

CLIMATE JOBS INSTITUTE

2025 Impact Report: New York State Programs



DIRECTORS' MESSAGE

In 1945, the New York State legislature established the School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) at Cornell University. To this day, the ILR School is a state-sponsored school with a mission to help policymakers, unions, and industry leaders understand and act on the most pressing labor and employment issues of the day.

At the Climate Jobs Institute (CJI), we are proud to carry on this tradition of public service in new and exciting ways. Since our founding in 2023, we have worked with key stakeholders to help guide New York State's transition to a low-carbon economy that tackles climate change, elevates workers' voices, creates equitable career pathways, and drives affordability for everyday New Yorkers.

In this annual impact report, we share highlights of our work in 2025. Through our excellent research, cutting-edge policy solutions, and innovative training and education programs, CJI has helped policymakers, labor leaders and others drive New York's transition to an equitable, climate-safe economy. Cornell ILR first began working on labor, employment and climate change issues in New York in 2014, and we are proud to deepen our commitment and efforts to the Empire State year after year.

None of this work would be possible without our dedicated partners across the state. In particular, we would like to thank Climate Jobs New York, and the New York State legislature for supporting our work. We would also like to thank the incredible faculty and staff at CJI and Cornell's ILR School who helped deliver these amazing results. We look forward to further progress in New York's transition to an equitable, unionized, and climate-safe economy in 2026 and beyond.



Dr. Lara Skinner
Executive Director
Climate Jobs Institute



Zach Cunningham
Assistant Director of Labor Education
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ABOUT CLIMATE JOBS INSTITUTE

The Climate Jobs Institute at Cornell University's ILR School is guiding New York's transition to a strong, equitable, affordable, and resilient clean energy economy that tackles the climate crisis, creates high-quality union jobs, confronts race and gender inequality, and builds a skilled and diverse workforce. Through cutting-edge policy studies, deep relationships with on-the-ground partners, and innovative training, education, and workforce development programs, CJI provides information that policymakers, the labor and environmental movements, industry leaders, and others need to navigate this historic transition to a zero-carbon economy.

As part of New York State's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, CJI takes its public service mission seriously. Funding from New York State has allowed CJI to conduct groundbreaking research, release informative public policy reports, influence workforce development strategies, and convene educational programs for legislative and labor audiences on climate change and clean energy. This impact report highlights CJI's key activities and programs in New York in 2025. To learn more about our work, please visit www.ilr.cornell.edu/climate-jobs-institute

RESEARCH & POLICY DEVELOPMENT

6

POLICY REPORTS RELEASED

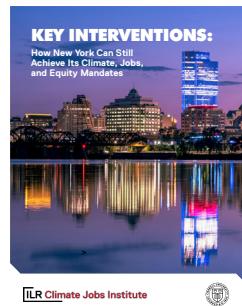


CJI released and contributed to six New York State reports in 2025, advancing policies to create high-quality jobs in energy generation, manufacturing, utilities, housing, and many other industries. Some highlights include:



[Update on New York's Renewable Energy Policies, Plans & Progress: A Climate Jobs Perspective](#), examining New York's progress toward meeting its ambitious climate and clean energy goals and mandates. The report also examined whether the jobs that have been created thus far are

good quality jobs for New Yorkers who have historically been underrepresented in clean energy or the transition away from fossil fuels.



KEY INTERVENTIONS:

How New York Can Still Achieve Its Climate, Jobs, and Equity Mandates

ILR Climate Jobs Institute

[Key Interventions: How New York Can Still Achieve Its Climate, Jobs, and Equity Mandates](#) identified 10 immediate interventions New York can take to drive down emissions, expand access to high-quality union jobs, contribute economic, social, and health benefits, and make the state more affordable.

- [Understanding Thermal Energy Networks: A Building Decarbonization Approach to High-Quality Union Jobs](#)
- [Employment and Work in New York State: Empire State Poll](#)
- [2024-2025 New York At Work](#)
- [Off the Rails: Inequality, Insecurity, and Unsafe Conditions at Kawasaki's U.S. Manufacturing Facilities](#)

PROGRAMS FOR NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATORS

300+

Hours of technical assistance
to NYS legislators and labor partners



NYS legislators and government officials called on CJI to analyze the climate, clean energy, and job creation landscape in New York. CJI reviewed legislation, conducted quantitative and geospatial analysis, and spoke with elected leaders and staff throughout the year.

Legislative Briefing

In January, CJI and other ILR faculty briefed legislators on key labor issues for the upcoming year. [CJI's brief](#) focused on New York's progress toward its climate, equity, and job creation goals, as well as the state's workforce development infrastructure and private sector climate investments.



Legislative & Labor Educational Delegation

In August, CJI organized and led an [educational delegation to Vancouver](#), British Columbia, bringing together 11 state legislators and staff, as well as 11 labor leaders. Delegates visited thermal energy networks, district heating facilities, and sustainable construction sites. They also met with several labor leaders and city, regional, and provincial elected officials. This marked CJI's third international delegation aimed at equipping lawmakers and advocates with global insights on the clean energy transition.

SOMOS Legislative Conferences

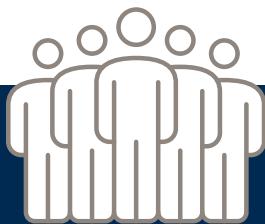
CJI also collaborated with legislators, commissioners, labor leaders, and advocates to present at SOMOS legislative conferences in [Albany](#) and [Puerto Rico](#). These sessions covered topics like building a resilient clean energy grid and presented key findings from CJI research reports.



TRAINING & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

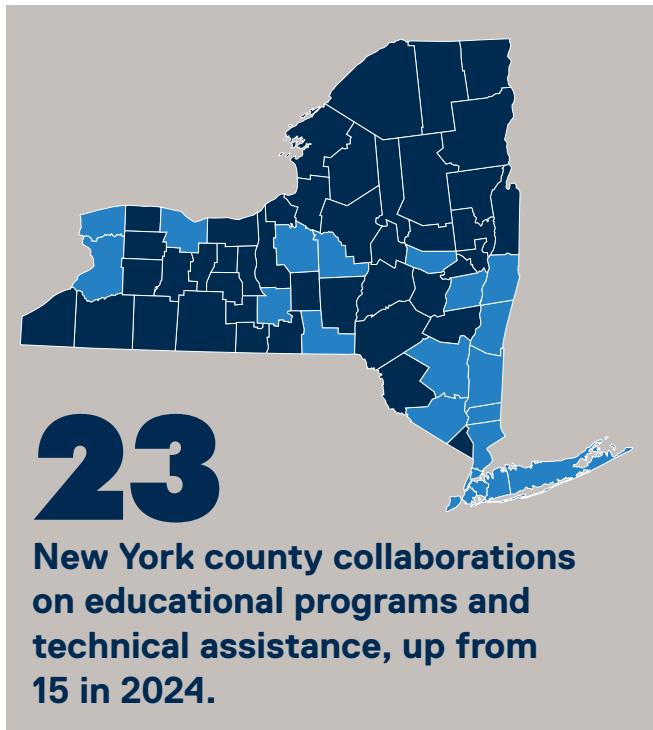
1840

New Yorkers participated
in climate jobs trainings and
educational programs in 2025



Public Programs

- April: Webinar presenting key findings from CJI's report, "New York's Renewable Energy Policies, Plans & Progress: A Climate Jobs Perspective," which examines existing and planned renewable energy projects across New York State, evaluates their effectiveness in advancing the state's clean energy goals, and explores the potential for generating high-quality clean energy jobs.
- September: Climate Week NYC event highlighting CJI's report, "Key Interventions: How New York Can Still Achieve Its Climate, Jobs, and Equity Mandates."
- September: Climate Week NYC event with the Climate Jobs National Resource Center, 32BJ SEIU, and both national and local leaders discussing the importance of centering affordability and union jobs in climate action.



Workforce Equity

In June, CJI launched the nation's first-ever climate and clean energy pre-apprenticeship cohort. CJI team members piloted a first-of-its-kind climate education course with Pathways 2 Apprenticeship (P2A) meant to build pathways to high-quality, family-sustaining, union careers in the trades for frontline and environmental justice communities.



Educational Programming for Organized Labor

- Climate Jobs New York: Throughout 2025, CJI partnered with Climate Jobs New York and labor unions on a series of workshops on hot topics in climate and clean energy. Sessions covered topics like nuclear energy, distributed energy resources, long-duration energy storage, and more. CJI also led a comprehensive strategic planning process with Climate Jobs New York, helping the organization to update labor's vision for creating a diverse, equitable, and unionized clean energy economy in the years ahead.
- Speaking Appearances: CJI representatives spoke in front of hundreds of union members in 2025, including events for LiUNA, the IAM, the NYS Building & Construction Trades Council, and more.

- The Story Lives in the Body: Theater-Making as Movement-Building in the Pro-Worker Clean Energy Transition: Throughout the winter and spring, CJI embarked on an exciting collaboration with Working Theater (WT), an award-winning off-Broadway theater, to develop an innovative training and community-building program for rank-and-file union members. For the past forty years, WT has commissioned, supported, and produced over seventy culturally diverse world-premiere plays about working people's issues, and offered union members interactive opportunities for growth and connection through its Theaterworks! playwriting and performance classes.



LOOKING FORWARD

As we enter 2026, CJI faculty and staff are excited about the work ahead. We will continue delivering high-quality technical assistance and educational programs to legislators, organized labor, and other stakeholders. We will also release a new report highlighting ways to affordably decarbonize New York State's housing stock while creating scores of high-quality jobs. Finally, we launched a new public impact website, a one-stop shop for the public to find data, maps, and other educational resources related to the clean energy economy in New York. We look forward to continuing our partnerships throughout the state and deepening our impact in the year ahead.



ILR Climate Jobs Institute

