



June 28th, 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the Climate Action Council's Draft Scoping Plan for New York State. UPROSE is a member of New York Renews- the statewide coalition of over 300 organizations who helped pass the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act in 2019, and have since been working tirelessly to ensure implementation of the law is equitable and supporting disadvantaged communities like Sunset Park, Brooklyn. Founded in 1966, UPROSE is Brooklyn's oldest Latino community-based organization. UPROSE is an intergenerational, multi-racial, Black and Indigenous women of color-led organization working at the intersection of racial justice and climate change through community organizing, planning, policy, youth development, and cultural and artistic expression.

UPROSE is located in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, home to the largest Significant Maritime Industrial Area (SMIA) in New York City. Sunset Park is an environmental justice community of over 130,000 where many environmental burdens are sited. Local pollution comes from three fossil fuel burning peaker power plants, two solid waste transfer stations, thousands of diesel trucks, and brownfields.

CLCPA is the most progressive climate legislation in the country and mandates investments for disadvantaged communities. At minimum, 40% of all investments must be directed towards disadvantaged communities and must provide benefits that redress the legacy of extraction, create community wealth, and improve public health.

Investments in disadvantaged communities must prioritize **BIPOC community-led** projects. Community led projects are projects developed by and for communities that address community needs to strengthen social cohesion and a just climate future. The CLCPA must work to enable community led projects such as the Green Resilient Industrial District.

CLCPA must reject false solutions such as "green" hydrogen, carbon capture and sequestration, and cap and trade schemes. These solutions do not prioritize the needs of communities in New York State and enable the continued operation of the fossil fuel industry.

CLCPA mandates must be strongly enforced in order to achieve emissions reduction goals and ensure protections of disadvantaged communities. Recent actions such as permit denials for natural gas plants demonstrate the State's commitment to implementing the CLCPA.

CLCPA must invest in workforce development and job training resources for disadvantaged communities to ensure that historically marginalized groups (BIPOC, immigrant, undocumented, formerly incarcerated, low-income, etc.) have access to well-paying, family-sustaining, union/green jobs.

Siempre en Lucha, y Siempre por Nuestra Gente.

462 36th Street Brooklyn, NY 11232 | t. 718 492 9307 | f. 718 492 9030

www.uprose.org



New York needs Scenario 3 of the Draft Scoping Plan. This scenario will ensure greenhouse gas emissions reductions without reliance on polluting fuels and will ensure clean air and public health benefits for New York communities.

CLCPA must fund climate justice and jobs at \$15 billion annually. \$15 billion is much less than the \$27.5 billion in annual climate pollution costs and much less than the \$30 billion that the state spends on out of state, polluting fossil fuel resources.

CLCPA is the most progressive climate legislation in the country and mandates investments for disadvantaged communities. At minimum, 40% of all investments must be directed towards disadvantaged communities and must provide benefits that redress the legacy of extraction, create community wealth, and improve public health.

Black and brown communities have disproportionately borne the negative impacts of the fossil fuel industry. Climate investments *must* work to redress this burden by providing access to healthy and affordable energy, creating access to healthy and family sustaining jobs, and creating healthy and thriving communities. 40% is the *minimum amount* that must be directed towards disadvantaged communities in order to ensure equitable implementation of the CLCPA.

Investments in disadvantaged communities must prioritize *community led* projects. Community led projects are projects developed by and for communities that address community needs for a resilient and just climate future.

UPROSE is working to develop several community led projects that would invest in the Sunset Park community. The GRID project is a community-led plan developed by UPROSE, its partners, and the Sunset Park community. The GRID enables a working waterfront in Sunset Park's Significant Maritime Industrial Area that supports the state's renewable energy, sustainable manufacturing, zero-emissions transportation and sustainable food production sectors. The GRID creates local family-sustaining jobs in Sunset Park. Innovative projects such as the GRID that support regenerative economies and are developed by and for local communities must be prioritized by CLCPA investment. Community led innovation and development is crucial for a just and resilient future.

CLCPA must reject false solutions such as “green” hydrogen, carbon capture and sequestration, and cap and trade schemes. These solutions do not prioritize the needs of communities in New York State and enable the continued operation of the fossil fuel industry.

“Green” hydrogen is hydrogen produced using renewable energy. Proponents of green hydrogen argue that it can act as a bridge fuel as fossil fuel plants transition away from natural gas, while allowing the continued use of fossil fuel infrastructure. This argument as well as the

Siempre en Lucha, y Siempre por Nuestra Gente.

462 36th Street Brooklyn, NY 11232 | t. 718 492 9307 | f. 718 492 9030

www.uprose.org



numerous negative environmental impacts associated with “green” hydrogen present significant cause for concern. Combustion of “green” hydrogen emits dangerous levels of nitrogen oxides (NOx). NOx emissions are associated with aggravation of respiratory diseases including asthma.¹ NOx emissions would occur at existing fossil fuel plants where hydrogen is blended with natural gas and would further burden the communities which have been subject to pollution from fossil fuels for decades. Production of “green” hydrogen requires significant amounts of water consumption and could contribute to water stress. The production of “green” hydrogen may require the diversion of renewable energy output that could be directed towards other more efficient uses; this would distract from the climate goals of New York legislation. Finally, transportation of hydrogen is dangerous due to methane leakage and the potential for pipe embrittlement. Transport of hydrogen would require expensive and significant upgrades to existing fossil fuel pipelines in order to maintain safe use. Given these concerns, the CLCPA Scoping Plan must actively combat the use of “green” hydrogen within New York State. For more on why “green” hydrogen is a false solution, see [here](#).

Carbon Capture and Sequestration captures carbon from power generation and manufacturing processes and sequesters it in underground reserves. Use of this technology enables continued emissions from greenhouse gas intensive processes. CLCPA resources should be directed towards innovative solutions for a regenerative, zero carbon economy that move away from greenhouse gas and pollutant intensive processes.

Cap and trade schemes allow polluters to trade the ability to emit greenhouse gasses. These schemes do not guarantee emissions reductions, in fact best available evidence from cap and trade schemes in California suggests that cap and trade schemes result in an increase in greenhouse emissions and their associated co-pollutants in environmental justice communities. In California, the ability to purchase carbon offsets allowed polluting facilities to claim emissions reductions in other often out of state areas, while increasing emissions at facilities in frontline communities. Under its cap and trade plan, California saw an increase in emissions between 2011 and 2015.² The CLCPA Scoping Plan must reject using cap and trade mechanisms as a method of emissions reductions given its impact on marginalized communities and uncertain effectiveness in meeting emissions reduction goals.

CLCPA mandates must be strongly enforced in order to achieve emissions reduction goals and ensure protections of disadvantaged communities. Recent actions such as permit denials for gas burning plants demonstrate the State’s commitment to implementing the CLCPA.

¹ [EPA NOx Pollutants.](#)

² <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002604>



The CLCPA Scoping Plan must include mechanisms for enforcing mandates and for ensuring protections for disadvantaged communities. A whole government approach is needed to ensure the CLCPA is fully implemented. Already, recent decisions from the New York Department of Conservation have demonstrated the seriousness with which the CLCPA will be enforced.³ Continued coordination and enforcement of all aspects of the CLCPA is needed to ensure equitable and effective implementation.

CLCPA must invest in workforce development and job training resources for disadvantaged communities to ensure that historically marginalized groups (BIPOC, immigrant, undocumented, formerly incarcerated, low-income, etc.) have access to career pathways for well-paying, family-sustaining, union/green jobs.

A renewable energy and climate resilient economy will generate hundreds of thousands of jobs over the next decades.

- Recent estimates from the 2021 Jobs Study published by the Just Transition Working Group indicate that overall employment in New York State will increase by at least 189,000 jobs by 2030.⁴
- Offshore wind development has the potential to create over 1 million jobs in New York City alone. In Sunset Park, offshore wind staging at the Significant Maritime Industrial area will create over 1,000 jobs for turbine assembly and 200 jobs for ongoing operations and maintenance.
- Building electrification retrofits and building energy efficiency has the potential to create at least 40,000 jobs in New York City alone.⁵

These jobs align with NYC Council Local Law 97 will create more than 40,000 green jobs, help expand the annual retrofit market to \$20 Billion. Job opportunities must be directed towards historically marginalized groups of people. Job training resources must be geographically and financially accessible to historically marginalized groups. Job training resources must be holistic and include both access to education, child support for workers, financial resources to support workers during training and financial support for necessary certifications.

³ [Fossil Fuels Rejected: New York DEC Denies Permits for Astoria Gas-fueled Power Plant in Queens, New York. October 28, 2021.](#)

⁴ Just Transition Working Group. 2021 Jobs Study.

⁵ [ALIGN to NYC Council Local Law 97 Will Create More Than 40,000 Green Jobs, Help Expand Retrofit Market to \\$20 Billion](#)



New York needs Scenario 3 of the Draft Scoping Plan This scenario will ensure greenhouse gas emissions reductions without reliance on polluting fuels and will ensure clean air and public health benefits for New York communities.

CLCPA must fund climate justice and jobs at \$15 billion annually. \$15 billion is much less than the \$27.5 billion in annual climate pollution costs and much less than the \$30 billion that the state spends on out of state, polluting fossil fuel resources.⁶

UPROSE supports NYRenews vision for a community focused CLCPA budget:

- \$4.8 billion for a Climate Jobs and Infrastructure Fund that invests in electrifying public transit, creating local microgrids and upgrading public housing.
- \$4.6 billion for a Community Just Transition Fund that disburses grants to community organizations that develop projects in frontline and disadvantaged communities.
- \$1 billion for a Worker and Community Assurance Fund to support workers and communities that are reliant on fossil fuel wages and tax revenue.
- \$4.6 billion for a Household Climate Fund that will assist low and moderate income New Yorkers reduce their energy costs.

By centering equity in CLCPA implementation- these investments will not only reduce climate change costs, but also will improve public health, transportation, healthy housing, and redress generations of harm and disinvestment. The CLCPA is an opportunity for New York State to be a leader in operationalizing a true Just Transition.

⁶ [NY Renews. State Legislators and NYRenews Coalition Call for \\$15 billion Investment in Climate Jobs and Justice. January 27, 2022](#)