



Environmental
Scorecard

New York
City Council

2012 - 2013



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 New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV) regularly convenes a “Green Group” of New York City’s leading environmental, transportation, public health, parks and environmental justice organizations to discuss important issues and formulate collective legislative priorities.

NYLCV selected the legislation in this Scorecard after extensive consultation with these partner organizations. From an initial universe of more than three dozen bills, the final Scorecard bills were pared down to 17 to indicate the highest collective priorities. Throughout the Scorecard formulation process, NYLCV was in contact with Council members and their staffs, informing them of the bills under consideration and the pro-environment actions we urged them to take.

As this Scorecard makes evident, the City Council’s environmental performance under Speaker Christine Quinn’s leadership was strong. Important legislation — including post-Sandy reforms and an expansion of recycling — either passed or moved toward passage. The Council also played a critical role in realizing the goals of PlaNYC. From a groundbreaking package of energy-efficiency bills to composting for commercial businesses, the City Council took significant actions to make New York a greener, healthier place for all. Our city’s reputation as a global sustainability leader is directly attributable to the efforts of all 51 City Council members.

NYLCV applauds the City Council for its record of accomplishment over the last two years. As a new era of leadership dawns in New York City, we are especially heartened that many members of the City Council’s new leadership team scored a perfect 100 on this Scorecard — including the new Speaker, Melissa Mark-Viverito. We look forward to collaborating with this new generation of environmental champions and Mayor Bill de Blasio to build on the city’s past achievements and chart a course for an even healthier and more sustainable New York.

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.

Christine C. Quinn was the most pro-environment Speaker that New York City has seen so far. From sustainable food and clean energy, to green buildings and mass transit, she played a pivotal role in the transformation of New York City into the sustainability leader it is today. The sheer volume of environmental legislation adopted by the Council — as well as the high individual member scores in this Scorecard — reflect the high priority Quinn placed on sustainability.



NYLCV applauds Speaker Quinn for working with the Bloomberg administration to advance its environmental agenda, as well as for her determination to go beyond it; the City Council frequently initiated and approved legislation that was not a priority on the other side of City Hall. The Speaker and her committee chairs — especially Council Member James Gennaro, who chaired the Environmental Protection Committee — deserve enormous credit not only for the quality of their work but also for their professionalism and remarkable work ethic, down to their last days in office.

Here is a look at some of the City Council's major environmental accomplishments under Speaker Quinn's leadership:

Solid Waste: In 2006, the City Council adopted a new, comprehensive solid waste management plan (SWMP) based on an equitable distribution of waste-transfer facilities and a more sustainable waste-transportation infrastructure. Speaker Quinn demonstrated an unwavering commitment to borough equity and environmental justice by supporting a marine transfer station in her own district, even in the face of significant local opposition.

Recycling: The City Council dramatically expanded recycling to include electronic waste, plastic shopping bags, clothing and all rigid plastic containers. The Council also added hundreds of new recycling bins in public spaces and brought composting to all five boroughs.

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Air Quality: The Council passed legislation that not only modernizes the city's aging vehicles and trucks, but also cleans up the privately owned fleet of 8,300 waste collection vehicles — the equivalent of removing 341,829 new cars from city roads each year.

Climate Change: In 2008, the Council passed the Climate Protection Act, requiring the city to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2030. In 2012, Speaker Quinn helped to expand the scope of the New York City Climate Change Adaptation Task Force to assess how extreme heat, storms and flooding affect vulnerable populations, public health, natural systems, buildings and the economy. The bill is the first of its kind from any state or local government in the country to create institutional government mechanisms to assess the latest climate change science and plan and implement adaptive strategies accordingly.

Resiliency: Hurricane Sandy made landfall in New York City on October 29, 2012. The unprecedented storm cost 43 New Yorkers' lives and \$19 billion worth of damage. Speaker Quinn led the City Council through 11 post-Sandy oversight hearings to better prepare the city for future extreme weather events. The City Council passed 10 bills that will improve emergency preparedness and response by requiring the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to develop plans for food and water access, traffic and fuel management, emergency shelter preparations, vulnerable populations, outreach and small-business recovery. In 2013, the Speaker and Council also made great strides in building safety and resiliency, implementing 16 out of the 33 Building Resiliency Task Force proposals in the final months of 2013.

Transportation: Speaker Quinn was a steadfast champion of policies that give New Yorkers fast, convenient, safe and affordable options for moving about the city. Of particular note was the Five Borough Ferry Plan, which funded a comprehensive study of sites in all five boroughs to determine which are capable of supporting new ferry service. The Council also approved funds to establish ferry service between Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Rockaways, which gives residents of those communities better alternatives to driving.

Food Access: Speaker Quinn created FoodWorks, the first comprehensive strategy to ensure all New Yorkers have access to affordable and nutritious food. She was instrumental in expanding the number of farmers markets accepting food stamps to 51. Quinn created the FRESH program, which uses tax and zoning incentives to open and preserve supermarkets in neighborhoods with limited access to healthy food. She also supported 500 new fruit and vegetable carts in neighborhoods with limited access to healthy food. In addition, Quinn launched the Healthy Bodegas Initiative to educate and support bodega owners to increase fresh food offerings.

Green Buildings: With the city's existing building stock accounting for 80 percent of its carbon footprint, green building initiatives are absolutely critical to fight climate change. Under Quinn's leadership, the City Council in 2009 approved the Greener, Greater Buildings Plan which required energy audits of large buildings. The following year, the Council approved legislation to add environmental protection as a fundamental principle of the City Building Code. And in 2012, the Council adopted the Green Zone Text Amendment to remove zoning impediments to the construction and retrofitting of green buildings.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pro-environment action ✗ Anti-environment action A Absent - Not in office at time of vote ND = incomplete (scored less than half term) 	Plastic Bags	Polystyrene Ban	Composting	Hydropower	Energy Data	Recycling	Biodiversity	Green Zoning	CSO Reduction	Electric Vehicles	Complete Streets	Truck Emissions	Green Fleet	Fuel Economy	Fuel Usage	Emergency Plans	Toxic Materials	SCORE
Arroyo	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	88
Barron	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Brewer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Cabrera	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Chin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Comrie Jr.	✗	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	88
Crowley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Dickens	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Dilan	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Dromm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Eugene	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Ferreras	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	76
Fidler	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	88
Foster	✗	-	-	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	89
Garodnick	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Gennaro	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Gentile	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Gibson	✗	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	88
Gonzalez	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	82
Greenfield	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Halloran III	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A	A	✓	✓	76
Ignizio	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	88
Jackson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
James	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
King	✗	✓	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	93
Koo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Koppell	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ = Pro-environment action ✗ = Anti-environment action Δ = Absent - = Not in office at time of vote INC = Incumbents (scored less than half term) 	Plastic Bags	Polystyrene Ban	Composting	Hydropower	Energy Data	Recycling	Biodiversity	Green Zoning	C-50 Reduction	Electric Vehicles	Complete Streets	Truck Emissions	Green Fleet	Fuel Economy	Fuel Usage	Emergency Plans	Toxic Materials	SCORE
Koslowitz	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Lander	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Lappin	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Levin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Mark-Viverito	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Mealy	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Mendez	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Nelson	✗	✓	✓	Δ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	88
Oddo	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	88
Palma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	94
Reochia Jr.	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Reyna	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	88
Richards	✗	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	91
Rivera	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Rodriguez	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	A	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	82
Ross	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	88
Sanders Jr.	-	-	-	✓	-	A	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	INC
Seabrook	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	INC
Ulrich	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Vacca	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	88
Vallone Jr.	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A	A	✓	✓	76
Van Bramer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
Vann	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Weprin	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Williams	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94
Wills	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94

ABOUT THE BILLS

Plastic Bags (Int. 1135-2013, Lander)

Reduces the use of plastic bags by charging a fee of no less than 10 cents for carry-out bags. This bill will help reduce the amount of plastic bags in the waste stream and encourage the use of reusable bags. *(This legislation was introduced on Aug. 22, 2013 and stalled in the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.)*

Polystyrene Ban (Int. 1060-2013, Fidler)

Restricts the sale or provision of single-service food items in packaging that contains expanded polystyrene. This bill would eliminate a large volume of an environmentally harmful product that does not biodegrade and eliminate a major hurdle to large-scale food waste and other organic recycling. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Dec. 19, 2013 and signed into law on Dec. 30, 2013.)*

Composting (Int. 1162-2013, James)

Requires that temporary public events and food establishments provide facilities to allow for commercial organic waste recycling. These entities must contract with a private carter to collect the organic waste, transport the waste to a facility themselves or provide on-site organic waste processing such as composting or anaerobic digestion. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Dec. 19, 2013 and signed into law on Dec. 30, 2013.)*

Hydropower (Int. 534-2011, Gennaro)

Requires the New York City Department of Environmental Protection to assess the electricity-generation capability of the city's water supply, wastewater treatment systems and bodies of water, with the aim to implement hydropower projects at efficient sites. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on April 18, 2012 and signed into law on May 1, 2012.)*

HOW THE SCORES ARE COMPUTED

Council Members earn points by casting pro-environment votes or for co-sponsoring pro-environment bills that were not brought up for a vote by the full City Council. Of the 17 pieces of legislation, 16 were voted on. All of the bills are graded equally.

Energy Data (Int. 887-2012, Gennaro)

Calls for the development of a sustainability portal — an interactive Web site aimed at informing the public of the feasibility and economic viability of installing renewable-energy systems in New York City. The portal will make available tools to calculate the financial benefits and feasibility of installing renewable energy systems, as well as information about which local and state agencies must approve such installations. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Feb. 6, 2013 and signed into law on Feb. 25, 2013.)*

Recycling (Int. 575-2011, Garodnick)

Requires newly constructed multi-family residences to provide adequate space to store and sort designated recyclable material. With the city's current recycling rate at an unacceptably low 15 percent, this bill is part of a broader strategy for the city to meet its goal of a 30 percent recycling rate by 2017. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Dec. 10, 2012 and signed into law on Dec. 20, 2012.)*

Biodiversity (Int. 399-2010, Vann)

Mandates that the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation revise its rules and design manuals to increase native plant species on city-owned properties and to reduce invasive plant species. Non-native plants are ill adapted to the city's climate conditions and require frequent mowing and watering. This law supports biological diversity while decreasing land maintenance costs. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Feb. 6, 2013 and signed into law on Feb. 25, 2013.)*

Green Zoning (Res. 1323-2012, Comrie Jr.)

This citywide zoning text amendment removes impediments to the construction and retrofitting of green buildings. It gives property owners more choices for the investments they can make to save energy, save money and improve environmental performance. *(Approved by the Council on April 30, 2012.)*

CSO Reduction (Int. 75-2010, Gennaro)

Requires the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation to create a storm-water retention manual to instruct the city on best practices for planting and maintaining stormwater tolerant trees and plants. Combined sewer overflows (CSOs) are a major source of pollution for New York City's waterways and this legislation will improve water quality while also helping to prevent flooding. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Feb. 6, 2013 and signed into law on Feb. 25, 2013.)*

Electric Vehicles (Int. 1176-2013, Dilan)

Provides the infrastructure for electric-vehicle charging stations in new parking lots and garages by requiring them to provide 3.1 kW of electrical capacity to at least 20 percent of their parking spaces. Electric vehicles emit 75 percent less carbon dioxide than the typical New York City car and this legislation will help address one of the major hurdles to expanding the use of electric vehicles, i.e., the availability of charging stations. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Dec. 10, 2013 and signed into law on Dec. 17, 2013.)*

Complete Streets (Int. 1114-2013, Garodnick)

Mandates a comprehensive Street Design Manual for the improvements of roads and sidewalks every four years to promote higher-quality street designs and more efficient project implementation. The Street Design Manual will also help make New York City's streets and sidewalks safer for all pedestrians, motorists and cyclists, and will implement the use of sustainable practices and materials. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Dec. 10, 2013 and signed into law on Dec. 17, 2013.)*

Truck Emissions (Int. 1160-2013, Gennaro)

Requires commercial heavy-duty waste collection trucks that operate in the city to achieve U.S. Environmental Protection Agency emissions standards for 2007 model-year engines by 2020. The mandate will affect 85 percent of the 8,000 trucks in the commercial waste fleet. The resultant reduction in emissions is equivalent to removing approximately 341,829 cars from city roads every year. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Dec. 19, 2013 and signed into law on Dec. 30, 2013.)*

Green Fleet (Int. 1061-2013, Gennaro)

Aims to reduce emissions from vehicles used by or on behalf of the City of New York. This legislation requires that fuel-powered motor vehicles operated for city agencies contain at least five percent of an ultra-low sulfur diesel blend containing biodiesel in 2014. In 2016, the vehicles will be required to contain 25 percent biodiesel in the months of April to November and five percent from December to March. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Aug. 22, 2013 and signed into law on Sept. 4, 2013.)*

Fuel Economy (Int. 1082-2013, Wills)

Sets a minimum average fuel economy for light-duty vehicles purchased by the city. In 2014, the average fuel economy for light-duty vehicles will increase by 18 percent; by 2022 the average fuel economy will increase by 40 percent. Employing more fuel-efficient vehicles will help put the city on track to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent below 2006 levels by 2017. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Aug. 22, 2013 and signed into law on Sept. 4, 2013.)*

Fuel Usage (Int. 1074-2013, Richards)

Requires the mayor to submit a report regarding the fuel-economy performance of light-duty and medium-duty city-owned vehicles to the Speaker of the City Council and Comptroller. This legislation helps create benchmarks for progress, as the city looks to improve the energy- and cost-efficiency of its vehicle fleet. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Aug. 22, 2013 and signed into law on Sept. 4, 2013.)*

Emergency Plans (Int. 1085-2013, Chin)

Relates to emergency preparedness recommendations for owners of residential and commercial buildings and the posting of emergency information. It requires the city to compile recommendations for how residential and commercial property owners may prepare for and communicate certain information to the tenants of such buildings in the event of a weather emergency, a natural disaster or a utility outage. This law is important to enhance the city's overall resiliency. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Oct. 30, 2013 and signed into law on Nov. 19, 2013.)*

Toxic Materials (Int. 1102-2013, Van Bramer)

Improves hazardous-material storage for facilities located in special flood-hazard areas by requiring a risk management plan to ensure hazardous and toxic substances are located in areas that are dry and flood proof. *(This legislation was approved by the Council on Dec. 19, 2013 and signed into law on Dec. 30, 2013.)*

Electing for the Environment



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