

Grantee News

Policy Victories:

- Governor Christie signed into law two bills related to standardized testing due to advocacy by Save Our Schools NJ Community Organizing and Education Law Center— A4485/S2881 which prohibits the NJ Department of Education from withholding state aid from school districts with high PARCC refusal rates and A3079/S2766 which limits the uses of standardized tests in grades K-2 to identifying particular student learning needs or to modifying instructional strategies to improve an individual student's learning. For more information, read [here](#).
- New York Governor Andrew Cuomo vetoed a \$600 million proposal by Liberty Natural Gas to develop a liquefied natural gas facility off of Sandy Hook, NJ and Long Island, NY. NY/NJ Baykeeper, Environment NJ, American Littoral Society, Clean Water Fund, NJ Highlands Coalition, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, GreenFaith, and [partners](#) worked in NY and NJ to stop the project from going forward. For more information, read [here](#).

Policy Setbacks:

- Despite advocacy by NJ PACE and partners, Governor Christie conditionally vetoed a bill that would have allowed property owners to obtain private financing through special assessments on their property without having to pay any upfront costs for projects through the Property Assessment Clean Energy (PACE) program. PACE was developed to help property owners use more clean energy (i.e. solar) and be more energy efficient. In his conditional veto, Governor Christie recommended that the program be restricted to commercial and industrial building and residential properties with five or more units through a pilot in ten NJ municipalities, thus limiting the reach of the program. For more information, read [here](#).

Policy Reports:

- Education Law Center released *Newark Public Schools: Budget Impacts of Underfunding and Rapid Charter Growth*, concluding that the lack of adequate state funding (as measured by the School Funding Reform Act formula) and the diversion of dollars from district schools to rapidly growing charter schools has resulted in substantial cuts to teachers, support staff, and special education and other programs in Newark district schools in order to balance the school budget. Read the full report [here](#).
- New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) released *Expert Report on the PennEast Pipeline Project: Economic Impact Analysis for New Jersey and Pennsylvania*, a report that analyzes the economic impact study released by PennEast in support of the proposed pipeline. NJCF's report, developed by The Goodman Group, Ltd., indicates that PennEast's analysis overstates the total jobs produced by the pipeline by two-thirds or more. Read the full report [here](#).
- New Jersey Policy Perspective released three reports, *Fast Facts: New Jersey's Average Home Values Are Well Below Estate Tax Threshold* (highlighting that only 4% of NJ estates include enough wealth to owe any estate tax), *Fast Facts: Crucial Tax Credits for New Jersey Working Families at Risk if Congress Fails to Act* (highlighting the vulnerability of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit), and *Fast Facts: Allowing Undocumented Residents to*

Drive Legally Would Help New Jersey (highlighting the economic and public safety benefits of expanding access to driver's licenses). To read the reports, go [here](#).

- The Housing and Community Development Network of NJ released reports that measure the economic impact of community development corporations in Hudson (\$891 million), Bergen (\$284 million), and Morris (\$421 million) counties over the last twenty five years. Read here for [Hudson](#), [Bergen](#), and [Morris](#) county reports.

Updates:

- A new coalition is urging Governor Christie to release a long-awaited state water supply master plan. The current plan is 20 years old and the new plan has been held up in the Governor's office for the last year. Coalition members include NJ Highlands Coalition, Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Association of NJ Environmental Commissions, NJ League of Conservation Voters, NJ Conservation Foundation, and American Littoral Society. For more information, read [here](#).
- President Obama spoke at Rutgers University Newark about new actions to promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of formerly incarcerated people. Among the actions introduced was "banning the box" in federal employment, an initiative successfully championed in NJ by NJ Institute for Social Justice, Drug Policy Alliance, ACLU of New Jersey, and partners. "Ban the Box" legislation was passed in NJ in 2014 and went into effect in March 2015. For more information, read [here](#).
- NJ Policy Perspective's Deputy Director Jon Whiten was honored with the "Emerging Non-Profit Leader" award by the Center for Non-Profits and The Fairleigh Dickinson University Center for Excellence: Leadership, Governance, and Philanthropy.

Job Announcements

- ACLU-NJ—[Policy Counsel](#)
- ACLU-NJ—[Organizer](#)
- Association of NJ Environmental Commissions—[Development Director](#)
- Clean Water Fund—[Climate Organizer \(Newark\)](#)
- Drug Policy Alliance—[Policy Coordinator](#)
- Ironbound Community Corporation—[Junior Accountant](#)
- Ironbound Community Corporation—[Accounting Manager](#)
- NJ Institute for Social Justice—[Director of Philanthropy](#)
- NJ Citizen Action—[Bilingual Loan Counselors](#)
- NJ Citizen Action—[Bilingual Tax Preparers](#)
- NJ Citizen Action—[Bilingual Canvasser/Community Outreach Worker](#)
- NJ Policy Perspective—[Office Manager \(part-time\)](#)
- Regional Plan Association—[Associate Planner, New Jersey](#)
- Regional Plan Association—[Research Analyst, Energy and Environment](#)
- Regional Plan Association—[Data and Visualization Analyst](#)

The Fund for New Jersey's news updates will be distributed monthly. Please send policy news and updates to Ami Kachalia at akachalia@fundfornj.org.