



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## **Senator James Sanders Jr.'s Earth Week Expo Featured Environmental Experts, Free Rain Barrels and Compost, Workshops for Youth and Adults, and More**

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April 30, 2019



Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village, Far Rockaway) held an Earth Week Expo on April 27, 2019 at PS 52 in Jamaica in recognition of this important time of the year when we examine how to make our planet a better place through positive environmental practices. This event was conducted in collaboration with C.I.S.T.A. Girls Environmental Club.

“If we had done things differently, we would not be experiencing the negative environmental effects that we find ourselves facing,” Sanders said. The earth has finally gotten to this tipping point and it’s our job to prevent it from going further downhill. It’s our job as good stewards to protect the planet. So far, we’ve done a miserable job and that needs to change.”

The Earth Week Expo was educational and interactive fun for the whole family. Environmental experts and activists discussed the everyday steps we can take as a community to combat climate change. The event featured four panels – Environmental Justice & Health, The Climate Crisis, Climate Justice and Policy, and Environmental Career Opportunities.

These panels included information about green jobs, the usage of renewable energy sources, urban gardening, recycling, composting, using rain barrels to conserve water, healthy eating, and much more. At the event, Senator Sanders gave away 50 rain barrels and 240 bags of compost

The keynote speaker was Josh Fox, an award-winning film director, playwright and environmental activist. His 2010 documentary "Gasland" was nominated for an Academy Award. He spoke about the Green New Deal and how we have to transform every piece of our energy system in New York City, and on the planet earth, in twelve years.

"You think about the immensity of the task that's in front of us, changing every gas pipeline that runs underneath the city, every fossil fuel infrastructure, every car, every power plant – and understand how impossible that seems and sounds in the time we have left to do that," Fox said. "The science says we have 12 years to reverse these systems completely, but 100% renewable energy is possible. It is possible."

Other featured guests included: Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, Assembly Member Taylor Raynor, and Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chairman of the City Council's Environmental Protection Committee. All stressed the immediacy and urgency of climate change and how we must take action to save the earth before it's too late. BP Adams, for example, blamed part of the problem on the overconsumption of meat, stating how it causes health problems and how animal waste pollutes the environment. He, himself, reversed his own diabetes by switching to a plant based diet. He has also introduced a program called Meatless Mondays, which has reduced the amount of animal products served as part of school lunches.

There were seven workshops for youth and adults and they included information about how to reduce waste, cut back on energy costs, better ways to garden, and local ways to address the climate crisis. Some featured film screenings while others focused on interactive activities. Lyle Rawlings of Advanced Solar Products, Inc. attended dressed as his alter ego "Solar Man," and was clad from head to toe in yellow with a matching cape and goggles. He has played the character for the past 20 years as a way to get kids excited about learning about the sun and solar power.

Senator Sanders represents the 10<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District, which has acres of parkland and wildlife inhabited areas such as Jamaica Bay and Idlewild Park Preserve and under those conditions, he tries to be ecologically conscious.

He recently introduced a Green New Deal for New York, legislation that establishes a task force to plan how to make our state greenhouse gas emissions neutral by 2030

by transitioning from a fossil fuel-based economy to one based entirely on clean renewable energy. The goal is to prevent the catastrophic consequences of climate change, promote economic growth and job creation, and provide a just transition to benefit of all New Yorkers.

There is a Native American proverb that says: “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.” It’s just another way of saying we should be doing all we can to protect the environment, not only for ourselves, but for future generations. Senator Sanders invites the entire community to join him in his mission to protect the Earth.