reaching our ambitious Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) goals require using all the tools in our toolbox, and the cost of reaching these goals cannot be borne solely by our constituents. The Climate Change Superfund Act is designed to generate much-needed revenue for infrastructure, climate resiliency, job training and other programs to help New Yorkers make the green energy transition, while holding accountable those who have contributed the most to creating our climate crisis."

**Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz**, the prime sponsor of the bill, said: "The parties most responsible for our climate disaster are the fossil fuel companies. These companies have obscured the truth for decades because they know their products are the reason we are in the climate crisis. Fossil fuel companies have been making billions in profits yearly at our environment's expense. Enactment of the Climate Change Superfund Act would force Big Oil, who are the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, to pay \$75 billion over 25 years and ensure that New Yorkers don't shoulder the entire costs of paying for the costs related to climate change. Fossil fuel companies have made this mess, and they should be the ones to clean it up."

**Assemblyman Steve Otis** said: "If we are going to meet our climate change goals, we need to rationalize the costs to make the transition to clean energy possible with incentives that reward sounder environmental practices. Meeting our targets requires the development of implementation models such as those proposed in this legislation."

"The climate crisis is here. We see it every day," said **Assemblymember Tony Simone**. "We have experienced orange skies, extreme heat, and devastating floods. And this is just the beginning. If we have any chance of saving our planet, the actors responsible for the climate emergency must pay their fair share of the repair and resiliency costs that everyday New Yorkers have been paying for years. These companies have profited plenty from the pollution they've caused; they can use some of those profits to keep our communities safe."

**Assembly Member Dana Levenberg** said: "There are many individuals and households in my district taking every environmentally sustainable action they can, but we're still seeing flooding during storms and orange skies during wildfires. Individual actions are not enough. It is long past time for the biggest polluters to pay for the damages they caused. They lied about the science to muddy the waters and continued taking actions that produced climate change, even after they knew better. And they are still hindering our transition away from fossil fuels. Now, they need to pay for what they've done and help us protect our communities."

“New York should be leading the way on forward-thinking ways to fight climate change, rather than ceding ground to the polluting fossil fuel industry while they line their pockets. The Superfund Act will protect our planet, create new green jobs, and stop taxpayers from footing the bill for climate crises costs. Thanks to Assemblymember Dinowitz, Senator Krueger, and the advocates for their leadership on this crucial bill,” said **Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon**.

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“New York taxpayers are in a ‘perfect storm’ situation created by the devastating impacts of the escalating climate crisis and the huge costs faced to mount a response” said **Blair Horner, NYPIRG Executive Director**. “A growing number of New Yorkers expect the Governor and Legislature to ease the climate burden by making sure that the largest climate polluters pick up a substantial portion of those costs and to do so in a manner that prohibits the companies from passing those costs onto the public, by including the Climate Change Superfund Act in the Assembly and Senate One-House Budget bills, and ultimately the State Budget. It’s a lesson we all learned as kids: you make a mess; you clean it up. Big Oil should be on the financial hook.”

**Food & Water Watch Senior New York Organizer Eric Weltman** said: “Every five-year-old understands that if you make a mess, you clean it up. The climate crisis is Big Oil’s mess — it’s time our wealthiest corporate polluters cleaned up after themselves. Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Heastie must include the Climate Change Superfund Act in their one-house budgets, and make polluters pay for the climate crisis they have created.”

**Stephan Edel, Executive Director of the statewide climate coalition NY Renews**, said: “In 2023, while Big Oil companies raked in record profits, New Yorkers from Buffalo to Brentwood experienced unprecedented climate disasters. And if that wasn't bad enough, their cities, towns, and checkbooks were on the hook to pay for clean up. We can't wait another year to address this crisis. The answer is clear: Make the polluters—not the people—pay. We must include the Climate Change Superfund Act in the New York State Budget.”

**Dominic Frongillo, Elected Officials to Protect America Executive Director, Fmr. Councilmember & Deputy Supervisor Caroline, New York** said: “It’s absolutely time we enact the Climate Change Superfund Act. Every year climate related weather disasters take lives, uproot families and destroy businesses. While no sum can ever cover the emotional costs, people need the security to recover knowing the state has their back and won’t raise taxes on them to pay for Big Oil’s own mess. Elected Officials to Protect America urges passage of the Climate Change Superfund Act, which will hold the industry accountable for the environmental damages that they cause.”

**Third Act Upstate New York Co-facilitator Michael Richardson** said: “While fossil fuel companies continue to reap billions of dollars in profit from pumping their fuel and plastics into our state economy, they continue to pay nothing for the damage they sow upon our communities. The science is clear: the production and burning of fossil fuel is the primary cause of climate disruption. A reckoning of this inequity is long overdue. Polluters must no longer be allowed to make exorbitant profits by not paying for the destructive consequences.”

**Anshul Gupta, Policy & Research Director at New Yorkers for Clean Power** said: “The climate disasters that we are witnessing today aren’t natural disasters; these are premeditated crimes. The oil and gas industry knew decades ago that their products cause grave harm and chose to spend billions of dollars to lie to the public and lobby elected officials and policy makers to block climate action – a practice that the industry continues unabated to date. The Climate Change Superfund Act would hold the largest historic climate polluters accountable and would require them to help partly shield New York tax payers from the tens of billions of dollars that the state will end up spending in the coming years to fund disaster recovery, remediation and resilience.”

**Sister Catherine Darcy of Sisters of Mercy Justice Promoters** said: “It is no secret that fulfilling the requirements of the CLCPA will cost billions of dollars. As a member of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas which stands with the marginalized and those suffering from poverty, I am concerned that the funds needed for resilience efforts not be diverted from other important New York State Government initiatives which assist our most vulnerable New Yorkers in accessing very basic needs, such as, affordable housing and health care. We know from the long tradition of Catholic Social Teaching that all persons need to be able to access that which they need to not merely survive but thrive in society. The revenue stream which could flow from the Climate Change Superfund Act (S.2129/A.3351A) would access its 3 billion dollars per year which could result in more New Yorkers thriving rather than merely surviving.”

**Fridays for Future Capital District NY Co-organizer Xanthe Plymale** said: “My generation cannot afford the price of the climate crisis, and yet, we are already paying it; youth have already been asked for forfeit money, opportunities, public services, and hope because New York’s climate legislation puts the cost of repair and adaptation completely on taxpayers. On December 17th and 18th of 2023, we saw yet another set of widespread floods damage infrastructure across New York State. The connection between rising global temperatures and regional flooding has been well documented, and locally, Friends of the Lansingburgh Public Library resorted to public fundraising in order to afford repairs to their children and young adult sections. I know that legislation like the Climate Superfund Act would enable local municipalities, like Lansingburgh, to continue providing critical services to children and the general public without having to burden taxpayers or rely on donations. The Governor, Senate Majority Leader, and Assembly Speaker must prioritize the Climate Superfund Act if they want to be able to lead and protect young people.”

**Sara Gronim, Co-leader of 350Brooklyn,** said: “The Climate Superfund Act (S2129/A3351) is a ‘must pass’ bill this session. Every year we delay means lost opportunities to protect New

Yorkers from the effects of extreme weather caused by a rapidly warming world. The big fossil fuel companies, who have known the effects of their pollution for decades, must be made to pay their fair share of the damage they have caused.”

**Sara Schultz, Sierra Club Niagara Group Vice-Chair** said: “It is time to hold big oil accountable for the damage and destruction that is a result of our warming planet. Just like the cigarette industry, these companies knew they were causing harm but ignored the science and manipulated the public for profit. With the huge cost of mitigation and future resiliency plans, New York State must demand that the worst polluters pay their fair share of the bill. This would be justice served for the people!”

“It only makes sense that taxpayers should not bear the burden of the extensive damage caused by the fossil fuel industry in New York. The connection between global warming, on the one hand, and the flooding and other extreme weather events taking place in the state, on the other, is now crystal clear. At a time when the state is facing a serious budget deficit and oil and gas companies are making record profits, holding these companies accountable is imperative. The Climate Superfund is exactly the right solution at exactly the right time,” said **Peter Bardaglio, Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative Coordinator**.

**Ruth Foster of the New York Climate Advocacy Project** said: “Let’s be clear – The fossil fuel industry is responsible for the climate crisis that is destroying communities across the world and here in New York. Oil companies like Exxon, Shell and BP make billions by spewing climate destroying gas into our air and pay high priced lobbyists to promote their deadly products. They must pay. And then we must shut them down.”

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