



**Testimony Joint Budget Hearings on Environmental Conservation  
Senate Finance Committee and Assembly Ways and Means Committee  
January 28, 2026**

**Jeff Levy-Lyons and Wendy Seligson, Co-directors, Jewish Climate Action Network NYC**

Our names are Jeff Levy-Lyons and Wendy Seligson. We represent the Jewish Climate Action Network NYC, as its co-directors. Thank you for seeking this testimony.

Our members come from all denominations of the Jewish faith and also include those who identify as “just” Jewish. We are compelled by our faith to act in order to protect and preserve life, a doctrine in Hebrew known as “*Pikuach Nefesh*”. Our members are worried and we are not alone.

We are here today to ask you to recognize the urgency of now and significantly increase the State of New York’s investment in the transition to renewable energy. Among other actions, we strongly urge that:

- The state budget allocate at least \$3 billion to the Sustainable Future Program to facilitate the transition to renewable energy
- The Legislature call for the Governor to release the overdue cap-and-invest regulations
- The Legislature pass legislation to generate much-needed revenue for the transition to a renewable energy economy
- The state budget should include Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act, and legislation to promote the expanded use of solar energy including
  - **Accelerate Solar for Affordable Power Act (ASAP Act) (S6570/A8758)**—*raises distributed solar capacity goal to 20 GW by 2035 and includes multiple other provisions to make creating solar energy sources in New York more practical and efficient.* This bill could save ratepayers billions of dollars and would create thousands of new, green jobs.
  - **Resident Automated Solar Permitting (S5781A/A6270A)** —requires municipalities with population over 5000 to implement *automatic online permitting for solar systems*. This would make it faster and cheaper for homeowners to install solar panels.



- **Community SOLAR Act (S8119/A9087)**—*shortens permitting timelines and lowers costs* for community solar project development. This will help make solar energy available at reasonable costs for people who cannot place solar panels on their own homes and will create more local jobs.
- **SUNNY Act (S8512/A9111)** --Solar Up Now New York Act exempts *small-scale balcony or plug-in solar* from interconnection and net metering requirements and prohibits utilities from requiring customers to obtain approval for using such a device or paying any related fee. This will remove barriers and red tape from installing small, plug-in or balcony solar units, making it much easier for people to install balcony solar in their homes.
- **NYS Residential Solar Tax Credits (S2626/A1373)**--Increases the maximum residential solar tax credit from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and expands credit eligibility to include battery storage systems.

We have no time to waste. Through your actions this session, leave no doubt that you are doing whatever it takes to protect life today and future generations. Thank you.