

February 23, 2026

Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins
New York State Senate

Speaker Carl Heastie
New York State Assembly

Chairpersons Kreuger and Pretlow
Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means

Senator Shelley Mayer
Senate Education Committee Chair

Assemblymember Michael Benedetto
Assembly Education Committee Chair

Re: Funding for changes to section 100.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education

Dear Majority Leader Stewart Cousins, Speaker Heastie, Chairperson Krueger, Chairperson Pretlow, Senator Mayer and Assemblymember Benedetto:

It is the understanding of the League of Women Voters of New York State that the New York State Board of Regents in March 2026 will vote in favor of the Board of Regents' proposed amendment of Section 100.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education to require instruction in climate education. Attached is the letter of support from the League of Women Voters of New York State for the proposed amendment, submitted during the public comment period.

It has further come to the attention of the League of Women Voters of New York State that the Executive Budget does not include funding to the New York State Department of Education for the New York Inspires initiative which includes \$560,000 to fund the climate education initiative.

We ask that the NYS Senate and Assembly include in your one-house budgets the full funding for climate education contemplated in the amendment; otherwise, the expected affirmative vote without the financial backing will result in an unfunded mandate. Not only would an unfunded mandate undermine the statutory goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protections

Act, an unfunded mandate would likewise have the effect of depriving New York State's K-12 public school students of today the very education they critically need to become the responsible leaders of tomorrow tasked with addressing the climate crisis; thereby sending the chilling message that they're on their own.

The League of Women Voters of New York State thanks you for your service and your action to demonstrate to our children, our future leaders, that we all have their back.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erica D. Smitka". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light grey rectangular background behind it.

Erica D. Smitka, Executive Director
League of Women Voters of New York State