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MEDIA RELEASE

Governor Kathy Hochul gets an F on her 2026 Climate Report Card for Failing to Implement the Climate Law and Address the Worsening Climate Crisis

As 2026 begins, Climate Can't Wait, a statewide coalition of more than 50 climate groups holds Governor Hochul accountable for a year full of serious climate failures.

NEW YORK — On Wednesday, Climate Can't Wait, a statewide coalition of over 55 environmental, climate, and community groups, [released its second climate report card](#) for Governor Kathy Hochul (D-NY). The final grade was an F based on her track record of backsliding on implementation of critical climate legislation and failing to take actions to achieve the mandates of New York State's 2019 Climate Law (the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act or CLCPA). An Albany Supreme Court decision last October, *Citizen Action of New York vs. DEC*, found that the Hochul administration's failure to issue greenhouse gas reduction regulations as required by the Climate Law was illegal.

As fossil-fueled extreme weather shatters records and devastates communities, the Trump administration has questioned the science of the climate crisis, dramatically cut funding to renewables, and signed numerous executive orders undermining regulations that protect our climate. New York State, with the 11th largest economy in the world, must now increase its efforts for a just transition from oil and gas to clean, renewable energy.

This year, Governor Hochul made it to TIME Magazine's 2025 TIME100 Climate list for approving the Climate Change Superfund Act and the New York City congestion pricing plan. In her interview with TIME during a day of heavy rain in New York, she said, "With the federal government imposing serious roadblocks on renewable energy and rolling back water and other environmental protections, the single most important thing we can do is fight back."

Governor Hochul has not fought back. Instead, she has been in lockstep with President Trump on a number of climate fronts, with the sole exception of repealing the costly 100-foot rule, although with an inexplicable one-year delay. Her agencies approved permits for the William's NESE fracked gas pipeline and a massive expansion of the Iroquois pipeline. She has

aggressively pursued new, unaffordable, and highly polluting nuclear reactors, while cutting funds for affordable and safe solar and wind power.

Solar and wind, combined with battery storage, are now the most affordable forms of energy, creating an opportunity to lower total energy costs for New Yorkers as we reduce local and global pollution. Governor Hochul says her top concern is affordability, but her proposals to defy New York's climate law and spend billions on dangerous forms of energy would raise utility costs and endanger public health.

Climate Can't Wait calls on the Governor to do her job in 2026 and take action before it's too late: implement the Climate Law in her Executive Budget with a package of bills to meet New York's mandated climate goals.

"This report card by a collection of leading New York climate organizations shows a sad record in 2025 of backsliding by Governor Hochul and her administration on climate and energy affordability, and bending to the will of the fossil fuel industry," said **Bob Cohen, Policy and Research Director of Citizen Action of New York**. "What I find most distressing is the Governor's failure to even adopt regulations to reduce greenhouse gases that cause climate destruction, which a judge has found violated the law. New Yorkers dealing with storm damage and high energy bills do not need flowery words from the Governor, but meaningful steps like the funding of climate transformation and forcing utility companies to transition away from gas."

"We give Governor Hochul an 'F' because New York cannot afford a Governor who treats our climate laws as suggestions while our communities bear the cost. We call on her to stop investing in fossil fuels and embrace a clean energy future," said **the activists at Rise and Resist**

Catherine Du, a volunteer at Sunrise and Fridays for Future NYC said, "Governor Hochul's lack of forward-thinking climate policy is acting as if lives are not on the line. Young people today will live in a world shaped by decisions through policy both today and tomorrow. If Governor Hochul's intention with her policies, such as the phone ban, is truly to protect young people, she ought to consider advancing climate-forward legislation for the safety and health of all of our communities. Approving congestion pricing is no excuse to permit fossil fuel pipelines and stop acting in accordance to the law on climate. The laws apply to everyone, and to be a good leader, Governor Hochul ought to uphold the climate law as the court orders."

"We're in a crisis moment for climate justice and the cost of living in New York State," said **NY Renews Executive Director Stephan Edel**. "Governor Hochul recently approved a toxic pipeline off the coast of Long Island, delayed our electric-building mandate, and has all but scrapped NY's pollution cap program, starving our communities of billions of dollars that we could be using to create cleaner, healthier, and safer communities. Is it any wonder she's getting an F on this year's Climate Report Card? The hundreds of thousands of members represented in our coalition say: We don't think so."

“Governor Hochul deserves an F for betraying New Yorkers by sacrificing the need for clean, affordable energy to the interests of the greedy fossil fuel industry. We need a governor that will stand up against President Trump and his polluter pals, and stand up for our communities and climate,” said **Eric Weltman, a Food & Water Watch senior organizer**. “This is why New Yorkers from across the state will be marching in Albany on Saturday, April 18 -- days before Earth Day -- at the Deadline Hochul rally.”

“The Governor’s failure to make progress on climate policy; and triumph in driving affordable and healthy energy policy backwards, makes it apparent that her loyalty and motivations are driven by the fossil fuel industry, not by the people of New York,” **said Eric Wood, Senior Environmental Program Coordinator for NYPIRG**. “Climate destruction is contributing to widespread illness and an unstable economy. New Yorkers deserve far better,” Wood added.

“With climate denier Donald Trump in charge of the federal government, it is critical that state governments take strong action to prevent climate collapse. Instead, Governor Hochul has joined Trump in doing the bidding of the fossil fuel and nuclear industries. Despite her claims to be concerned about affordability, she refuses to lower energy costs by rapidly replacing fossil fuels with much cheaper renewable energy and is adding another \$30 billion plus to the nuclear subsidies for 4 plants. She refuses to follow both the climate law and the recommendations of the Climate Action Council. Especially troubling is her refusal to move forward with carbon pricing, which is essential both to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to raise the \$10 billion her administration has said is needed annually to fund the transition to clean, affordable green energy,” **said Mark Dunlea, convenor of PAUSE (People of Albany United for Safe Energy), the 350.org affiliate in the Capital District.**

“Governor Hochul’s climate record is abysmal. She can’t even get her own house in order. Every day the Governor goes to work in the Capitol that is heated by a fracked gas power plant owned by New York. The plant spews greenhouse gas emissions into the air and pollution into my neighborhood where the residents suffer from high rates of cancer and asthma,” **said Merton Simpson, Albany County Legislator and Co-Chair, Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy**. “Governor, we need you to be a climate leader. Show your commitment to climate action by starting with the New York State Capitol.”

“This report card reflects what communities like ours in the Finger Lakes have been living with for years,” **said Yvonne Taylor, Co-Founder and Vice President of Seneca Lake Guardian**. “Under Governor Hochul, New York has failed to enforce its own climate law, allowing corporate polluters like Greenidge Generation to keep operating for years after their permits were denied. When corporations can exploit loopholes, drag out appeals and continue polluting with no real consequences, the Climate Act becomes meaningless. That failure is why New York is falling behind, and why this administration earns an ‘F.’ We must hold New York’s leaders accountable and protect our environments and the health of our communities for years to come.”

“The forces confronting our democracy and our climate laws are the same: powerful vested interests, disinformation, and short-term thinking. Since the scoping plan to implement the

state's climate law was published in 2022, the transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy generation has been afflicted by incrementalism... then inaction... and now the actual undoing of our landmark climate law," said **Michael Richardson, Campaigns Director for Third Act**. "The excuses from the Governor for not meeting our mandated goals in transitioning off fossil fuel are couched in terms of affordability and reliability. We cannot accept this, for to borrow a quote from Senator Liz Krueger: '*The seemingly reasonable excuses that justify incrementalism today will ring hollow to our grandchildren suffering from the irreversible consequences of our inaction*'. Richardson added, "We have all the knowledge and tools to make the transition, what is missing is the determinative leadership to muster the political courage and political will."

Susan Van Dolsen of Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion and United for Clean Energy said, "Governor Hochul's abysmal climate record is unacceptable to New Yorkers who support renewable energy and who know that continued dependence on fossil fuels and nuclear are not only harming the environment and health, but are not addressing an affordability energy crisis that exists today. Climate Can't Wait groups agree that Hochul must follow the law and implement policies that will support development of renewable energy by standing with the people instead of large, greedy corporations."

In 2025, the tyranny of Big Oil was overtly seen in Trump's drastic cutting of funding for sustainable energy and more than 300 administrative rulings undoing decades of environmental protections, and covertly seen in Hochul's attacks on climate at the state level. Hochul earned her failing grade by blocking legislation designed to lower energy costs, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, transition to clean, renewable energy and reduce plastic waste. While claiming to prioritize "affordability," Hochul cuts funding for proven, low-cost, sustainable solutions that create jobs for New Yorkers," said **Molly Ornati of 350Brooklyn**.

"The kids and caregivers of Climate Families NYC and Westchester would like to give Governor Hochul a big stinking F on her climate policy this year. This year, she pursued an 'all of the above' energy strategy, which led to approval of a fracked gas pipeline while wind power construction was halted. Perhaps by 'all of the above' she meant more pollution, higher utility bills, more profits for fossil fuels and corporate donors, and more climate chaos? We encourage Hochul to try a lot harder in the coming year to hold major polluters accountable and protect New York families," said **Ella Ryan, Climate Families NYC Co-chair and parent of two**.

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