

## AN OPEN LETTER URGING SUPPORT FOR S.1574/A.2657

February 25, 2025

Dear Members of the New York Legislature,

We write to urge you to co-sponsor legislation introduced by State Senator Liz Krueger (S.1574)<sup>1</sup> and State Assemblyman Steven Otis (A.2657)<sup>2</sup> that will establish rebates for the purchase of electric lawn equipment in New York.

This legislation will play a critical role in reducing global warming pollution, improving air quality, and reducing noise pollution by promoting the adoption of quieter, zero-emission lawn care equipment.

This is incredibly important since research shows that gas-powered lawn equipment produces an outsized amount of air, climate and noise pollution—both in New York state and nationwide.

According to the Respiratory Health Association, gas-powered lawn equipment contributes to ground-level ozone and fine particulate pollution (PM 2.5).<sup>3</sup> Even short-term exposure to these pollutants can cause or contribute to asthma, heart attacks, cardiovascular disease, and premature death.<sup>4</sup>

**It's estimated that in 2020 alone, gas-powered lawn equipment in New York produced almost 1.4 million tons of climate pollution, the equivalent to the emissions from more than 300,000 cars annually.**<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, in a recent study from the Environment America Research & Policy Center, New York State ranked *third* in the country for fine particulate emissions from lawn equipment, and *fourth* in the nation for carbon dioxide emissions.<sup>6</sup>

Gas-powered lawn equipment also emits high levels of carcinogens, such as benzene and butadiene, along with other toxic compounds, including formaldehyde (a known respiratory and skin irritant) and nitrous oxides (which can cause lung damage and disease and is one of the key precursor pollutants that combines chemically to form ground-level ozone).<sup>7</sup>

Incredibly, levels of air pollution from gas-powered lawn equipment are so high that **operating a gas-powered leaf blower for just one hour produces as much smog-forming pollution as driving a car 1,100 miles – the distance from Albany to Jacksonville, Florida.**<sup>8</sup>

Gas-powered leaf blowers also are significant culprits of noise pollution. The vast majority of gas-powered leaf blowers exceed 70 decibels measured at 50 feet, which is considered dangerous to hearing. Additionally, this noise impacts the immune system, causes adverse cardiovascular effects, and impairs the learning, hearing, sleep, and language development of children.<sup>9</sup> Acoustic research also shows that gas-powered leaf blower's distinctive low-frequency noise penetrates further than other machine-generated sound waves, including through solid walls.<sup>10</sup>

The studies are clear: the impacts of both the air and noise pollution from gas-powered lawn equipment put the health of our most vulnerable community members—children, older adults, and those with underlying respiratory and other health conditions—at risk.

Given this, we call on the New York state legislature to move swiftly to pass Senator Krueger's S.1574 and Assemblyman Otis's A.2657 to establish rebates for electric lawn equipment. This will help transition New Yorkers away from the use of the dirtiest gas-powered lawn equipment such as lawn mowers, leaf blowers, and other handheld tools.

Thank you for your consideration and support, and please do not hesitate to contact us with questions about this important legislation.

Sincerely,

- ❖ Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Environmental Health
- ❖ All Our Energy
- ❖ Alliance for a Green Economy
- ❖ Audubon Society of the Capital Region
- ❖ Bash the Trash Environmental Arts LLC
- ❖ Bedford 2030
- ❖ Big Reuse
- ❖ Bronx River - Sound Shore Audubon
- ❖ Buy Local, Grow Local
- ❖ Capital Region Interfaith Creation Care Coalition (CRICCC)
- ❖ Caring for Creation Reformed Church of new Paltz
- ❖ Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY)
- ❖ Church Women United in New York State
- ❖ Clean Air Coalition of Greater Ravena-Coeymans
- ❖ Clean Air Coalition of Western New York
- ❖ Clean+Healthy
- ❖ Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region
- ❖ Coalition Against the Rockaway Pipeline
- ❖ Coastal preservation network
- ❖ Color Henrietta Green
- ❖ ColorBrightonGreen
- ❖ Concerned Health Professionals of New York
- ❖ Deignan Institute at Iona University
- ❖ Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society
- ❖ Dropseed Native Landscapes
- ❖ Earth Eden Sanctuary
- ❖ Earthkeeper Health Resources
- ❖ Environment America
- ❖ Environment New York
- ❖ Extinction Rebellion Mid-Hudson
- ❖ Fairspring LLC
- ❖ Finca Seremos
- ❖ FlyingTrillium Gardens and Preserve, Inc.
- ❖ Fossil Free Tompkins
- ❖ Four Harbors Audubon Society
- ❖ Friends of the RiverWalk Tarrytown
- ❖ Gas Free Seneca
- ❖ Genesee Valley Audubon Society
- ❖ Grassroots Environmental Education
- ❖ Great SouthBay Audubon Society
- ❖ Green Map System
- ❖ Green Ossining
- ❖ Green Party of New York
- ❖ Green Sanctuary Team at Albany UU
- ❖ HabitatMap
- ❖ Healthy Yards
- ❖ Hudson River Sloop Clearwater
- ❖ Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition, Inc. 501(c)(3)
- ❖ Huntington CALM
- ❖ Irvington Green Policy Task Force, a committee of the Village of Irvington, NY
- ❖ Lady Clippers, Inc.
- ❖ Lakeview Organic Grain
- ❖ Mamaki
- ❖ Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

- ❖ Neighborhood Sun
- ❖ New Paltz Climate Action Coalition
- ❖ New Paltz Climate Smart
- ❖ New York Climate Action Group
- ❖ New York Interfaith Power & Light
- ❖ New York Progressive Action Network
- ❖ New York State American Academy of Pediatrics (NYS AAP) - District II
- ❖ New Yorkers for Clean Power
- ❖ North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)
- ❖ North Fork Audubon Society
- ❖ North Shore Audubon Society
- ❖ Northeast Organic Farming Association-Interstate Council
- ❖ Northern Catskills Audubon Society
- ❖ Northern New York Audubon
- ❖ NY Clinicians for Climate Action
- ❖ NYC Bird Alliance
- ❖ NYCD16/15 Indivisible
- ❖ NYPAN environmental committee
- ❖ New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)
- ❖ People for a Healthy Environment
- ❖ Physicians for Social Responsibility - New York
- ❖ Possible Rochester | Possible Planet, a 501c3
- ❖ Pound Ridge CALM
- ❖ Pound Ridge Energy Action Committee
- ❖ Protecting Our Waters
- ❖ Quiet Clean Alliance
- ❖ Reach Out America
- ❖ ReWild Long Island
- ❖ Rockland Audubon Society
- ❖ Roctricity LLC
- ❖ Sane Energy Project
- ❖ SASD
- ❖ SectorOne Realty LLC
- ❖ Seneca Lake Guardian
- ❖ Serenity Lawncare Inc.
- ❖ Sierra Club
- ❖ Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York
- ❖ Sisters of the Good Shepherd
- ❖ Solarize Albany
- ❖ South Bronx Unite
- ❖ South Shore Audubon Society
- ❖ Southampton Town Sustainability Advisory Committee
- ❖ Southern ADK Audubon Society
- ❖ SUNY New Paltz Environmental Task Force
- ❖ Sustainable Finger Lakes
- ❖ The Climate Reality Project NY Chapters Coalition
- ❖ Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center
- ❖ Third Act NYC
- ❖ Third Act Upstate New York
- ❖ Tompkins County Climate and Sustainable Energy Advisory Board
- ❖ Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative
- ❖ Town of Huntington Gateway Garden
- ❖ Town of Mamaroneck Sustainability Collaborative
- ❖ Town of Pound Ridge Conservation Board
- ❖ United for Action
- ❖ United For Clean Energy
- ❖ Upper Nyack Green Committee
- ❖ UU Congregation of Binghamton, Green Sanctuary
- ❖ WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
- ❖ West Branch Conservation Association
- ❖ Yonkers Committee for Smart Development
- ❖ Yonkers Green City Advisory Committee

Endnotes:

- 
- <sup>1</sup> New York Senate bill 1574, <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2025/S1574>.
  - <sup>2</sup> New York State Assembly bill 2657, <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2025/A2657>.
  - <sup>3</sup> Respiratory Health Association, "Leaf Blowers Leave Lungs Vulnerable," <https://resphealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Gas-Powered-Leaf-Blowers-Leave-Lungs-Vulnerable.pdf>.
  - <sup>4</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Association, "Integrated Science Assessment (ISA) for Particulate Matter," <https://www.epa.gov/isa/integrated-science-assessment-isa-particulate-matter>.
  - <sup>5</sup> Environment America, "Lawn care goes electric," <https://environmentamerica.org/center/resources/lawn-care-goes-electric/>.
  - <sup>6</sup> Environment America, Frontier Group, U.S. Public Interest Research Group, "Lawn Care Goes Electric: Why it's time to switch to a new generation of clean, quiet electric lawn equipment," [https://publicinterestnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Lawn\\_Care\\_Goes\\_Electric\\_Oct23.pdf](https://publicinterestnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Lawn_Care_Goes_Electric_Oct23.pdf).
  - <sup>7</sup> U.S. EPA, "Characterization of Emissions from Handheld Two-stroke Engines," <https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/P100GDP7.PDF?Dockey=P100GDP7.PDF>.
  - <sup>8</sup> Colorado Public Interest Research Group, "Small Machines, Big Pollution: How shifting to electric lawn and garden equipment can significantly reduce harmful ozone pollution on Colorado's Front Range," <https://publicinterestnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CoPIRG-Foundation-report-Small-Machines-Big-Pollution-Dec-1-2022.pdf>.
  - <sup>9</sup> Erickson, L. C., & Newman, R. S. (2017). "Influences of Background Noise on Infants and Children." *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 26(5), 451-457. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721417709087>.
  - <sup>10</sup> Walker E, Banks, JL (2017) Characteristics of Lawn and Garden Equipment Sound: A Community Pilot Study. *J Environ Toxicol Stu* 1(1) doi <http://dx.doi.org/10.16966/2576-6430.106>.