

A Fair Economy For All

Invest in Communities, Not Corporations

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Accountability for Wall Street and Corporations, Strengthened Protections for Workers and Consumers](#)

[Database of Deals and Procurement Integrity](#)

[Fighting Wall Street's Abuse of Employees and Consumers](#)

[Enforce Laws to Stop Wage Theft](#)

[Strengthen Unions](#)

[Addressing Racial and Economic Equity in Economic Development](#)

[Invest in Minority and Women Owned Businesses](#)

[Community Development and Postal Banking](#)

[Supporting Worker-Owned Businesses](#)

[Legalizing Marijuana: Economic Growth and Equity](#)

[Invest in Our Crumbling Infrastructure](#)

[Green New Deal](#)

[Expand High-Speed Broadband in Rural and Low-Income Communities](#)

[A Real \\$15 Minimum Wage Statewide](#)

[Making \\$15 Real: Include Upstate Workers](#)

[Making \\$15 Real: Raise Wages for Tipped Workers](#)

[Investing in the Caring Economy](#)

[Training and Skills for a 21st Century Economy](#)

[Federal Jobs Guarantee](#)

Introduction

All New Yorkers should be able to enjoy the fruits of their labor. But right now prosperity and wealth in New York state belongs only to a tiny few. New York is the most unequal state in the country. The top 1 percent of New Yorkers earn 45 times more than the bottom 99 percent.¹ To understand why, you have to look no farther than Governor Cuomo's economic development strategy.

The Governor has taken a Republican-like approach to economic development: cutting taxes for the rich and gutting public goods and services for everyone else.²³ As we saw with the Trump-Ryan tax cuts early this year, this approach is a recipe for disaster. In New York, our infrastructure is now crumbling, our fastest growing industries do not pay a living wage, and communities of color and minority-owned businesses are being left behind.

The Governor's misguided economic development philosophy is made worse by his administration's rampant corruption. Cuomo has doled out millions and even billions of dollars to his corporate donors with very little strings attached or expectations set around real, well-paying jobs to be produced.

As Governor, Cynthia will take a very different approach. First, she will hold Wall Street and big corporations accountable, and strengthen protections for workers and consumers. Next, she will make a targeted investment in communities of color and minority-owned businesses, which have been left behind by Governor Cuomo's policies. Cynthia will also make a robust investment in our state's infrastructure, creating thousands of jobs and strengthening communities across our state. Finally, Cynthia will ensure that our state's fastest growing industry -- service jobs and home health aides -- provide family sustaining wages.

These economic development strategies are all accompanied by Cynthia's commitment to greatly expanding educational opportunities from birth through college, which will create the high quality workforce that is essential to economic growth and development in New York State.⁴

¹ <https://www.epi.org/multimedia/unequal-states-of-america/#/New%20York>

² <https://www.vox.com/2014/5/15/5710402/andrew-cuomo-future-of-the-democratic-party>

³ <http://prospect.org/article/fiscal-purgatory-new-york>

⁴ For more on Cynthia's education plan, see here: <https://cynthiafornewyork.com/issue/educate-ny/>

Cumulatively, Cynthia's approach to workforce training and economic development will help grow New York's economy, while combating the runaway income inequality that has been aided and abetted by the corrupt Cuomo Administration.

Accountability for Wall Street and Corporations, Strengthened Protections for Workers and Consumers

Database of Deals and Procurement Integrity

New York State spends \$4 billion annually on so-called “economic development” programs.⁵ Taxpayers have a right to know whether these businesses are creating the jobs that were promised, and whether the corrupting influence of political donations is swaying this process. The Database of Deals legislation, already passed unanimously by the State Senate, would create a single public database listing all state projects awarded to companies and track our return on economic development investment. Unlike Governor Cuomo, Cynthia fully supports this legislation and would sign it into law.

Cynthia also supports the Procurement Integrity Act, which would restore the comptroller’s authority to review contracts before they are executed for SUNY/CUNY construction and construction services, materials and printing contracts, and Office General Service centralized contracts. This issue was at the heart of the Buffalo Billion corruption scandal, and yet, at the Governor’s insistence, the Comptroller’s oversight role was eliminated.

As Governor, Cynthia will ensure that the Database of Deals and the Procurement Integrity Act are enacted into law.

Fighting Wall Street’s Abuse of Employees and Consumers

Over the past decade, credit card companies and Wall Street banks have inserted individual forced arbitration clauses into a skyrocketing number of consumer and employment contracts, in order to bar consumers from joining together in class-action lawsuits. It has become increasingly difficult to apply for a job, a credit card, or conduct just about any consumer activity without agreeing to private arbitration and giving up your recourse to litigation.

⁵<https://www.cityandstateny.com/articles/opinion/commentary/new-york-economic-development-funding-waste.html>

The most viable way to fight forced arbitration is the EmPIRE Worker Protection Act and EmPIRE Consumer Protection Act. These bills are based on a model already tested and refined in California - the State Private Attorney General Act (PAGA). This legislation allows individuals or organizations to step into the shoes of the government to enforce laws that protect vulnerable communities. These bills would support workers fighting wage theft, workplace safety and sexual harassment violations at their workplace.

In California, it allows aggrieved employees to enforce state labor laws by giving them the power to sue as a proxy or agent of California's state labor law enforcement agencies in collecting civil penalties for Labor Code violations -- with the state retaining control of the suit (and receiving a portion of the damages).

These claims will generate fees for the state which will offset much of the investment in wage theft enforcement. California has collected increasing amounts from fees and penalties to offset the cost of enforcement work in that state: based on the most recent information available, California's annual revenues are increasing, from \$4.5 million in Fiscal Year 2012/12 and \$5.7 million in FY 2013/14, to \$8.4 million in FY 2014/15.⁶ Between its enactment in 2004 and April 2013, the California government collected a total of \$24.5 million in PAGA penalties across 1,255 cases.⁷

As Governor, Cynthia would work to enact this legislation to empower workers and consumers to hold corporations accountable.

Enforce Laws to Stop Wage Theft

In New York City alone, workers lose approximately one billion dollars to wage theft -- unpaid and underpaid wages -- each year.⁸ The chance of being fully prosecuted for wage theft remains so low that many businesses calculate that it makes better business sense to violate the law and run the low risk of being caught. The result? Responsible employers cannot compete, and low wage industries are in a race to the bottom to cut labor costs on the backs of their workers. Cynthia will increase wage theft enforcement and ensure that not a single public penny flows -- as subsidies, government contracts, or tax breaks -- to repeat violators of workers' rights.

⁶ See Department of Industrial Relations Budget Change Proposal, Fiscal Year 2016/2017

⁷ Data supplied in response to a Public Records Act [request](#) by Christian Schrieber, April 2013.

⁸ <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/18/minimum-wage-not-enforced-investigation-409644>

Governor Cuomo has made virtually no investment in policing our wage theft laws. In fact, the vast majority of the state's wage theft enforcement is funded by the federal government. During Cuomo's tenure, despite inflation and rising need, the budget has decreased or remained level every year until 2018, when following Cynthia's entrance into the race he added \$1 million to the Department of Labor budget.⁹ We would need to almost triple the number of wage theft investigators at the Department of Labor just to return to 1960's staffing levels.¹⁰

Another shameful secret of his NYS Department of Labor (DOL) is that they generally do not even attempt to collect the full amount of unpaid wages that workers are entitled to recoup under the law. NYS DOL only investigates and attempts to recover three years -- or half the time period authorized by law -- of vulnerable workers' claims. The results are predictable: under Andrew Cuomo's leadership, the average amount of money returned to each worker by the NYS DOL fell 58% from 2012 to 2017. This is no way to remedy, much less deter, wage theft.

As Governor, Cynthia will vigorously enforce the workplace standards on New York's books. She will invest \$30 million to quadruple the number of staff dedicated to minimum wage enforcement.

Strengthen Unions

Cynthia has been a proud union member for over four decades. She believes it is in all working people's interest in New York to support the work that unions do on behalf of their members. As Governor, Cynthia will resist federal, right-to-work attacks on organized labor by amending Taylor Law to allow public sector workers the right to strike and support organizing drives for larger and stronger unions and protect union jobs from abusive non-union contractors. As public sector workers across the country are under attack, Cynthia does not support undermining workers' wages and benefits, unlike Governor Cuomo who added a Tier VI to the state pension system and reduced benefits for newly hired state and local public workers.¹¹

⁹<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-more-35-million-stolen-wages-returned-workers-2017>

¹⁰ https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1768942

¹¹<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-newyork-pensions/new-york-cuts-pension-benefits-for-public-workers-idUSBRE82E00F20120315>

Cynthia will support stronger workplace health, safety, and workers rights enforcement, mandatory apprenticeship on public-funded job sites, and increased fines for employers with worker death and injury on the job.

In the last year, over 30 workers have died on construction jobs in New York City alone. Cynthia supports the expansion of real apprenticeship programs, especially on state-funded construction jobs. Union-run apprenticeship programs create a pipeline to career track jobs, and address workplace safety concerns by ensuring that all workers on construction sites are adequately prepared for the dangers of the site.

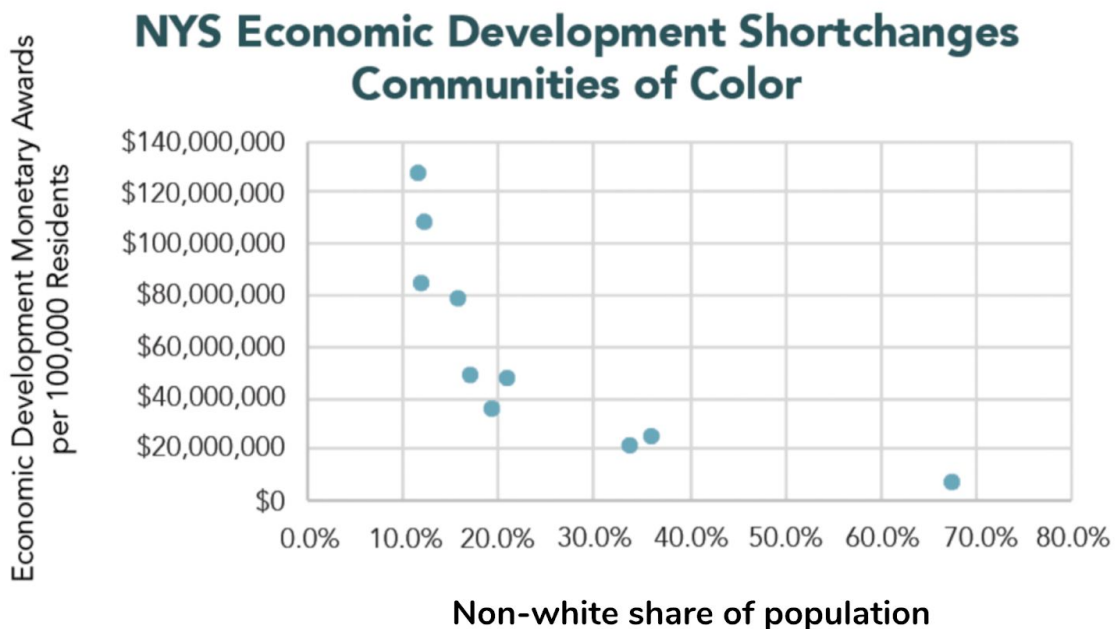
Cynthia also supports new models for recognition, respect, and representation for all domestic workers and independent contractors. Too many workers still face burdens in coming together to build worker power and express a unified worker voice. Cynthia will partner with domestic workers, independent contractors, and other historically excluded workers to pursue new solutions for dignity and respect.

Cynthia also supports universal just cause legislation to ensure that no worker is unfairly fired or disciplined by their employer. While common in other countries, a long history of anti-unionism in the United States has led to inaction on this issue. Most workers in the United States are employed at-will. Universal just cause legislation would provide additional protections for workers by requiring employers to give notice of termination and provide just cause.

Cynthia also supports the Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act. The Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act will establish nurse to patient ratios by unit. It would mean that no nurse can be assigned responsibility for more patients than he or she can adequately manage at any given time.

Addressing Racial and Economic Equity in Economic Development

Currently, the Cuomo Administration’s Empire State Development programs and tax credits support well-connected businesses with little accounting for the state’s return on its investment. They also frequently make economic and racial inequality worse.¹²



(Source: Make the Road New York and Fiscal Policy Institute)

As a result of Governor Cuomo’s policies, the whitest region in New York State received almost 25 times more money per person than the region with the highest concentration of people of color. It isn’t surprising that Cuomo’s Regional Economic Development Council’s have short-changed communities of color when you consider that 90 percent of Cuomo’s hand-picked REDC leaders are white -- many of whom are also major contributors to his campaign.¹³

¹² <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/01/nyregion/economic-development-funding-report.html>

¹³ <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/companies-run-andrew-cuomo-biggest-donors-won-millions-state-grants-state-records-article-1.1927236>

As Governor, Cynthia will bring a much-needed racial and economic equity framework to our state's economic development agenda. By mandating a focus on equity and sustainability for economic development, we can ensure that our investments create jobs for communities that truly need them, and do so in a way that does not destroy our neighborhoods or environments along the way.

Invest in Minority and Women Owned Businesses

There are tremendous economic opportunities generated by state contracting, including major projects like JFK and LaGuardia Airports, Penn Station, the Buffalo Billion and other economic development activity. If New York is going to stand for equity and opportunity and ensure that all our residents benefit from the state's economic activity, it is essential that we have a robust and accountable program for Minority- and Women- Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE). As Governor, Cynthia would set a goal that 35 percent of state economic development activity goes to MWBEs and would provide the leadership necessary to meet this goal. Governor Cuomo has set his goal at 30 percent, and he has failed to meet it.

Currently, there is a lack of transparency and accountability for meeting these goals. There are many contracts and programs which are being exempted or not counted and there are special deals cut with some developers. The Cuomo administration has never released real-time data about state agencies contracting with specific minority groups or firms, ensuring that watch dogs and community members are kept in the dark about who exactly is benefitting from its programs and whether individual agencies or the state as a whole are meeting specific participation goals established for MBEs and WBEs separately in § 313, Article 15-A of NYS Executive Law. Cynthia will release such data. She will also ensure we are counting every form of state contracting in pursuit of MWBE goals and not exempting some programs, agencies and contracts as currently occurs under Governor Cuomo.

Under Governor Cuomo, lower standards for minority hiring goals have been traded off as political favors to donors, as occurred with the Buffalo Billion. As part of the purchase agreement which transferred the Riverbend location from the City of Buffalo to the State of New York, Governor Cuomo according to his own press release, stipulated that 25 percent of construction jobs would go to racial minorities.¹⁴ But when

¹⁴<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-phase-ii-riverbend-purchase-agreement>

he subsequently entered into project management agreement with LPCiminelli he cut this goal to 15 percent.

Ciminelli failed to meet even this reduced goal. Only nine jobs out of 334 construction jobs went to African Americans and only five went to Latinos.¹⁵ Ciminelli received special treatment from the Cuomo administration after Louis Ciminelli and his family made over \$100,000 in campaign contributions to Andrew Cuomo. In July this year, Ciminelli was convicted in a corrupt bid rigging scheme over the Buffalo Billion. As Governor, Cynthia will eliminate sweetheart deals that shortchange workers of color and MWBEs, such as the one that Governor Cuomo made with Louis Ciminelli. This is essential to making the MWBEs and minority employment goals meaningful.

Cynthia will also ensure that MWBEs are utilized in the full range of opportunities available, this includes as prime contractors, in professional opportunities such as architects, attorneys, etc., as well as subcontractors and to provide labor and service contracts, etc. She will expand programs like the Entrepreneurial Assistance Program (EAP) which provides key services to small businesses, especially MWBEs. In 2016-17, 89 percent of EAP's more than 1000 new clients were MWBEs, with EAP's help these businesses created 576 new jobs.¹⁶

Additionally, Cynthia will remove existing impediments for MWBEs such as ensuring they have access to capital and eliminating the net worth cap for MWBEs. Cynthia will also ensure that our state authorities and commissioners, who exercise many contracting decisions, are representative of the racial and gender diversity of New York State.

Community Development and Postal Banking

Many banks have abandoned low-income communities and communities of color. Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) bring critical resources into these communities, helping people buy homes, avoid foreclosure, access safe and affordable rental housing, develop micro-businesses, get fair consumer credit, and benefit from financial counseling. These community-based credit unions, loan funds, and specialized banks concentrate the vast majority of their lending activity among

¹⁵ <http://www.investigativepost.org/2015/09/30/minority-workers-get-short-shrift-at-riverbend/>

¹⁶ "2016-2017 Annual Report to Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature." Entrepreneurial Assistance Program. https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/16-17_EAP_Annual_Report.pdf.

historically underserved borrowers, and lend out several times the amount of public funding they receive, helping to disrupt poverty and create wealth.

Yet, New York State's CDFI Fund budget was only a fraction of the recommended appropriation this year, and has historically been denied funding. As Governor, Cynthia will increase funding to the state's CDFI Fund to invest in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods not adequately served by mainstream banks.

Postal banking would further address the needs of bank deserts, allowing thousands of New Yorkers to access essential financial tools. Offering affordable, basic banking services would help undercut predatory lenders and high-interest payday loans, which are easily available online despite being illegal in New York. Cynthia supports federal legislation to bring postal banking to New York.

Supporting Worker-Owned Businesses

Worker cooperatives are businesses that are owned and operated by their workers. New York City's Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative has been highly successful. Worker co-ops can be instrumental in creating well-paying jobs, tackling racial and economic inequity, and more democratic models of workplace governance. Building community wealth through worker-owned businesses is a major way to tackle the racial wealth gap.¹⁷

A study by the New York State Senate Democratic Policy Group shows that employee-owned businesses create jobs three times faster than traditional companies.¹⁸ They also returned 11.5% average annual growth from 2002 to 2012 compared to a growth rate of 7.1% for top publicly traded companies.

As Governor, Cynthia will support State Senate Bill S5685 to expand employee-owned businesses and incentivize more workplaces to utilize this business model. Part of this legislation would also support loan funds and technical assistance that would be accessible by independent cooperative developers to invest in low and moderate-income neighborhoods not adequately served by mainstream banks. This would provide an opportunity to establish new priorities for economic and workforce

¹⁷https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/journal_of_affordable_housing/vol25no1/a_h-25-1-06-seidelman-howell.authcheckdam.pdf

¹⁸<https://www.scribd.com/document/349959492/Policy-Group-Report-Creating-Jobs-Sharing-the-Wealth-6-1-17>

development organizations to make existing training and technical assistance more readily available to worker owned businesses.

Legalizing Marijuana: Economic Growth and Equity

As we move toward legalization, New York must ensure that our policy is equitable and places the communities most harmed by racist drug laws at the center -- including who is able to benefit from the new jobs and revenue. New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer's office offered conservative estimates that regulated and taxed marijuana for adult use would generate \$3.1 billion in profits per year in New York State and \$436 million annually in new state tax revenue.¹⁹ Cynthia will utilize these revenues to invest in communities hardest hit by racist drug laws.

It's no surprise that as this new industry emerges, racial and class bias are already evident in who stands to profit. This April, former Republican House Speaker John Boehner announced that he was lobbying for the marijuana industry and had joined the board of a marijuana cultivation and distribution business. This follows decades of Boehner's support for the draconian "war on drugs" that propelled mass incarceration by targeting black and brown communities for high volumes of arrests and by funding law enforcement over job creation, health care, social services and education.

As Governor, Cynthia will implement models similar to those created in places like Oakland, which sets aside half of its marijuana licenses for low-income residents who have been convicted of a marijuana-related crime or who live in a community targeted by the drug war. Cynthia will set aside a portion of the tax revenue from marijuana sales to implement a statewide marijuana equity program similar to Massachusetts which provides supports such as loans and technical assistance to applicants from qualifying communities.

The Massachusetts marijuana equity program is also worthy of replication. They have focused on providing opportunity to people and communities hardest hit by the war on drugs. The Massachusetts program prioritizes the review of applications from businesses where more than half of the employees have lived in an area of disproportionate impact for five of the last ten years, and where 75% or more of the employees will reside in areas of disproportionate impact by the time the business opens. Priority review is also given to businesses where more than half of the

¹⁹<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/new-comptroller-stringer-analysis-legalizing-marijuana-could-lead-to-millions-in-tax-revenue-for-city-and-state/>

employees have drug-related criminal defense records. This does not ensure that a business will receive a license but it does put them at the front of the line.

The Massachusetts program has other elements worthy of replication. For example, it provides businesses grounded in these communities with fee waivers, and a wide array of training and technical assistance including assistance with borrowing and obtaining capital. The Massachusetts program also requires that businesses are committed to the inclusion of under-represented groups and that they submit and adhere to a plan for how the business will positively impact such communities. New York needs to follow the lead of our neighboring state.

Legalization must also be accompanied by reinvesting in the communities that were the hardest hit by mass criminalization. As Governor, Cynthia will reinvest the remaining tax revenues from adult-use marijuana sales back into communities to fund community-directed and led projects including adult education services, job training, the expansion of afterschool programs, reentry services, and other community-centered projects.

Invest in Our Crumbling Infrastructure

New York's economy depends on strong infrastructure, but, right now, our roads, bridges, water systems and sewers are deteriorating. In fact, 13 percent of local bridges are structurally deficient and 21 percent are functionally obsolete. The State Comptroller estimates that New York State will need \$250 billion in investment in roads and bridges and water and sewer systems over the next twenty years, but that funding for these needs will fall \$89 billion short.²⁰

There are over 130 local mass transit systems in New York State²¹ and Governor Cuomo has also provided little support to mass transit systems statewide. These transit systems are vital to our economic growth. Nearly 60 percent of people who ride public transit are commuting to and from work²² and disproportionately they are low income.²³ Every one million dollars invested in mass transit produces 36 jobs and generates four million in economic returns.²⁴ Advocates estimate that as a first installment in a multi-year plan, that non-MTA transit systems outside New York City need a \$55 million investment.²⁵ In addition, the Long Island Railroad and Metro-North need repairs and upgrades. The first priority is the installation of positive train control technology (PTC) to prevent accidents. The federal government has already loaned MTA one billion for this purpose, but under Governor Cuomo, the MTA has failed to meet the original deadline and is on track to miss the extended deadline at the end of this year.²⁶

To address these funding gaps Cynthia will take several actions. As a first step she would first stop the misuse of the Highway and Bridge Trust Fund. This fund was established to maintain state highways and bridges, but due to the failure of the state to properly fund operations at the Department of Transportation, more than one-third of the Fund's resources are diverted to DOT for operating costs. As Governor, Cynthia would follow the Comptroller's recommendations to develop a five year plan to eliminate the use of the Trust Fund to cover DOT's operating costs.

²⁰<https://osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/infrastructure.pdf#search=deficient%20roads%20and%20bridges>

²¹ <https://nytransit.org/resources/public-transit-facts>

²² <https://nytransit.org/resources/public-transit-facts>

²³ https://www.cdta.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/fare_equity_analysis.pdf

²⁴ <https://nytransit.org/resources/public-transit-facts>

²⁵ https://nytransit.org/images/2018_19_Executive_Budget_Recommendations.pdf

²⁶<https://www.lohud.com/story/news/transit/2018/07/24/metro-north-miss-safety-technology-deadline-positive-train-control-lirr/826533002/>

To increase investment in our state's infrastructure, Cynthia would also repurpose some funds from the Empire State Development Corporation and other economic development tax credits. Instead of offering corporate subsidies that have too often resulted in corruption scandals or de minimis jobs gains, we should make more certain investments in infrastructure and mass transit. In making these investments she will prioritize upstate communities where the need for the economic benefits of these investments is the greatest.

As Governor, Cynthia would also authorize local government and authorities to implement development fees to ensure that new development contributes to roadways, bridges and sewer and water systems.

Finally, before the end of her first term, Cynthia will propose a Clean Water and Transportation Bond Act.²⁷ This Bond Act will detail specific projects for these investments. While statewide in its benefits, the Bond Act will prioritize upstate communities with the greatest need for the jobs and economic activity which will result.

This combination of funding streams will create infrastructure jobs, provide a core foundation for economic growth in upstate and other regions of the state, and stimulate the economy.

In contrast, the Governor has failed to even keep an up to date database on the condition of roads and bridges statewide. Since 2016, the Executive branch has been required under state law to produce such a report annually. But after producing it in 2016, the Cuomo administration produced no such report in 2017 and missed the deadline for producing this report in 2018.²⁸ A first step in addressing the problem is to understand it and Cynthia will ensure that New York documents the existing state of our roads and bridges, so her Commissioner of Transportation can make a full assessment of the needs and priorities for construction and repairs.

Green New Deal

Now is the time for New York to exhibit leadership and to show our children and the nation what a new, robust and flourishing clean energy economy can and should look

²⁷ Cynthia has also proposed specific funding solutions and other structural changes to address the state of emergency currently plaguing the MTA. Those can be viewed here:

<https://cynthiafornewyork.com/issue/fixing-the-subways/>

²⁸<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/politics/albany/2018/07/31/new-york-blows-deadline-report-road-bridge-conditions-again/870820002/>

like. Almost a century ago, Americans made a bold investment in our people in order to tackle the Great Depression. With the climate crisis growing every single year, New York needs an even bolder investment in our communities to transition off fossil fuels and create renewable energy jobs across our state.

One of Cynthia's top priorities as Governor is to pass the Climate and Community Protection Act. The bill mandates in law that New York fully transition to clean energy by 2050 by tasking state agencies with creating plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, not just in our power plants, but in our cars and buildings too. This bill mandates 40% of state energy funding be directed toward the low-income communities and communities of color most impacted by climate change. The bill sets fair labor standards for new clean energy jobs that receive state funding, so we can make sure that green jobs are always good jobs.

A critical component of the Climate and Community Protection Act is also making sure there is dedicated funding for a transition to the clean energy economy that puts workers first. This includes direct investment to make sure workers employed by the fossil fuel industry are trained and supported to transition to clean energy jobs and that any lost tax base is replaced.

Cynthia will fund the Green New Deal by instituting a polluters fee as outlined in the Climate and Community Investment Act. As we learned with the tobacco industry, until we start holding corporate polluters responsible for their actions, we will see very little change in their behavior.

The polluters fee would generate an estimated \$7 billion in revenue to invest toward creating good paying renewable energy jobs.²⁹ Estimates say that making the investment necessary to reach 100% renewable energy could generate over a 100,000 new jobs every year through building solar panels and wind turbines, retrofitting houses and other buildings, and revamping our outdated transit systems.³⁰

Currently, a policy known as VDER (Value of Distributed Energy Resources) is stalling solar development in New York. VDER was put in place by the Public Service Commission to 'value' distributed energy like solar but has made the process onerous and tilted toward big utility companies. Community-owned energy is a much more equitable way to promote the transition toward a fossil free economy. A bill is now

²⁹ More details on the fee can be found in Cynthia's environmental platform:
<https://cynthiafornewyork.com/justtransition>

³⁰ https://www.peri.umass.edu/publication/item/download/737_44eb6ca6a57cb3c0b0f7d59b0d58e322

before the New York State Assembly (A.10474) and Senate that would place a moratorium on VDER and restore net metering, removing the complexities that are thwarting the development of solar. As Governor, Cynthia will champion this piece of legislation.

Expand High-Speed Broadband in Rural and Low-Income Communities

Broadband service is critical to economic growth and the provision of basic services like health care and education. New York's slow pace in expanding vital broadband services has stranded many rural and low-income New Yorkers from accessing education technologies, 21st century jobs, and more. It's past time to end the digital divide. In many rural areas of New York State you can't get access to broadband services whatsoever. Providing fiber optics networks is an enormous economic develop boost that enables job growth. Lack of access to the internet holds back small business owners who are unable to process orders and provide services via online markets and/or email.

Expanding fiber optics should be done to maximize the expansion of union jobs across New York State. Laying and servicing fiber optics channels is difficult and dangerous work, and it should be done by trained, union professionals. If Charter is failing to expand quality broadband services, they should be held accountable.

But the Governor's track record has been one that focuses more on handing favors to his big corporate donors than on making targeted economic invement.³¹ New York needs less grandstanding and real leadership in order to drive the expansion of high-speed broadband across New York State.

During the New Deal, we provided electricity to thousands and thousands of rural households through state and federal investment. Today we need the same attention to utility access. 2.5 million households (and therefore nearby businesses) in New York State lack access to high speed internet services.

³¹<https://capitalandmain.com/cuomos-cable-company-war-may-be-helping-some-big-campaign-donors-0802>

A Real \$15 Minimum Wage Statewide

Millions of New Yorkers continue to face poverty wages even as corporate profits, executive income and wealth skyrocket. Governor Cuomo touts New York's \$15 minimum wage as a solution to this problem, but the reality is that he became a supporter of \$15 an hour only after massive upheaval and mobilization by thousands of workers and dozens of unions and community groups.³² And still, for millions of New Yorkers, \$15 an hour is nowhere near becoming a reality. Governor Cuomo has left upstate workers and tipped workers behind.

Making \$15 Real: Include Upstate Workers

Despite touting a \$15 minimum wage as a major state accomplishment, Governor Cuomo's \$15 minimum wage policy excludes upstate New York. The current upstate minimum wage is \$10.40 an hour - as compared to \$12 or \$13 for New York City workers. For New York City, the \$15 minimum wage will be fully phased in on December 31, 2019--thus taking effect in 2020. For Long Island and Westchester it is scheduled to be phased in December 31, 2021. Under Governor Cuomo's policy, New Yorkers living outside of New York City, Long Island, and Westchester will have to wait until 2021 to begin receiving a \$12.50 minimum wage, and there is no guarantee that they will ever reach \$15. After 2021, regulatory agencies controlled by the Governor will determine whether there will be an annual increase of any amount based on an unspecified "market analysis." If the Cuomo Administration continues its current pace of annual increases in the upstate minimum wage it will take all the way until 2025 for upstate workers to get to \$15 an hour.³³

Cynthia will rapidly move upstate and suburban New Yorkers to a \$15 minimum wage by putting them on the same schedule as exists for full implementation for Long Island and Westchester. She will guarantee a statewide \$15 minimum wage effective December 31, 2021, thus ending the unfair disparities between different regions in the state.

³²<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/11/nyregion/cuomo-pivots-again-as-he-seeks-a-15-minimum-wage.html>

³³ <https://www.ny.gov/new-york-states-minimum-wage/new-york-states-minimum-wage>

Making \$15 Real: Raise Wages for Tipped Workers

In New York, an estimated 400,000 tipped workers struggle to survive on a sub-minimum wage because of a loophole that allows employers to pay far less than the minimum wage.³⁴ Tipped workers largely make up one of the fastest growing sectors of our economy, the service industry. Yet, these fast growing jobs barely provide enough to survive. The poverty rate among restaurant servers, 61% of whom are women, is over double the statewide rate.³⁵ Full-time tipped restaurant workers in New York earn a median income of just \$22,000 a year, including tips.³⁶

By 2022, under Governor Cuomo, the tipped minimum wage will be just \$8.35 across much of the state and \$10 in New York City, Westchester and Long Island.³⁷ Despite holding hearings across the state, Governor Cuomo has failed to act on raising tipped workers' minimum wage to \$15. In the face of Cuomo's inaction, most tipped workers continue to grapple with poverty. As Governor, Cynthia would immediately end the sub-minimum wage and raise wages for tipped workers to \$15 an hour. For New York City she would do this effective December 31, 2019, which is the same schedule as small businesses in New York City. For the rest of the state, for businesses with 11 or more employees she would phase in the \$15 minimum wage for tipped workers effective December 31, 2020 and for businesses with 10 or less employees it will go into effect December 31, 2021.

California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Nevada, Montana, and Minnesota have implemented One Fair Wage for all workers; and the data is clear: their restaurant sectors are thriving, and workers are earning more in tips as well.³⁸ The custom of tipping restaurant servers is well-established and the percentage rates of tips are set by widely-shared expectations.

It is also critical to note that enacting a \$15 statewide minimum wage for tipped workers will strengthen our fight against sexual harassment as the restaurant industry is the single largest source of sexual harassment claims in this country. The tipped wage system makes women vulnerable to sexual harassment. Workers confront

³⁴ http://rocunited.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/EmployerLiability_Report-2.pdf

³⁵ <https://www.littler.com/publication-press/publication/minimum-wage-increases-new-york-what-employers-should-know>

³⁶ <http://nownyc.org/events/one-fair-wage-public-hearings-raise-minimum-wage-tipped-employees/>

³⁷ <https://www.littler.com/publication-press/publication/minimum-wage-increases-new-york-what-employers-should-know>

³⁸ https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/posteverything/wp/2018/01/16/paying-tipped-workers-better-wouldnt-lead-to-fewer-restaurant-jobs/?utm_term=.18ee16393c36

unwelcome sexual advances and even assault, in order to piece together enough tips to try to make ends meet. The tipped wage system also facilitates wage theft by turning check stubs into confusing records that make it virtually impossible to tell whether workers have actually taken home the proper wages or not.

Investing in the Caring Economy

Home care is one of the fastest growing sectors of our economy. There are about 326,000 home care workers, including home health aides and personal care assistants, across New York state, and this number is expected to grow by almost 125,000 workers by 2024.^{39 40}

Despite this growth, the workforce has historically been excluded from basic labor protections because women's labor -- and especially the labor of women of color -- has been invisible and undervalued. These policies have led to black women in New York City earning 57 cents for every dollar paid to white men, among the highest wage gaps in the country.⁴¹ The emerging working class is increasingly dominated by women of color, not just white male workers on the factory floor. It's past time to make sure these are good paying jobs that treat workers with dignity and respect.

New York will need an estimated 125,000 new home care aides by 2024, a 38 percent increase from 2014.⁴² A majority of direct care workers leave their jobs each year, due to low wages, irregular or insufficient hours, limited opportunity to advance their careers, and overall poor job quality.⁴³ Unless we act now, there will not be enough workers to meet New York's care needs.

According to the New York Department of Labor, the annual salary for home care aides is just \$24,330.⁴⁴ Without a living wage, direct care workers must rely heavily on public benefits to support themselves and their families. 54 percent of home care workers and 39 percent of nursing assistants rely on some form of public support such as food and nutrition aid, Medicaid, or cash assistance.⁴⁵ Beyond low wages, home care workers also receive limited benefits and limited job training.

³⁹ <https://apnews.com/9951c021718345668a0bfb1efd2985a7>

⁴⁰ <https://phinational.org/24-hour-home-care-shift-debate-matters/>

⁴¹ https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/inside-the-gender-wage-gap-part-i-earnings-of-black-women-in-new-york-city/?utm_source=Media-All&utm_campaign=e0f4f40fab-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_12_08_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_7cd514b03e-e0f4f40fab-109196353

⁴² <https://phinational.org/policy-research/workforce-data-center/#states=36&var=Employment+Projections>

⁴³ https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/2742328/Resource%20Library/Download%20Documents/2017%20Snapshot%20Report.pdf?t=1513367824943&utm_campaign=2017%20Home%20Care%20Benchmarking%20Study&utm_source=hs_automation&utm_medium=email&utm_content=52015631&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_qH_k2MjYu01YTK6kLaulSmfINRG619iEoh6Vb4Qz45U2iS-vcsbyBD5ENvo4yX1Ep4Ajhc1UjWq9EwUJFiY6MpYQUlg&_hsmi=52015631

⁴⁴ <https://www.labor.ny.gov/stats/lswage2.asp>

⁴⁵ <https://phinational.org/policy-research/workforce-data-center/#states=36&var=Public+Assistance>

It makes no economic or moral sense to allow one of the fastest-growing workforces in New York's economy to be underdeveloped and underpaid. Similar to what fast food workers demanded for their industry in 2012, Cynthia will create a wage board to create industry-wide wage floor for care workers.

To meet the growing need for home care workers, Cynthia will also use economic development funds to create a \$15 million Home Care Jobs Innovation Fund. This fund will implement and test methods to recruit and retain care workers and help New York state develop strategies to address our workforce shortages.

Training and Skills for a 21st Century Economy

New York's workers need the supports for training and skills development that can help transform our economy for the 21st century. Cynthia has an incredibly robust free tuition program which will provide free tuition to an additional 170,000 New Yorkers. By contrast Governor Cuomo's Excelsior Scholarship program serves only 3.6 percent of SUNY and CUNY students.⁴⁶

In order to lift up workers, Cynthia's plan allows students to utilize free tuition pursue certificate programs that will lead to jobs, something that the Cuomo program does not allow. Cynthia education plan includes providing funding to CUNY and SUNY for wrap-around services that help non-traditional students access jobs training and college degree programs. New York City currently funds CUNY to run CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate Programs. CUNY ASAP provides a tuition waiver to low income students. SUNY Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) provides similar supports. Importantly, it also provides the wrap-around services that non-traditional college students need to succeed: transportation subsidies, child care support, text-book vouchers, as well as specialized advisement and support. Cynthia's education plan will expand these programs to an additional 60,000 non-traditional students.

This program has saved CUNY money per student, as students graduate faster. The program has been wildly successful at improving graduation rates and getting non-traditional students into well paying careers. CUNY ASAP is only available at CUNY's two year community colleges; it should be expanded to cover SUNY colleges and community colleges, as well as CUNY's four year schools.

⁴⁶ <https://cynthiafornewyork.com/issue/educate-ny/>

Federal Jobs Guarantee

Democrats in the United States Senate are campaigning on a federal jobs guarantee. One proposal put forward provides federal funding to 15 municipalities to guarantee employment for all job-seeking residents. Cynthia would support a federal jobs guarantee and advocate for high unemployment areas like Rochester, Syracuse, and Buffalo to be strongly considered as part of the initial rollout of the plan.

A Federal Jobs Guarantee would provide resources to local nonprofit and government institutions to create useful employment for jobseekers in the community who have been unable to find a job through traditional means. Focusing on a mix of rural and urban communities with very high unemployment would provide the best possible exploration of this approach to ending poverty, while also providing the biggest return on our investment.