



# Support for the Climate Resilient New York Act of 2024 S. 8158 Harckham

New York State has established itself as a leader with a clear plan for reducing greenhouse gases and making critical investments to combat climate change, demonstrated by the implementation of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) of 2019 and the \$4.2 billion Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act in 2022. And yet, **we lack coordinated governance and planning to take on the impacts that New Yorkers already face today.** These impacts are evidenced in the aftermath of Hurricanes Ida, Sandy, and recent devastating flooding. We need an equivalent commitment to combatting the impacts of climate change. The Climate Resilient New York Act of 2024 is a pathway to a safer, more resilient New York through strong leadership and a plan to meet the challenge.

## A safer New York State

Our current system is broken. New York has consistently been devastated by flooding and extreme heat, resulting in the loss of lives, billions in damages, and little more than short-term infrastructure fixes to a long-term problem. In just a 10-year period between 2011-2021, New York has had 16 climate disaster declarations with a per capita spending of \$1,348 on recovering from those disasters, the second highest in the country.<sup>1</sup> We need a plan for tackling these issues thoroughly and justly. And with multiple agencies with overlapping mandates and disjointed funding sources, we desperately need a new model for managing our changing future. **S 8158 would require a coordinated framework across multiple agencies, charged with building a more resilient New York.**

## More efficient use of taxpayer dollars

Right now, much of climate action is reactive, only coming into play following a devastating storm. We cannot build lasting resilience and the kind of future

New Yorkers want through a cycle of repairs following crises. **Digging out from the damage of a storm is costly, with estimates of up to six times more in spending when compared to proactive resilience measures.** With an influx of climate funding thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and the 2022 Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Bond Act, the time is now to have a clear, proactive plan for deploying funds where they are most needed. A plan is even more critical since a lack of shovel-ready projects has also meant challenges to deploying those funds. S 8158 would establish a framework to support the strategic deployment of these investments and related programs spanning different agencies and levels of government toward safer, more resilient communities.

## A just and equitable transition

Long-term climate impacts and acute disasters disproportionately impact low-income people and people of color. **S 8158 requires a robust analysis of impacts and a plan for ensuring that the state's disadvantaged and environmental justice**

<sup>1</sup> Rebuild by Design. 2023. [Atlas of Disaster](#).

**communities are prioritized in resilience investments and strategies.** The bill will push for clarity on how the state is addressing resilience challenges to ensure that frontline communities experiencing environmental injustice and those less able to adapt or financially recover from climate impacts will be benefited and losses from future disasters reduced. The bill also includes requirements for transparency and public availability of information regarding flooding, extreme heat events, storms and other climate risks.

### Fixing our infrastructure

New York State's infrastructure is currently graded a C by the American Society of Civil Engineers. S 8158 requires the development of a publicly available, updated inventory of critical infrastructure that is vulnerable to current and future flooding. An up-to-date inventory will ensure our roads, subways, electrical grid, sewers and all other systems we depend on have a viable pathway to meeting our needs now and in the long term.

## Key Provisions Of S.8158 (Harckham)

Establishing an Office of Resilience and Interagency Climate Resilience Governance Structure, which will:

- Coordinate and provide strategic direction for governmental resilience initiatives to build long-term climate resilience.
- Establish a statewide resilience plan and framework.
- Provide technical guidance to agencies and local and regional jurisdictions.
- Establish a means of tracking progress toward statewide goals on climate resilience.
- Appoint a Chief Resilience Officer who will manage the Office of Resilience, and monitor and seek available funds to support the state's resilience priorities.

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