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WNY Climate and Immigration Groups Protest Hochul Rally

They chanted "Climate Justice/Shut Down Polluters/New York For All/Shut Down Colluders"

Cheektowaga, NY: Western New York community members from several climate, environment, and immigration organizations rallied outside of an event in Cheektowaga where Governor Hochul appeared, to call attention to the ways that she is failing to protect New Yorkers by attempting to weaken the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act through the state budget process and by refusing to back the full New York For All Act.

The Governor came to Cheektowaga today to tout her proposed changes to weaken the greenhouse gas emission reduction goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act under the auspices of affordability.

However, she admitted just days ago that her proposed changes will not immediately improve energy costs, and claimed that the proposed changes that will keep New Yorkers reliant on fossil fuels for energy are looking at the years ahead.

This claim is counter to all the science and energy planning of the past decade, including by NY state agencies, and jeopardizes the deployment of 21st century technologies which would retain and grow the unionized workforce in NY, such as shifting pipefitter jobs from maintaining the natural gas system into the construction and maintenance of Thermal Energy Networks, and the reuse of brownfields for renewable solar energy generation, which would grow the number of unionized electrical and



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building trades jobs while also addressing existing industrial contamination in WNY communities.

Transitioning to renewable energy generation offers very real solutions and continues a long trend of decreasing costs, increasing efficiencies, and offering local stability amid worsening global supply chains, which the Governor's approach of telling state staff to change formulas on spreadsheets does not.

Her approach also does nothing to address the growing energy demand of hyperscale data centers, nor does it address the backlog of deferred maintenance to the grid by the private sector which is one of the largest contributors to the energy affordability crisis. Per a recent report by LittleSis, one of the largest donor bases for the Governor in the 2026 election cycle has been technology companies in the artificial intelligence sector. A moratorium on data centers is currently being weighed in Albany.

"The Governor has the opportunity to lead in the fight against the Trump agenda. Instead she is clearing the path for him to steamroll his policies into NY through the budget process, in a very anti-democratic manner and through refusing to implement the laws on the books, something the Trump administration is also very comfortable with." said Dawn Wells-Clyburn, Executive Director of People United for Sustainable Housing (PUSH Buffalo.) *"Rather than her approach of trying to change the math, we call on the Governor to instead put some shovels in the ground! We can walk and chew bubble gum: we need both affordability AND climate justice. In fact, with full implementation, the CLCPA is a TRUE holistic solution to affordability, housing, workforce and health."*

She added *"Our affordability crisis is directly linked to the \$50 Billion it takes to maintain a faulty Gas Infrastructure AND Governor Hochul's Fossil Fuel Financiers. A truly progressive affordability strategy will raise revenue and invest in community-led climate solutions. Governor Hochul needs to fully implement the CLCPA by releasing Cap and Invest regulations and committing to achievable renewable energy targets, e.g., a 15 GW goal for*



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NYPA to implement the Build Public Renewables Act. We also urge her to protect vulnerable New Yorkers by backing the legislative version of the New York for All Act, which she is trying to also weaken.”

New York For All would prevent collusion between local police and ICE and Border Patrol on Trump’s mass deportation agenda. This is especially important to the Western New York community in the wake of Nurul Amin Shah Alam’s death. Mr. Shah Alam was transferred into the custody of the Border Patrol agents who abandoned him outside in freezing conditions by Erie County Sheriff’s Office corrections officers.

Mr. Shah Alam would likely be alive today if New York For All were already law in New York. Western New York Democrats including Jonathan Rivera and Sean Ryan have expressed support for New York For All, but Governor Hochul continues to oppose it, offering instead a compromised version that immigration justice organizations oppose. Governor Hochul’s version of the bill would not have prevented the act of collusion that led to Mr. Shah Alam’s death.

“We know that the Erie County Sheriff’s Office and other local police departments continue to collude with ICE and Border Patrol to harm our neighbors,” said Melissa Hubbard, a leader in Showing Up for Racial Justice Buffalo (SURJ). *“New York For All is urgently needed to prevent another senseless tragedy in our community.”*

Since taking office in 2023, Governor Hochul has also maintained close ties to Delaware North through her husband, First Gentleman William Hochul, a longtime senior executive and top lawyer at the company.

“Despite pledges of transparency and a recusal policy, her actions have continued to raise concerns about benefiting Delaware North, particularly here in Buffalo.” said Harper Bishop, Campaign Coordinator for Evict ICE from 250 Delaware Ave. *“Recent reporting from watchdog research group LittleSis show these ties persist through campaign contributions from Buffalo-based*



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billionaires, the Jacobs family, owners of Delaware North, an entertainment and hospitality services conglomerate.”

He continued, stating that “While the governor claims to oppose federal immigration crackdowns, she has not used her personal and political influence to push Delaware North to remove DHS and ICE from its global headquarters. We call on Governor Hochul to pass NY4All, without any carveouts, and demand that Delaware North use its outsized power to demand that Uniland Development stop profiting from unjust detentions and mass deportations, and remove them from 250 Delaware Avenue once and for all.”

The assembled residents and organizations call upon the Governor to stop attempting to weaken the CLCPA and NY4ALL, and instead take leadership amid the current national crisis brought on by the Trump administration by forging a bold progressive path forward.

Bridge Rauch, Environmental Justice Organizer for the Clean Air Coalition of Western New York, added *“The Governor is failing to protect New York residents on multiple fronts. She states that she believes that she is doing her best to fight the Trump agenda, and she says she takes to heart the lessons learned from the Love Canal crisis. I, too, take lessons from Love Canal, and have spoken directly with survivors about all they endured. In that instance, residents were also forced to go toe to toe with NYS lawmakers and agencies to force them to take actions to bring about some semblance of justice, and communities like Love Canal are those that today continue to be hurt the worst by her inaction. I would also urge her to consider that history tends to take as harsh a view of those who choose the path of compromise as with those who actively wish harm upon vulnerable populations.”*

Clean Air, PUSH Buffalo, SURJ Buffalo, Evict ICE from 250 Delaware, and all assembled partners further urged all residents of Western New York to contact their lawmakers by the end of this week during the crucial budget negotiations and voice their support for the immediate passage of the full NY4ALL act and for the full implementation of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, without any of the changes the Governor is



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attempting to make to either piece of legislation. The NYS budget is due April 1, 2026.

For more information, please contact Bridge Rauch, Environmental Justice Organizer at the Clean Air Coalition of Western New York, at bridge@cacwny.org or 716-852-3813.

Citations and further reading -

<https://www.cityandstateny.com/opinion/2026/03/opinion-lowering-energy-bill-s-starts-getting-new-york-fossil-fuels/412229/>

<https://nysfocus.com/2026/03/20/hochul-clcpa-climate-law-roll-back>

<https://www.nydailynews.com/2026/03/12/keep-n-y-s-climate-law-it-is-working/>

<https://littlesis.org/news/who-is-bankrolling-new-yorks-gubernatorial-candidates/>

<https://littlesis.org/reports/hochul-stalls-climate-action-amid-multi-million-dollar-lobbying-effort-by-fossil-fuel-industry/>

<https://investigativepost.org/?s=Nurul+Amin+Shah+Alam>

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The Clean Air Coalition builds power by developing grassroots leaders who organize their communities to run and win environmental justice and public health campaigns in Western New York.



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