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New York Proposal 1, Environmental Bond Measure (2022)

New York Proposal 1, the **Environmental Bond Measure**, is on the ballot in New York as a legislatively referred bond question on November 8, 2022.

New York Proposal 1



Election date

November 8, 2022

Topic

Bond issues and Environment

Status

On the ballot

Type

Bond issue

Origin

State Legislature

A **"yes"** vote supports issuing \$4.20 billion in general obligation bonds for projects related to the environment, natural resources, water infrastructure, and climate change mitigation.

A **"no"** vote opposes this measure issuing \$4.20 billion in general obligation bonds for projects related to the environment, natural resources, water infrastructure, and climate change mitigation.

Overview

How would the bond revenue be distributed?

See also: Measure design

Proposal 1 would issue \$4.20 billion in general obligation bonds for projects classified as climate change mitigation, flood-risk reduction, water infrastructure, and land conservation and recreation. The ballot measure would require that bond issue revenue be distributed as follows:^[1]

- up to \$1.50 billion for air and water pollution reduction projects; wetland protections to address sea-level rise, storm surge, and flooding; relocating or retrofitting facilities; green building projects; solar arrays, heat pumps, and wind turbines in public low-income housing areas; zero-emission school buses; street trees and urban forest programs; green roofs and reflective roofs; and carbon sequestration on natural and working lands.
- at least \$1.10 billion for flood-risk reduction, coastal and shoreline restoration, relocating and repairing flood-prone infrastructure and roadways, and ecological restoration projects.
- up to \$650.00 million for land conservation and recreation plans, programs, and projects, as well as fish hatcheries;

and

- at least \$650.00 million for projects related to wastewater, sewage, and septic infrastructure; lead service line replacement; riparian buffers; stormwater runoff reduction; agricultural nutrient runoff reduction; and addressing harmful algal blooms.

The ballot measure would require that at least 35% of bond revenue benefit disadvantaged communities.^[1]

How was the bond issue placed on the ballot?

See also: Path to the ballot

Former Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) proposed the bond issue during his State of the State Address on January 8, 2020.^[2] The New York State Legislature referred the \$3.00 billion bond issue, titled the *Restore Mother Nature Bond Act*, to the ballot for November 3, 2020. However, the bond issue was withdrawn on July 30, 2020, due to financial concerns surrounding the coronavirus pandemic, according to Gov. Cuomo.^[3] In April 2021, the state Legislature again passed the bond measure, sending the issue to the ballot for November 8, 2022.^[4]

In September 2021, Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) asked legislative leaders to amend the bond issue to include an additional \$1 billion.^{[5][6]} Renamed the *Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act*, the change increased the bond amount from \$3.00 billion to \$4.20 billion. The state Legislature passed the changes on April 8 as part of the annual budget legislation, and Gov. Hochul signed the bill on April 9.^[1]

Measure design

Distribution of bond revenue

The following table shows which projects would have been eligible for funding from the bond issue:

Click **show** to expand the bond revenue table.

New York Proposal 1 (2022)

[show]

Terms and definitions

The ballot measure included several terms that were defined in the legislation, including:^[1]

- The Climate Justice Working Group, housed within the state Department of Environmental Conservation, was responsible for defining **disadvantaged communities**.^[7] The working group was required to consider socioeconomic criteria, pollution and environmental hazard, and areas vulnerable to flooding, storm surge, and urban heat island effects.^{[8][9]}
- Legislation defined **green buildings project** to include:
 - "installing, upgrading, or modifying a renewable energy source at a state-owned building or for the purpose of converting or connecting a state-owned building or a public school building, or portion thereof, to a renewable energy source;"
 - "reducing energy use or improving energy efficiency or occupant health at a state-owned building or a public school building;"
 - "installing a green roof at a state-owned building or a public school building;"
 - "installation of renewable heating and cooling systems at a state-owned building or a public school building;" and
 - "emission reduction projects."
- The phrase **nature-based solution** was defined as "projects that are supported or inspired by nature or natural processes and functions and that may also offer environmental, economic, and social benefits, while increasing resilience. Nature-based solutions include both green and natural infrastructure."

Text of measure

Ballot title

The ballot title is as follows:^[10]

“ To address and combat the impact of climate change and damage to the environment, the "Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022" authorizes the sale of state bonds up to four billion two hundred million dollars to fund environmental protection, natural restoration, resiliency, and clean energy projects. Shall the Environmental Bond Act of 2022 be approved?^[11] ”

Ballot summary

The official ballot summary is as follows:^[10]

“ The purpose of this proposal is to authorize the creation of state debt and the sale of state bonds in the amount of up to four billion two hundred million dollars (\$4,200,000,000) for certain capital projects for the purpose of making environmental improvements that preserve, enhance, and restore New York’s natural resources and reduce the impact of climate change. If approved, the proposal would allow the State to borrow up to \$4,200,000,000 to provide funding for capital projects for the following: restoration and flood risk reduction (at least \$1,100,000,000), open space land conservation and recreation (up to \$650,000,000), climate change mitigation (up to \$1,500,000,000), and water quality improvement and resilient infrastructure (at least \$650,000,000). The proposal also would allow the State to refund the debt to take advantage of lower interest rates if the opportunity arises. To accomplish this, the proposal authorizes the State Comptroller to issue additional state bonds in sums up to or exceeding the amount of the bonds initially issued to refund, to advance refund, or otherwise to repay part or all of such bonds prior to the scheduled dates of their maturity.^[11] ”

Full text

The ballot measure was a provision, Part NN, of Senate Bill 8008C, which was state budget legislation. The following is Part NN of SB 8008C:^[1]

Part NN of Senate Bill 8008C

§ 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "clean water, clean air, and green jobs environmental bond act of 2022".

§ 2. Creation of state debt. The creation of state debt in an amount not exceeding in the aggregate four billion two hundred million dollars (\$4,200,000,000) is hereby authorized to provide moneys for the single purpose of making environmental improvements that preserve, enhance, and restore New York's natural resources and reduce the impact of climate change by funding capital projects for: restoration and flood risk reduction not less than one billion dollars one hundred million (\$1,100,000,000); open space land conservation and recreation up to six hundred fifty million dollars (\$650,000,000); climate change mitigation up to one billion five hundred million dollars (\$1,500,000,000); and, water quality improvement and resilient infrastructure not less than six hundred fifty million dollars (\$650,000,000).

§ 3. Bonds of the state. The state comptroller is hereby authorized and empowered to issue and sell bonds of the state up to the aggregate amount of four billion two hundred million dollars (\$4,200,000,000) for the purposes of this act, subject to the provisions of article 5 of the state finance law. The aggregate principal amount of such bonds shall not exceed four billion two hundred million dollars (\$4,200,000,000) excluding bonds issued to refund or otherwise repay bonds heretofore issued for such purpose; provided, however, that upon any such refunding or

Readability score

See also: *Ballot measure readability scores, 2022*

Using the [Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level \(FKGL\)](#) and [Flesch Reading Ease \(FRE\)](#) formulas, Ballotpedia scored the readability of the ballot title and summary for this measure. Readability scores are designed to indicate the reading difficulty of text. The Flesch-Kincaid formulas account for the number of words, syllables, and sentences in a text; they do not account for the difficulty of the ideas in the text. The state legislature wrote the ballot language for this measure.

The FKGL for the ballot title is grade level 17, and the FRE is 28. The word count for the ballot title is 59.

The FKGL for the ballot summary is grade level 22, and the FRE is 20. The word count for the ballot summary is 180.

Support

Vote Yes for Clean Water and Jobs is the organization in support of Proposal 1.^[12]

Supporters

Officials

- Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) [↗](#)

Unions

- NYS Laborers' Organizing Fund [↗](#)

Organizations

- Environmental Advocates of New York [↗](#)
- New York League of Conservation Voters [↗](#)
- New Yorkers for Clean Water & Jobs [↗](#)
- Riverkeeper, Inc. [↗](#)
- The Nature Conservancy [↗](#)

Arguments

- **Julie Tighe, president of the New York League of Conservation Voters:** "The Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Bond Act is a ballot initiative that would authorize \$4.2 billion in state spending to safeguard clean air and water, preserve farmland and natural space and update our infrastructure system. The bond act will fund projects to replace dangerous lead pipes and make critical infrastructure updates, from upgrading our sewers, fixing roads, retrofitting buildings and expanding clean energy. It will also create and expand parks and green spaces, which we've all heavily relied on throughout the pandemic. The measure will support family farms and provide funds for improved soil health and will fund conservation projects that will protect our forests, lakes and wildlife habitats. All these projects require skilled labor and the measure will support nearly 100,000 good, local and family-sustaining jobs. We also recognize that for decades, low-income communities and people of color are the most impacted by environmental injustices." [↗](#)
- **Amy Chester, the managing director of Rebuild by Design:** "Communities in New York State are already suffering from climate change. Recent disasters from Hurricane Ida to last summer's severe heat waves, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, have revealed the stark reality that these events disproportionately hurt the most vulnerable populations. We need to pass the Bond Act and give communities the resources they need to build infrastructure that will address climate change and put New York on a path to recovery." [↗](#)
- **Anne deBoer, the manager of Sustainable Economics at AECOM:** "We analyzed the economic impacts of the updated proposal and our findings remain clear – the Bond Act would be a useful stimulus, with the potential to support thousands of jobs in numerous sectors while spurring long-term economic growth and protecting New York's environment for future generations. Voters have an opportunity this year to make investments in protecting the environment that will simultaneously benefit the economy." [↗](#)

Opposition

Opponents

Political Parties

- New York State Conservative Party [↗](#)

Arguments

- **Gerard Kassar, president of the New York State Conservative Party:** "The New York State Conservative Party cares about environmental conservation, but it also cares about working- and middle-class families that are having trouble making ends meet. Almost a million and a half financially beleaguered New York families have fled the state for friendlier tax climates over the past dozen years, and Albany Democrats still don't get it. The Conservative Party does because it is rooted in reality." [↗](#)

Campaign finance

See also: *Campaign finance requirements for New York ballot measures*

The campaign finance information on this page reflects the most recently scheduled reports processed by Ballotpedia, which covered through **October 24, 2022**. The deadline for the next scheduled reports is **December 5, 2022**.

Vote Yes For Clean Water and Jobs is the PAC in support of Proposal 1. The organization has raised \$4.21 million in support of the ballot measure, and has spent \$4.16 million in expenditures.^[13]

	Cash Contributions	In-Kind Contributions	Total Contributions	Cash Expenditures	Total Expenditures
Support	\$3,797,056.00	\$414,527.21	\$4,211,583.21	\$3,747,385.15	\$4,161,912.36
Oppose	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Support

The following table includes contribution and expenditure totals for the committees in support of the measure.^[13]

Committees in support of Proposal 1					
Committee	Cash Contributions	In-Kind Contributions	Total Contributions	Cash Expenditures	Total Expenditures
Vote Yes For Clean Water and Jobs	\$3,797,056.00	\$414,527.21	\$4,211,583.21	\$3,747,385.15	\$4,161,912.36
Total	\$3,797,056.00	\$414,527.21	\$4,211,583.21	\$3,747,385.15	\$4,161,912.36

Donors

The following were the top donors to the committee.^[13]

Donor	Cash Contributions	In-Kind Contributions	Total Contributions
The Nature Conservancy	\$975,000.00	\$185,043.93	\$1,160,043.93
Scenic Hudson Inc	\$600,000.00	\$33,881.71	\$633,881.71

Polls

See also: [2022 ballot measure polls](#)

Are you aware of a poll on this ballot measure that should be included below? You can share ballot measure polls, along with source links, with us at editor@ballotpedia.org.

New York Proposal 1, Environmental Bond Measure (2022)						
Poll	Dates	Sample size	Margin of error	Support	Oppose	Undecided
Siena College Research Institute	9/16/22-9/25/22	655 LV	± 3.9%	55%	26%	12%
<i>Question:</i> "Also on the ballot this year is a proposal to authorize the sale of up to \$4.2 billion of state bonds to fund environmental protection and clean energy projects. Will you vote yes or no on the environmental bond act, or do you not intend to vote on that?"						
<i>Note:</i> LV is likely voters, RV is registered voters, and EV is eligible voters.						

Background

Bonds on the ballot in New York

See also: [Bond issues on the ballot](#)

Between 1990 and 2021, statewide ballots featured seven bond issues. Voters approved three (43 percent) of the bond issues. Voters rejected four (57 percent) of the bond issues.

Year	Measure	Amount	Purpose	Outcome

2014	Proposal 3	\$2.00 billion	Education	✔
2005	Proposal 2	\$2.90 billion	Transportation	✔
2000	Proposal 1	\$3.80 billion	Transportation	✘
1997	Proposal 3	\$2.40 billion	Education	✘
1996	Proposal 1	\$1.75 billion	Environment	✔
1992	Proposal 1	\$800.00 million	Infrastructure	✘
1990	Proposal 1	\$1.975 billion	Environment	✘

Path to the ballot

See also: *Legislatively-referred state statute*

The New York Constitution (Section 11 of Article VII) requires that bond issues, with exceptions, go before voters for approval or rejection. In the New York State Legislature, a simple majority vote in each legislative chamber is required to refer a bond issue. The governor's signature is needed for a bond issue to be placed on the ballot.

2020

On January 8, 2020, Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) proposed the bond issue during his State of the State Address. The New York State Legislature approved budget legislation that included the bond issue; however, the bond issue was withdrawn in response to COVID-19 and the pandemic's expected economic impact.^[2]

On July 30, 2020, Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) announced that the 2020 bond measure was being pulled from the ballot. "The financial situation is unstable. I don't think it would be financially prudent to do it at this time," said Gov. Cuomo. In April, as part of the state budget bill, the New York Director of the Budget was empowered to remove the bond measure from the ballot should the budget department decide that there would be an adverse effect on the state's finances.^[14]

2021

The ballot measure was proposed again during in 2021 as a provision of Senate Bill S2509C. On April 6, 2021, the New York Senate voted 38-25 to approve SB S2509C. Of Senate Democrats, 38 voted "yes" and 5 voted "no". All 20 Republicans voted "no." On April 7, the New York State Assembly voted 88 to 61 to approve the bill. Democrats were divided 88-18. All 43 Republicans voted against the legislation. Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) signed the bill on April 19, 2021.^[4]

2022

In September 2021, Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) asked legislative leaders to amend the bond issue to include an additional \$1 billion, thus increasing the bond amount from \$3 billion to \$4 billion.^{[15][16]} The budget bill introduced in 2022, Senate Bill S8008C, increased the bond amount from \$3.0 billion to \$4.2 billion. The bond measure was also renamed as the Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act.^[1]

On April 8, 2022, both the Assembly and Senate passed a budget bill that included a provision amending the bond measure. On April 9, Gov. Hochul signed the legislation.^[1]

Vote in the New York State Senate April 8, 2022				Vote in the New York State Assembly April 8, 2022			
Requirement: Simple majority of all members in each chamber				Requirement: Simple majority of all members in each chamber			
Number of yes votes required: 32 ✔				Number of yes votes required: 75 ✔			
	Yes	No	Not voting		Yes	No	Not voting
Total	48	15	0	Total	113	35	0

Total percent	76.19%	23.81%	0.00%	Total percent	76.35%	23.65%	0.00%
Democrat	43	0	0	Democrat	101	4	0
Republican	5	15	0	Republican	11	31	0
				Independence	1	0	0

How to cast a vote

See also: *Voting in New York*

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How to cast a vote in New York

[show]

See also

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External links

- [New York Senate Budget Bill 8008 \(2022\)](#)

Footnotes

1. *New York Senate*, "Senate Bill S8008C," accessed April 11, 2022
2. *New York Governor*, "2020 State of the State Address Proposals," accessed April 1, 2020
3. *North Country Public Radio*, "Cuomo scraps \$3-billion Environmental Bond Act," July 30, 2020
4. *New York Senate*, "Senate Bill 2509," accessed April 12, 2021
5. *Hudson Valley 360*, "Hochul to add \$1B to Environmental Bond Act," September 22, 2021
6. *WAMC*, "How big will NY's environmental bond act be?" March 21, 2022
7. *New York Climate Act*, "Climate Justice Working Group," accessed April 11, 2022

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- Ballot measures
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