

The Honorable Liz Krueger
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
NYS Senate
Albany, New York 12247

The Honorable J. Gary Pretlow
Chair, Assembly Ways and Means Committee
NYS Assembly
Albany, New York 12248

January 28, 2026

Re: Written Testimony for the SFY 2026-27 Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Environmental Conservation

Subject: Establishing a “Staggered Yearly No-Repayment Carbon-Reduction (S.Y.N.C.) Act” as the Financial Solution for Local Law 97 (LL97) Compliance.

Dear Chair L. Kruger, Chair J. Pretlow, and Honorable Members of the Committees,

On behalf of the of the **Queens Cooperatives and Condominiums Action Network (QCCAN)** Project, I am writing to provide a written testimony on the urgent need for a new financial architecture to meet New York decarbonization mandates. While Local Law 97 (LL97) provides a necessary emission cap, the primary barrier to its success —particularly **Queens**—is the prohibiting upfront capital required for building retrofit. Current estimates indicate that the total cost for New York City building owners to comply with LL97 is between **\$12 billion and \$15 billion**.

Legal and Fiscal Urgency

Without state intervention, the staggering financial burden will fall directly on the shoulders of the middle-income families and older adults, resulting in bankruptcy and displacement. To solve this crisis, I urge the State Legislature to review, authorize, and fund the **“Staggered Yearly No Repayment Carbon-Reduction Act** expeditiously. The timing couldn’t have been more critical until now given the **February 6, 2026, Supreme Court Deadline**, where the court ordered Governor Hochul and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to finalize regulations by this date or extension dates, that will finally force a decision with the prohibitive cost required to meet the state’s emission targets. Without a non-repayable funding mechanism like the **S.Y.N.C Act** with its element of **certainty** in place, an Act that align with construction phases and verified emission reductions, the ruling would leave Queens and the rest of the boroughs building owners exposed to these massive liabilities without any state-level shield. The Legislature cannot wait until the final budget adoption in April to act; this **“staggered yearly no repayment Carbon-reduction ACT”** must be prioritized to prevent market chaos and financial ruins of the co-ops and condominium community.

The Queens Impact: A Case for Action in Protecting Queens and Vulnerable Population

In Queens, the proposed S.Y.N.C Act is the difference between displacement and stability; neighborhoods like **Forest Hills, Bayside, and Glen Oaks** are home to thousands of middle-class families and older adults on fixed incomes, who view LL97 penalties not as an incentive- but rather a threat to their homeownership. A guaranteed, staggered, no- repayment grant removes the threat of maintenance hikes and special assessment.

In several co-ops, the challenge started; an increase of 4%-6% have commenced since early this year, special assessment as well include parking structure (LL126) inspection and renovation with an estimate of \$1 million for a mere 15-20 car garage. In at least two Buildings in the Forest Hills Neighborhood, depending on the shares, \$149 has been added to the monthly maintenance fee, payable in lump sum or in 24 months (\$3,576) beginning early this year, and to cite other Local Laws such as LL11 (Facades), 92/94 (Green Roof) and LL152 (Gas Piping), the costs are simply unsustainable. As cost escalates, this Act serves as a vital anti-displacement measure, ensuring that the cost of climate compliance does not force working families or older adults out of their homes and communities, but rather allow Queens residents and other boroughs to comply with the law to keep their homes, while the State provides the necessary capital investment that would create more green jobs and businesses, it would guardrail the process to get the work done.

The Solution:

The Five-Year Guaranteed State Funded Staggered Funding Model:

To ensure accountability and fiscal responsibility, the projects shall have the cash flow required to reach completion. The Act shall mandate the following yearly grant installments:

Year 1: 10% of Total Project Cost for initial assessment and basic upgrades

Year 2: 40% of Total Project Cost for electrification and infrastructure

Year 3: 30% of Total Project Cost for major mechanical retrofit

Year 4: 10% of Total Project Cost for renewable integration

Year 5: 10% of Total Project cost for compliance maintenance

Placing Funding Sources Under One Umbrella:

To streamline the application process for efficiency, this “no-repayment” model should be capitalized by the four most robust funding vehicles in New York State:

1. The \$1 Billion Sustainable Future Fund as the primary source
2. The \$4.2 Billion Environmental Bond Act
3. The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)

4. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in partnership with Mayor Office Climate of Environmental Justice (MOCEJ)

We urge the State Legislature to include and prioritize the **“Staggered Yearly No-Repayment Carbon-Reduction Act” in the SFY 2026-2027 Budget** to ensure that the transition to a green economy is fully funded, debt-free, guaranteed, and turn the mandate of LL97 into an investment and an economic opportunity that protects New York’s housing stock, our economy, our climate future and the communities affected by it.

We thank you for your leadership and consideration of this life-saving proposal that could go down in history to single-handedly rescue millions of New Yorker residents and constituents from displacement and risks of losing their home. *“Our homes are where our hearts and spirits reside, cradle it with care and safeguard it with courage and urgency.”*

Respectfully Submitted,
Candida Uy-Beriro On behalf of QCANN Project
cuyberir@gmail.com
(917)536-5839

cc:
Hon. David Weprin (WeprinD@nyassembly.gov)
Hon. Toby Ann Stavinsky (stavisky@nysenate.gov)
Hon. Leroy Comrie (comrie@nysenate.gov)
Hon. Andrew Hevesi (HevesiA@nyassembly.gov)

Encl: Exhibit A --Policy Comparison of Climate Funding Models for New York City Residential Buildings
Exhibit B – Streamline Access of Funds Under One Umbrella
Exhibit C –2026 Funding Sources Comparison: High Viability
Exhibit D—2026 Funding Sources Comparison: Low Viability

Exhibit A: Policy Comparison of Climate Funding Models for NYC Residential Buildings

Feature	NYS Cap and Invest	Staggered Yearly No-Repayment Carbon-Reduction (S.Y.N.C) Act
Up-front Cost	High, resident pay first	Zero; funding arrives first
Financial Type	Market-based, loans	Direct Capital Grants
LL97 Alignment	No automatic fine relief	Automatic “Safe Harbor” from fines

Exhibit B: Streamline Access To Fund Under One Umbrella

Single Application Portal	Cohort System	Interdisciplinary Coordination
Propose a single, universal application portal	Co-op and Condo Boards cohorts to pool resources and negotiate bulk purchases of quality approved green equipment	Create a formal Memorandum of Understanding between NYSDEC, NYSERDA, HPD, Mayor’s Office of Climate and Environmental
NONE	NONE	Justice (MOCEJ), under the Office of Management Budget (OMB) to ensure funds are coordinated and not competitive

Exhibit C: 2026 Funding Sources Comparison: High Viability

Feature	1.Sustainable Future Program (SFP)	2.Environmental Bond Act 2022 (EBA 2022)	3.Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)	4. GreenHouse Fund OMB in partnership with MOCEJ and DOB
Primary Source	Direct Grant	One-time voter - approved debt for sale of state bonds	Recurring state revenue particularly real estate transfer taxes	Not a Direct Funding, revenue from buildings’ offset purchase, directed as grants to decarbonize affordable housing
2026 Fundings	\$1 Billion (\$450 million reduce building	\$4.2 billion total pool (\$3.7B + remaining)	Proposed \$425 million annually	\$8 Billion but include funding for school bus and other initiatives

	emissions			
--	------------------	--	--	--

Exhibit D: 2026 Funding Sources Comparison: Low viability

Feature	5. Climate Change Superfund Act
Primary Source	“Polluters’ Payors”
2026 Fundings	<p>\$75 Billion over ten years- paid by companies with high pollution - pending litigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st payment in September 2026. • Cannot rely on this fund for immediate LL97 implementation costs on February 6, 2026.