



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

DEC Commisioner Martens, Sen. Grisanti & Assemblyman Sweeny Join Generations of Enviromentalists at 21st Annual Earth Day Lobby Day

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State Lawmakers Join Groups to Protect NY's Air, Land & Water, Advance High Priority Super Bills on May 2

ALBANY, NY (05/02/2011)—Hundreds of concerned citizens from across New York State traveled to Albany today to call on lawmakers to pass the environmental community's priority "Super Bills." New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Joe Martens, State Senator Mark Grisanti and Assemblyman Robert Sweeney joined attendees at the 21st annual Earth Day Lobby Day and spoke in support of legislation to protect New York's environment.

In addition to the keynote speakers, the morning program featured issue briefings by many of New York's leading environmental advocates and a special event celebrating the next generation of environmentalists. In the afternoon, participants lobbied their state legislators on the Super Bills.

Earth Day Lobby Day is the environmental community's signature annual event at the State Capitol, providing an opportunity for individuals and lawmakers alike to come together and support addressing New York's most pressing environmental challenges—such as expanding solar energy, cutting the pollution that's changing our climate, protecting water from dirty gas drilling called hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," and making our communities more pedestrian-friendly. The 2011 Super Bills are:

- **The Solar Industry Development & Jobs Act (A.5713 / S.4178)** would create new jobs and jumpstart investment in New York's growing solar energy industry by requiring state utilities and energy service companies to purchase solar renewable energy credits.
- **The Global Warming Pollution Cap (A.5346 / S.2742)** would require that climate-altering pollution from all sources is cut by 80 percent by the year 2050. These are the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that scientists say will help us avert the worst impacts of climate change.
- **The Water Withdrawal Permitting Program (A.5318-A / S.3798)** would protect all New York's waters from wasteful withdrawals by requiring anyone with the capacity to withdraw more than 100,000 gallons of water per day to first obtain a permit from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).
- **Closure of the Hazardous Waste Loophole for Fracking Fluid Disposal (A.7013 / S.4616)** would end special exemptions that allow the gas industry to circumvent requirements for hazardous waste disposal. This bill would update state law so that all waste resulting from gas drilling that meets the definition of hazardous waste be treated as such and subject to all regulations related to its generation, transportation, treatment, storage and disposal.
- **Complete Streets (S.1332 / A.1863)** would ensure that New York's future roads take into account the needs of all users—bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and passengers, motorists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities—and help reduce climate-altering greenhouse gas emissions.

"By taking up the environmental community's slate of green Super Bills this year, our state leaders are sending a clear signal to the nation—New York is ready to lead by example and protect our water, make our communities safer and more pedestrian friendly and clean up our energy mix," said Rob Moore, Executive Director, Environmental Advocates of New York.

"As lawmakers return to work today after their spring break, we are laying out a clear environmental "to do" list for the remaining months of the legislative session," said Laura Haight, Senior Environmental Associate, NYPIRG. "These Super Bills are backed not only by the hundreds of people in Albany for Earth Day Lobby Day today, but by the tens of thousands of people who our organizations represent."

After the morning program, citizen lobbyists both young and old met with more than 75 State Senators and Assembly members. The State Assembly is expected to vote on a package of environmental bills on May 2.

“As fossil fuel prices increase and impact every aspect of our economy it is clear that New York needs alternative energy solutions now,” said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director Citizens Campaign for the Environment. “The public overwhelmingly supports an increased investment in sustainable solar power, and we need the state legislature to stand with the public and support a clean, sustainable energy future for New York State.”

This year’s Earth Day Lobby Day was hosted by Adirondack Council, Audubon New York, Catskill Mountainkeeper, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Environmental Advocates of New York, New York Interfaith Power and Light, New York League of Conservation Voters, Natural Resources Defense Council, New York Public Interest Research Group, Parks & Trails New York, PEF-EnCon, Riverkeeper, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, The Nature Conservancy, The Vote Solar Initiative and the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, and cosponsored by additional organizations from across the state.