



Environmental  
Scorecard

New York  
City Council

2010 - 2011



NYLCV  
NEW YORK LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS



# ABOUT THE NEW YORK LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

NYLCV is the only nonpartisan, statewide environmental organization in New York that takes a pragmatic approach to fighting for clean water, healthy air, renewable energy and open space.

We're effective because we:

- Educate public officials about the steps they should take to improve the environment;
- Evaluate the performance of elected officials; and
- Endorse and elect environmental leaders.

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## INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City Council plays a critical role in New York's overall sustainability efforts. City Council members originate important legislation affecting transportation, parks, urban planning and much more, while Council committees monitor the city's progress through oversight hearings.

In addition, the Council collaborates on legislation proposed by the Mayor's Office and city agencies. This collaboration is particularly important since Council approval is required for many components of PlaNYC— the Bloomberg administration's comprehensive long-term sustainability plan.

NYLCV selected the legislation in this Scorecard after extensive consultation with partner organizations in the transportation, environmental justice, faith, conservation, parks and clean-energy communities. Relying heavily on their input, NYLCV drafted an initial list of more than three dozen bills. The final list was pared down to eleven to indicate the highest collective priorities. Throughout the Scorecard formulation process, NYLCV was in contact with Council members and their staffs, advising them of the bills under consideration and the pro-environment actions we urged them to take.

As the results of this Scorecard show, the current City Council is the most pro-environment Council in recent memory. The average score was 90 – well above the 68 average on NYLCV's 2009 Scorecard and double the 2005 Scorecard average of 45. It is worth noting that high scores were posted among members of both political parties and in all five boroughs.

This Scorecard reflects the strong environmental leanings of the City Council, but just as importantly, the willingness of this body to work closely with the executive branch of city government on critical sustainability issues that will benefit the lives of New Yorkers for years to come.

Big changes are coming to city government with term limits in 2013. We look forward to working with this Council over the next 20 months to build on their work to make New York City a sustainability leader.

## AN ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION OF CITY COUNCIL SPEAKER CHRISTINE C. QUINN

The Office of the Speaker wields tremendous power in the City Council. The speaker appoints committees and exercises broad control over the Council's legislative and policy agendas. To fully gauge the Speaker's handling of sustainability issues, NYLCV offers this detailed analysis rather than a numerical score.

Speaker Christine C. Quinn was elected to represent Manhattan's 3rd City Council district in 1999. She was overwhelmingly elected to the powerful position of City Council Speaker in 2006 and re-elected in 2010.

Quinn has established herself as an environmental leader throughout her tenure as Speaker, particularly in recent years. Through her Food Works plan she has championed food sustainability and food equity; she has been a vocal supporter for the full implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan; and she championed significant improvements to the city's recycling program.

The crowning sustainability achievement of the City Council in 2010 and 2011 has been codifying dozens of the New York Green Codes Task Force's recommendations. In the two years since the task force proposed 111 recommendations for greening New York's building stock, the Council has – under the Speaker's leadership – implemented at least 29. Buildings account for 75 percent of the city's total greenhouse gas emissions and 95 percent of total electrical consumption, so the impact of these bills to the city and its residents is impressive.



Urban Green, formerly the New York City Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council, calculates that the adoption of the 29 codes will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5 percent; save 30 billion gallons of water through better plumbing regulations; treat 15 million gallons of toxic construction water; recycle 100,000 tons of asphalt; and save \$400 million in overall energy costs. These environmental benefits will be realized by 2030, putting the city on track to meet many of the goals of PlaNYC.

Importantly, Speaker Quinn has also worked closely with the executive branch of city government to advance sustainability legislation proposed by the Mayor's Office and city agencies. The sheer amount of environmental legislation adopted by the Council, as well as the high individual member scores in this Scorecard, reflect the high priority that the Speaker has placed on sustainability. The Speaker and her committee chairs deserve enormous credit not only for the quality of their work over the past few years but also for their professionalism, traits rarely seen in government these days.

NYLCV applauds Speaker Quinn for her leadership on the swift progress of green building legislation and on the wide range of sustainability initiatives in this Scorecard. We look forward to her leadership in advancing other recommendations from the Green Codes Task Force throughout the balance of her tenure.

<p>✓ = Pro-environment action  X = Anti-environment action  A = Absent  * = Not in office at time of vote</p>	<p>Sustainable Food  Waste Reduction  Green Infrastructure  Solar Energy  Clean Air  Indoor Air Quality  Green Buildings  Lighting Efficiency  Safe Streets  Clean Waterways  Illegal Dumping</p>											<p><b>SCORE</b></p>
Arroyo	A	A	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	73	
Barron	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Brewer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Cabrera	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	82	
Chin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Comrie	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Crowley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Dickens	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Dilan	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Dromm	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Eugene	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Ferras	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Fidler	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Foster	A	A	X	A	A	A	✓	✓	✓	A	36	
Garodnick	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Gennaro	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Gentile	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Gonzalez	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	82	
Greenfield	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Halloran	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Ignizio	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Jackson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
James	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Koo	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91	
Koppell	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	
Koslowitz	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	

	Sustainable Food	Waste Reduction	Green Infrastructure	Solar Energy	Clean Air	Indoor Air Quality	Green Buildings	Lighting Efficiency	Safe Streets	Clean Waterways	Illegal Dumping	SCORE
✓ = Pro-environment action ✗ = Anti-environment action A = Absent * = Not in office at time of vote												
Lander	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Lappin	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91
Levin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Mark-Viverito	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Mealy	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	82
Mendez	A	A	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	73
Nelson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Oddo	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91
Palma	A	A	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	64
Recchia	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	82
Rivera	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91
Reyna	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91
Rodriguez	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Rose	✓	✓	✗	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	82
Sanders	A	A	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	73
Seabrook	A	A	✗	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	64
Ulrich	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Vacca	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Vallone	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Van Bramer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Vann	A	A	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	73
Weprin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Williams	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Wills	✓	✓	✗	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	73

## ABOUT THE BILLS

### How the scores are computed:

Council members earn points by casting pro-environmental votes or for co-sponsoring pro-environment bills that have not come up for a vote yet by the entire City Council. Of the 11 pieces of legislation in this Scorecard, 10 were voted upon. All the bills are graded equally.

### Sustainable Food (Int. 452-A-2011, Brewer)

Codified as Local Law No. 2011/050, this legislation requires the city to develop guidelines for city agencies to purchase food grown in New York State and publish those guidelines on the Mayor's Office of Contracts Services Web site. Procuring New York agriculture products helps improve access to healthy food, supports the region's farmers, food processors and distributors. Locally produced food also benefits the consumer, the environment and the regional economy.

This legislation was introduced January 18, 2011, approved by the Council on July 28, 2011 and signed into law on August 17, 2011.

### Waste Reduction (Int. 461-A-2011, Palma)

Codified as Local Law No. 2011/051, this legislation requires the city's environmental purchasing director, in conjunction with the Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability, to establish goods packaging reduction guidelines for all contracts with city agencies. This includes the reduction and elimination of packaging materials whenever possible and the use of packaging that is reusable, recyclable or compostable. This law will help save the city money, divert waste from landfills, reduce the city's carbon footprint and also create jobs in the collection, processing and reuse of goods.

This legislation was introduced January 18, 2011, approved by the Council on July 28, 2011 and signed by into law August 17, 2011.

### Green Infrastructure (Int. 75-2010, Gennaro)

This legislation requires the city to increase the planting of storm water-tolerant native vegetation in order to facilitate storm water retention and filtration. This bill will help advance cost-effective initiatives to reduce combined sewer overflows. Int. 75-2010 was introduced on March 3, 2010.

A hearing was held on November 10, 2010 and the bill remains in the Committee on Environmental Protection.

### Solar Energy (Int. 341-A-2010, Dilan)

Codified as Local Law No. 2011/020, this legislation removes barriers for the installations of solar thermal and photovoltaic panels by permitting more than one-third of the area of the roof to be covered by these panels without counting as an additional floor.

This bill was introduced on September 29, 2010, approved by the Council on April 6, 2011 and signed into law on April 29, 2011.

### Clean Air (Int. 194-A-2010, Gennaro)

Codified as Local Law No. 2010/043, this legislation mandates the use of biofuels in heating oil and phases out dirty boilers. This bill will cut by half the allowable level of harmful sulfur-pollutants in heating oil, thereby reducing the emissions of several air toxins and local-air pollutants that are directly linked to heart and lung disease.

This legislation was introduced on April 29, 2010, approved by the Committee on Environmental Protection on July 29, 2010, and signed into law on August 16, 2010.

### **Indoor Air Quality (Int. 592-A-2011, Chin)**

Codified as Local Law No. 2011/72, this legislation requires commercial and residential buildings that already have a large air-handling unit for mechanical ventilation to use air filters that are capable of filtering out dust particulates that cause asthma and other respiratory conditions. This bill will improve air quality and reduce indoor pollutants.

This legislation was introduced on June 14, 2011, approved by the Council on December 8, 2011 and signed into law on December 27, 2011.

### **Green Buildings (Int. 267-A-2010, Gennaro)**

Codified as Local Law No. 2010/049, this legislation adds environmental protection as a fundamental principle of the building code. This bill will provide minimum standards to safeguarding the environment by regulating and controlling elements in building design and construction.

This legislation was introduced on June 9, 2010, approved by the Council on September 29, 2010 and signed into law on October 6, 2010.

### **Lighting Efficiency (Int. 277-A-2010, Ulrich)**

Codified as Local Law No. 2010/052, this legislation will increase lighting efficiency in apartment buildings by allowing automatic lighting sensor controls to be installed to operate lighting fixtures in stairwells, hallways, mechanical equipment and storage rooms.

This bill was introduced on June 9, 2010, approved by the Council on September 29, 2010 and signed into law on October 6, 2010.

### Safe Streets (Int. 370-A-2010, Lappin)

Local Law No. 2011/012 requires the New York City Police Department to make certain traffic-related statistics available through its web site. This bill will enable communities to identify unsafe traffic areas and make informed recommendations regarding planning processes.

This legislation was introduced on October 13, 2010 and approved by the Council on February 16, 2011 and signed into law on February 22, 2011.

### Clean Waterways (Int. 53-A-2010, Nelson)

Local Law No. 2011/055 requires various city departments to develop a plan to combat illegal dumping into New York City Waterways. New York's waterways are vital resources, directly linked to the health of our economy and increasingly our quality of life. Anything that threatens their sustainability reduces our waterways' economic, recreational and environmental value. This bill will help reduce the pollution of the city's waterways.

This legislation was introduced on February 11, 2010, approved by the Council on September 8, 2011 and signed into law on September 27, 2011.

### Illegal Dumping (Int. 54-A-2010, Nelson)

Local Law No. 2010-004 reduces illegal dumping into New York City waterways by increasing the penalties to no less than \$1,500 and no more than \$10,000 for the first violation and not less than \$5,000 or more than \$20,000 for each subsequent violation.

This legislation was introduced on February 11, 2010. It was approved by the Council on March 3, 2010 and signed into law on March 18, 2010.



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