



SUPPORT

A. 3658/S. 5576 (Englebright/Mayer)

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to freshwater wetlands and repealing section 24-1305 of such law relating thereto

The New York League of Conservation Voters supports A. 3658/S. 5576 (Englebright/Mayer), which would expand the Department of Environmental Conservation's regulatory authority over freshwater wetlands in the state.

Wetlands are some of the most ecologically sensitive and important parts of New York's environment. They serve as natural buffers to protect and recharge drinking water supplies, serve as habitat for diverse and vulnerable species, and provide resiliency against flooding, something that is increasingly important as climate change worsens flooding and extreme weather. However, under current state law DEC only has regulatory authority over freshwater wetlands larger than 12.4 acres that have been formally mapped as wetlands. This unnecessarily restricts the State's ability to protect some of our most valuable lands.

A. 3658/S. 5576 would grant DEC the authority to regulate all wetlands over one acre that have the characteristics of freshwater wetlands. Under this regulatory regime, mapping would become a tool for public education rather than a costly, time-consuming race to protect wetlands before they can be developed.

Protecting freshwater wetlands is one of the most important things New York can do to adapt to the effects of climate change, preserve clean drinking water, and protect vulnerable species. For these reasons, the New York League of Conservation Voters strongly urges passage of A. 3658/S. 5576.

Contact:
Patrick McClellan
(212) 361-6350 x 209
pmcclellan@nylcv.org

