



NYPIRG

New York Public Interest Research Group Fund

Annual Report 2015

The New York Public Interest Research Group Fund (NYPIRG), founded in 1976, seeks to empower, train, and educate the public through research, organizing efforts, advocacy, and media outreach in order to address significant problems affecting the health, environment, civic institutions and quality of life for New York State's residents.

From our Executive Director

I'm honored to introduce myself as NYPIRG's seventh Executive Director. After doing just about every job at NYPIRG over the past 35 years, I'm both excited and humbled to take the reins of this great organization. I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge and express my gratitude to our outgoing Executive Director, Rebecca J. Weber, for her dedicated leadership over the past 11 years. On behalf of everyone at NYPIRG, we thank you.



This has been a year of big victories and big changes for us. I'd like to thank our tens of thousands of loyal supporters and partners across the state. It is because of you that we have been able to accomplish so much this year. Our community outreach and education, reports, and earned media led to critical environmental victories for New Yorkers, including the landmark ban on fracking in New York State, savings for consumers, thousands of new registered voters, and so much more.

Since 1976, NYPIRG has informed, inspired, and engaged legions of New Yorkers, and together, we have accomplished amazing things. Our work to protect drinking water quality, oppose garbage incinerators, advocate for recycling and deposit laws, challenge the standardized testing industry, fight for affordable mass transit, stand up for patients and consumers, and defeat fracking has yielded hundreds of critical successes.

The pressing issues that we face today — including a rapidly warming planet, unprecedented government corruption, and soaring higher education and health care costs — make NYPIRG's work more important and relevant than ever. Together, we'll meet these challenges and continue to fulfill our crucial mission to protect the environment, public health, rights of consumers and voters, integrity of government, and so much more.

Thank you so much. I'm deeply grateful for your loyal support.

Sincerely,

Blair Horner

Making Strides Towards a Clean, Renewable Energy Future

2015 was the hottest year in recorded history, as 2014 was before it. There is no longer a credible debate about climate change — it is the most pressing public health, environmental, economic, and social justice issue facing our planet. It causes extreme weather that brings more intense and frequent heat waves, severe droughts, heavier rainfall, dangerous flooding, and outbreaks of deadly disease. Melting ice masses cause rising sea levels, putting coastal populations in jeopardy. Governments, businesses, communities, advocates, and concerned

individuals must step up to tackle this unprecedented threat. NYPIRG has been and continues to be a leader in moving New York toward a clean, renewable energy future.



New York Bans Fracking!

NYPIRG activists helped score a landmark victory when horizontal, hydraulic fracturing (fracking) is banned in New York, striking a blow against aggressive and dangerous fossil fuel development across the state. NYPIRG staff and volunteers played a pivotal role in the grassroots movement against fracking in New York — hosting educational events, participating in local actions, logging tens of thousands of phone calls to the Governor, generating media, partnering with a broad range of community and environmental partners, submitting thousands of public comments, and educating and engaging hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers one-on-one across the state.



NYPIRG activists rally in New York City to support a frack-free New York at one of dozens of statewide events throughout the year.

People's Climate March



On September 21st, together with a broad coalition of environmental, labor, faith-based groups, and environmental justice organizations from across the city and country—1,500 groups in total—history was made when 400,000 people turned out on the streets calling on the governments of the world to get serious about the global climate crisis. NYPIRG helped organize the record-breaking event, serving on the Host and Youth Committees, and bringing more than 10,000 participants.

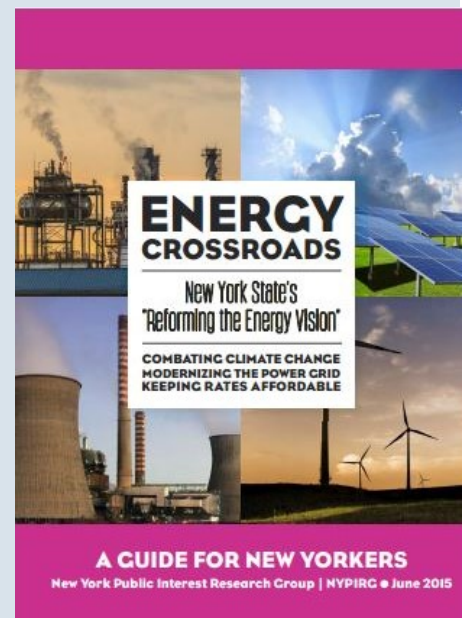
Limiting Fossil Fuel Infrastructure

NYPIRG is instrumental in another significant environmental victory when new regulations to limit the size of land-based Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facilities in New York are adopted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). NYPIRG is continuing our efforts to demonstrate strong public support for investment in renewable technologies.

NYPIRG Report – Energy Crossroads: New York's State's Reforming the Energy Vision: A Guide for New Yorkers

New York is advancing the Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) initiative, which is the State's core plan to restructure how electric power is generated, transmitted, and consumed. NYPIRG is advocating that REV prioritizes efficiency and renewable energy — more clean wind and solar power means that we can keep dirty coal and natural gas in the ground.

In order for REV to truly succeed, the public must be fully engaged. NYPIRG developed and released a guide – “Energy Crossroads” – in order to help accomplish that task. The Guide offers in-depth insights into the energy needs of the state, as well as the climate change challenges it faces, and provides information on how consumers can directly participate in the development of REV. The Guide examines the current energy infrastructure, the REV proceedings to date, contains a glossary of commonly-used terms, and links to the more relevant Public Service Commission proceedings that impact REV. It is our hope that this Guide will offer a strong starting point for all energy consumers to contribute to building a sustainable, affordable energy future that helps reverse global warming. A full copy of the guide can be accessed at http://nypirg.org/pubs/rev_report.pdf.



Promoting Open and Accountable Government, Increasing Civic Participation, and Removing Barriers to Voting

Shining a Light on Much-Needed Reforms at the State Level

NYPIRG published reports highlighting the prevalence of political fundraisers through our “Albany Money Machine” series, and on reforming the state’s ethics laws. NYPIRG also formally called for the State Board of Elections to investigate whether donations made through Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs) are effectively circumventing the campaign contribution limits and donor disclosure requirements in Election Law and calling for the Boards of Elections (BOE) to: (1) undertake a thorough examination of “dark money” LLCs—those named with only a street address, those with only a PO Box address, or those LLCs in which its address is in “care of” another entity; and (2) follow the path chosen by the Federal Election Commission’s treatment of LLCs, which is that they are to be treated as corporations or partnerships for the purposes of campaign contributions as is done under federal law.



Reporting on Local Good Government Practices

DRILLING DOWN:

Local Fracking Decisions Highlight Failures in
New York's Municipal Ethics Laws



New York Public Interest Research Group
December 2014

NYPIRG played a significant role to bring to light and close a gaping secrecy loophole by expanding lobbying reporting requirements to all local governments with populations of 5,000 or more. NYPIRG’s report, entitled “Drilling Down: Local Fracking Decisions Highlight Failures in New York’s Municipal Ethics Laws,” exposed this loophole in New York State’s lobbying law, which exempted reporting on efforts to lobby local officials in cities, towns, villages and other municipalities with fewer than 50,000 residents, effectively allowing the spending by business interests and advocacy groups to influence local governments to fly completely under the radar.

As a direct result of the report’s findings, the Governor proposed and the Legislature approved a change in the local lobbying disclosure law to increase the reporting of all local lobbying to cover all but localities for 5,000 or fewer residents. A copy of the report can be accessed here: http://nypirg.org/pubs/enviro/complete_drilling_down_3.pdf.

Non-Partisan Voter Registration

NYPIRG staff and volunteers, in partnership with our sister organization, set up non-partisan voter education tables at transit hubs, college campuses, and community locations across the state to register thousands of voters and provide resources where voters could look up their polling sites and find out information about what was on their local ballot. NYPIRG partnered with local and national groups to participate in National Voter Registration Day on September 23, 2014 and, in New York City, and co-sponsored the first citywide Student Voter Registration Day in partnership with NYC Votes, City University of New York, League of Women Voters, Generation Citizen, New York City Councilmember Helen Rosenthal and members of the New York City Council, and other groups on March 20, 2015.

12,264
*Registered
Voters*



NYPIRG Voter Helpline

NYPIRG conducted our annual Voter Helpline to field calls from New Yorkers who needed help finding their poll site or who encountered problems at the polls during the November General Election. Helpline volunteers also reported problems — such as broken machines or polls sites that were not open at the appointed times — directly to the local Board of Elections.

Publishing a Voters Guide

NYPIRG produced a non-partisan voter guide to provide New Yorkers with information about the proposed changes to the New York State Constitution and Bond Act proposal that were on the November ballot.

VOTERS GUIDE New York 2014

A Guide to the Proposed Changes
to the New York State Constitution
& the Bond Act Proposal
On the Ballot November 4, 2014,
With Arguments in Support of
and Opposition to those Changes

New York Public Interest Research Group/NYPIRG

Improving Mass Transit

NYPIRG's Straphangers Campaign continued to provide leadership with its reports, coalition building, media savvy, and rider organizing and education on behalf of millions of daily subway and bus riders.

The Campaign played a critical role in efforts that resulted in reduced transit costs for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers through pretax-transit benefits, and implementation of four new faster bus rapid transit (SBS) routes including:

Bx6 — Washington Heights, Manhattan to Hunts Point, Bronx

B46 — Utica Avenue and B82 from Coney Island to Flatlands

M23 — Crosstown on 23rd Street

Q52/53 — Woodhaven and Cross Bay Boulevards



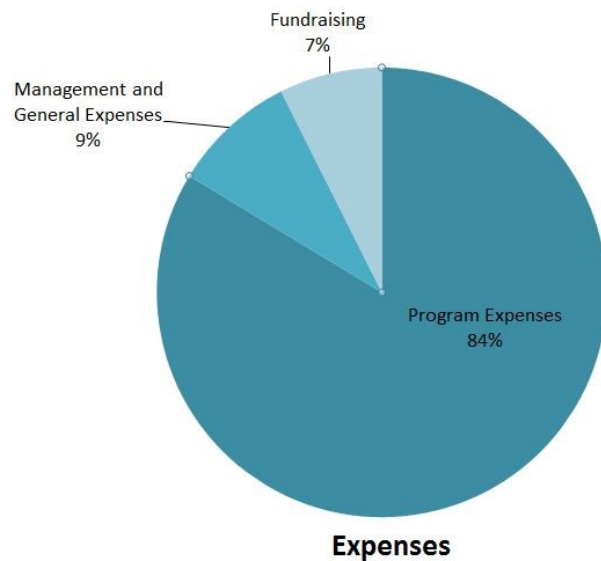
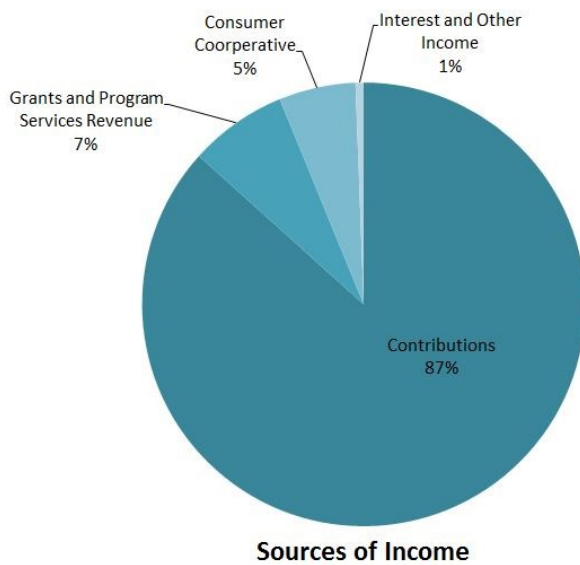
NYPIRG's Gene Russianoff, along with Paul Steely White of Transportation Alternatives award the Pokey for slowest bus service to the M79 in Manhattan.



Continuing to draw attention to the needs of riders as well as the transit system itself, the Campaign produced our annual State of the Subways report, distributed "Pokey" and "Schleppie" awards to highlight the slowest and most unreliable buses in New York City, and raised awareness about the need for transit capital funding through educational and attention-grabbing events across the city. Copies of reports can be accessed at straphangers.org.

Financial Overview and Contact Information

The following is an overview of NYPIRG's income and expenses for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2015.



**Based on unaudited financial statements*

Board of Directors

Jay Halfon, President
Ken Deutsch, Vice President/Secretary
Lisa Howard, Treasurer
Ludovic Blain III, Director
Chris Meyer, Director

Executive Director

Blair Horner

Contact Us:

New York Public Interest Research
Group Fund, Inc. (NYPIRG)

9 Murray Street, Lower Level

New York, NY 10007

Phone: (212) 349-6460

Fax: (212) 349-1366

Email: nypirg@nypirg.org

Website: www.nypirg.org

[Facebook.com/nypirg](https://www.facebook.com/nypirg)

[Twitter.com/nypirg](https://twitter.com/nypirg)