

## The Fund for New Jersey News

- The Fund for New Jersey is proud to announce that for the fourth quarter of 2017 it awarded grants in the total amount of \$577,500 to advance public policies in the areas of public media, anti-poverty, civil rights & criminal justice, education, HIV/AIDS prevention and non-profit advocacy. Read the full press release [here](#).
- The Fund for New Jersey's Board of Trustees have also committed to support a complete count for Census 2020 for New Jersey. The Fund for New Jersey welcomes other grantmakers, government partners, businesses, and community-based organizations to work together to support a complete count of all New Jerseyans for the 2020 Census. Read more about the census [here](#).

## Grantee News

### Policy Victories:

- Due to advocacy by Environment NJ Policy and Research Center and partners, a bill (S-3560/A-5330) to provide subsidies to nuclear power plants did not move forward in the lame-duck legislative session. The bill, introduced just a month earlier, was criticized by environmental advocates for its lack of evidence that the subsidy was necessary and its potential to undermine a broader clean energy agenda. Read more [here](#).
- As a result of advocacy by NJ Institute for Social Justice (NJISJ) and partners, the state announced it would close the New Jersey Training School for Boys (Jamesburg) and the Female Secure Care and Intake Facility (Hayes) youth prisons. Although a timeline has not been determined, two smaller juvenile rehabilitation centers are planned to be built to replace them. The decision comes just half a year after NJISJ launched its "150 Years is Enough" campaign to close Jamesburg and Hayes and instead invest in the creation of a community-based system of care. NJISJ will continue to work to ensure implementation that closes the racial disparity gap in youth incarceration in New Jersey. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- In response to advocacy by NJ Highlands Coalition, Association of NJ Environmental Commissions, and partners, the legislature rescinded (SCR-163/ACR-255) NJDEP's proposed rule to allow more development in the Highlands preservation area. Lawmakers determined the Highland Septic Density Standards rules, which would have permitted 1,145 more septic systems, to be inconsistent with legislative intent. Read more [here](#).
- In line with advocacy by the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey, Governor Christie signed into law the New Jersey Housing Assistance for Veterans Act (S-2017/A-306). The Act creates a pilot program to assist veterans who are disabled and low-income homeowners with home repairs, appropriating \$5 million. Read more [here](#).

- Due to advocacy by NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice, ACLU-NJ, and partners, Hoboken passed a Fair and Welcoming city policy through a mayoral executive order. Under the policy, local law enforcement resources will not be expended on enforcement of federal immigration laws, ICE interaction with the city will be tracked, public employees are barred from asking individuals about immigration status, and a commission was established to focus on immigrant issues. Read more [here](#).
- Due to advocacy by Drug Policy Alliance-NJ (DPA-NJ), and partners, S-677/A-3677 was signed into law by Governor Christie. The bill authorizes racial and ethnic impact statements (REIS) for proposed criminal justice policies to assist policymakers in detecting unforeseen policy biases before moving forward, marking a step forward to reduce the state's large racial disparities in prison population, one of the worst in the country. The decision came after a welcomed gubernatorial conditional veto, which broadened the legislation, making it the first REIS to include public safety analysis. Thereafter the legislature approved a final version of the bill. Read more [here](#).

*Policy Setbacks:*

- Despite advocacy by NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice, American Friends Service Committee, Faith in New Jersey, Wind of the Spirit, Make the Road NJ, and partners, Temporary Protective Status (TPS) for Haitians and Salvadorians have been terminated, with a 12-month delay. The status allows nationals from countries in which conditions, such as war and environmental disaster, prevent them from returning safely to their home country or where their home country cannot handle their return, to live and work within the U.S. The decision comes after President Trump ended programs for Sudan and Nicaragua, with a likely decision on the status of Hondurans later this year. In New Jersey, 13,900 people from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti have TPS. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- Counter to advocacy by NJ Policy Perspective and partners, Governor Christie signed a bill (S-3631/A5340) that expands the tax credits available from the NJ Economic Development Authority to \$10,000 per employee over 10 years for eligible companies that move their headquarters to the state. The deal was created to attract Amazon, allowing for \$5 billion in state tax breaks to the company. Advocates have criticized the state's dependence on large corporate tax subsidies for placing economic burden on taxpayers and redirecting government funds that could go to much needed infrastructure or education. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- Despite advocacy by NJ Citizen Action, NJ Policy Perspective, and partners, President Trump signed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act into law in late December. The final law will disproportionately hurt taxpayers in New Jersey, particularly middle-class and low-income residents, prompting legislators to consider state-level tax reform that can provide relief. The bill also included repeal of the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate, which will leave an estimated 340,000 New Jerseyans without health insurance by 2027. Advocates are concerned and warn that the trillion-dollar addition to the federal deficit will prompt devastating federal budget cuts that would harm working families across New Jersey and exacerbate the state's fiscal crisis. Although an overall setback, one silver lining is the preservation of the Johnson Amendment, a 60-year-old

provision that ensures non-profits can work in a partisan-free environment. However, the repeal of the amendment will likely resurface over the coming year, with the Center for Non-Profits and partners continuing to advocate for its preservation. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

- After S-2469/A-1115 passed the legislature, Governor Christie failed to sign the bill before his term end, leading to a pocket veto of the bill. The bill would have required independent investigations and prosecutions when someone dies at the hands of law enforcement and was supported by ACLU-NJ, DPA-NJ, Faith in NJ, NJISJ, and partners. Read more [here](#).
- Counter to advocacy by environmental advocates, S-3317/A5040 was pocket vetoed by Governor Christie. The bill would have prompted New Jersey to join the U.S. Climate Alliance, a multi-state initiative to curb carbon pollution in the wake of the Trump administration's decision to pull out of the Paris Climate Accord. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- Despite advocacy by Environment NJ Policy and Research Center and partners, S-2276/A-3918 was pocket vetoed by Governor Christie. The bill would have raised the state's renewable portfolio standard and increased the solar-specific carve out, which advocates argued would have been a short-term fix for the solar industry in New Jersey. Read more [here](#).
- Due to advocacy by Advocates for Children of New Jersey, a bill (S-447/A-2352) which would have required schools to include chronic absenteeism in their school performance reports passed the legislature. However, the bill was pocket vetoed by Governor Christie. Read more [here](#).
- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approved the PennEast pipeline, claiming that the market benefits outweigh adverse effects it could have on existing shippers, other pipelines, landowners and communities. The decision comes after NJ Conservation Foundation and Easter Environmental law center filed a lawsuit against the agency arguing the agency failed to demonstrate the PennEast pipeline is needed. The complaint seeks to end FERC's practice of allowing eminent domain authority to seize land that will not be for public use before a pipeline project has received its other required state and federal approvals. The litigation is a part of a long-standing effort by NJ Pinelands Coalition, NJ Conservation Foundation, and partners to prevent PennEast Pipeline. The pipeline still needs permits from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and the Delaware River Basin Commission to start construction. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

#### Policy Updates:

- Due to advocacy by NY/NJ Baykeeper and partners, a judge temporarily halted NJ Department of Environmental Protection's lease for a private marina on Liberty State Park. The judge ordered a restraining order that prevents the company from entering into the agreement until Governor Murphy takes office. Read more [here](#).

### Policy Reports:

- “ICE in the New Jersey Courts: The Impact of Immigration Enforcement on Access to Justice in the Garden State” was published by a coalition of NJ based legal service providers and advocacy organizations, including ACLU-NJ, American Friends Service Committee, Make the Road New Jersey, and NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice. The report surveyed over 50 legal service providers that provide representation in courts across the state to understand the chilling effects of ICE enforcement on the courts. Seventy eight percent of respondents said their clients were scared to attend criminal court and one in five providers reported clients who were arrested by ICE. Read the full report [here](#).
- Make the Road New Jersey published “The Cost of Trump’s Deportation Budget to the Empire and Garden States”, finding that New Jersey taxpayers would pay \$240 million under President Trump’s proposed \$4.1 trillion immigration budget. The report outlines other state impacts of the proposed federal immigration policies and includes policy recommendations. Read the full report [here](#).
- Advocates for Children of NJ released its third annual “Showing Up Matters: The State of Chronic Absenteeism in New Jersey”. The report finds one in 10 students chronically absent, marking a slight decrease in the statewide chronic absenteeism rate from 10.3 percent to 9.7 percent. The report outlines factors that may lead to chronic absenteeism, spotlights on specific school districts that have adopted efforts to improve school attendance, and provides additional recommendations for districts to improve attendance. Read the full report [here](#).
- ACLU-NJ released its “Vision to End Mass Incarceration in New Jersey”, outlining a range of policy reforms to reduce the prison and jail populations by nearly 20,000. Policies focus on reducing the number of people entering prisons and jails such as eliminating mandatory minimums, increasing the number of people released such as reforming the parole system, and system-wide reforms such as promoting transparency and accountability. Read the full report [here](#).
- New Jersey Policy Perspective (NJPP) published “2018 Minimum Wage Hike Will Boost 300,000 Low-Paid Workers”, arguing that while the increase in the minimum wage according to inflation set for the New Year is good practice, under the current wage the basic cost of living cannot be met. NJPP also released “Let’s Drive New Jersey: Expanding Access to Driver’s Licenses is a Common-Sense Step in the Right Direction”. The report finds that granting an estimated 233,000 New Jersey residents a driver’s license under an expansion would also lead to safer roads, a better economy, a boost to motorist fees collections, and increased well-being for families. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- NY/NJ Baykeeper, in conjunction with other researchers, published “Microplastics in Urban New Jersey Freshwaters: Distribution, Chemical Identification, and Biological Effects” in a peer reviewed scientific journal. The report finds that baby fish exposed to pure plastic exhibited heart defects and growth abnormalities, suggesting that plastic and pollutants can travel up the food chain and impact aquatic life. Read the full report [here](#).

- NJ Work Environment Council published “Who Tracks the Railroads? The Case for Transparency on Rail Bridges”, outlining the scope of the problem, upcoming federal threats, and state opportunities for intervention. The report recommends a placard be posted on each bridge with a contact for reporting structural concerns, requirements for rail and bridge owners to submit inspection records to NJ Department of Transportation, and the creation of a public bridge database. Read the full report [here](#).

## Events

- January 30—[Adapting to Change: Environmental Science and Policy in the Time of Trump](#)
- February 3—[Latino Action Network’s 2018 Annual Legislative Conference](#)
- February 5—[Community Schools: Understanding How They Can Work in Your Community](#)
- February 13—[The Bordentown School: Building the Prison-to-School Pipeline](#)
- March 6—[Art, Storytelling, and Social Justice Educational Symposium](#)

## Job Announcements

- American Civil Liberties Union—[ACLU Summer Institute](#)
- Faith in New Jersey—[South Jersey Community Organizer](#)
- NJ Citizen Action Education Fund—[Grassroots Resistance Organizer](#)
- NJ Policy Perspective—[State Policy Fellow](#)
- NJ Policy Perspective—[Development and Communications Specialist](#)
- Regional Plan Association—[New Jersey Director](#)

Please send policy news and updates, job announcements, and staff updates to Sofia Flores at [sflores@fundfornj.org](mailto:sflores@fundfornj.org) or you can Tweet to @FundforNJ.