

For Immediate Release: October 8, 2019

Brian Keegan: 518-462-5526, ext. 238; bkeegan@eplscorecard.org

Best Legislative Session in a Generation Leads to a Greener New York

Senator George Amedore's Abysmal Record Earns Him the 2019 Oil Slick Award

Albany, NY – EPL/Environmental Advocates, today released the 2019 Environmental Scorecard that tracks all state legislators' voting records on environmental legislation. The Scorecard offers a clear look into the priorities of state representatives, affecting all New Yorkers. For his consistently poor environmental record, Senator George A. Amedore Jr. (R-Kingston) has earned the Oil Slick Award.

Peter Iwanowicz, executive director of EPL/Environmental Advocates said, "Senator Amedore should know better. While his district encompasses some of New York's greatest environmental treasures—his voting record demonstrates a profound lack of concern for protecting what's in his backyard. Senator Amedore's NO votes this year on legislation phasing out the dangerous pesticide chlorpyrifos and protecting children from toxic exposure to dangerous chemicals were both callous reminders of where his priorities lie. Hint: it wasn't with the health and safety of New York's children and families."

EPL/Environmental Advocates, which has been at the forefront of every major environmental battle for 50 years, has also presented the illustrious Legislator of the Year award to both Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D-Yonkers) and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie (D-Bronx). This honor had not been awarded during the past few years but was reinstated after the two leaders' commitment and willingness to work together resulted in the greatest legislative session in a generation for the environment.

Iwanowicz said, "What we saw during this past legislative session was nothing short of amazing. The 'New' New York Senate, led by Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, has proven itself skillful, capable, and up to the task of leading New York to a greener future. The transformation from a place where good green bills went to die to an efficient, vibrant, and forward-thinking house was tremendous. Having them partner with an Assembly—that had long been carrying the environmental torch—made several pieces of game-changing legislation possible. New Yorkers will live longer lives because of bills that were passed this year and signed into law by Governor Cuomo."

2019 Overview

The 2019 State Budget included several green measures, including congestion pricing, \$500 million for water infrastructure, and a ban on plastic bags. Several critical pieces of legislation passed during the

legislative session and were signed into law by Governor Cuomo. Topping this list was the groundbreaking Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. This legislation had passed the Assembly for three consecutive years, only to die in the Senate. This year, the new Senate debated and passed this critically important bill.

Also signed into law:

A bill that prohibits new garbage incineration in the Finger Lakes region;

A bill that denies access to state marine and coastal district lands to offshore drilling companies;

A bill to prevent overfishing of menhadens (bunker fish), which are largely responsible for the return of humpback whales to New York City's coastline; and

A bill that limits the idling of school vehicles while parked on school grounds.

Several additional green bills passed both houses and are awaiting action by the Governor, including a bill that bans the dangerous pesticide chlorpyrifos, a bill that bans personal care products containing the toxic chemical 1,4-dioxane, and The Child Safe Products Act, which requires manufacturers to list toxic chemicals that are present in their products, as well as begin the process of phasing them out.

The EPL/Environmental Advocates' 2019 Environmental Scorecard exists as a means to draw attention to State Legislators' records on the environment and hold them responsible for their actions or inaction. It is the first and only record of New York State lawmakers' votes on legislation that will impact the environment. For the complete Scorecard, visit www.eplscorecard.org.

###

EPL/Environmental Advocates was founded in 1969 as one of the first organizations in the nation to advocate for the future of a state's environment and the health of its citizens. It is the sister organization of Environmental Advocates of New York.