



## For Immediate Release

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# Model legislation calls for green jobs in New York State

## Lawyers for Green Jobs propose a new bill to support an inclusive green economy in their state

New York, NY—April 22, 2009—Lawyers for Green Jobs (L4GJ) announced today the release of an innovative green jobs model legislation to serve as a non-partisan framework for a statewide green workforce development initiative in the State of New York. The legislation calls for an efficient statewide framework that provides green jobs education and training, stimulating the state's economy while protecting the environment.

Lawyers for Green Jobs was formed in 2008 by a group of young environmental attorneys who met while attending the New York City Environmental Law Leadership Institute (NYCELLI) and shared a strong passion for the economic implications of environmental and social issues. Their idea to propose green jobs legislation for New York State grew in part from their coursework in NYCELLI and in part due to the fact that there currently exists no such law. Since that time, L4GJ has been engaging national and New York-based green jobs advocacy organizations, such as Green For All, the New York Apollo Alliance, and several environmental justice groups, to foster a statewide policy for green jobs in New York.

According to Jason Wiener, L4GJ Media Outreach Coordinator, "Our overarching goal is for the state to develop and administer a comprehensive green workforce development program that trains a green workforce and stimulates the state's green economy."

As L4GJ State Policy Coordinator Cullen Howe explained, "What we are primarily pushing for is to have the state come up with a systematic program to develop education and training programs to prepare people for these jobs, particularly low income and underserved communities. We envision a future that actively includes the entire workforce in the clean energy revolution that's beginning to unfold."

"Green jobs are critical to a revitalized New York State economy," said Jeff Jones, Director of New York State Apollo Alliance. "For stimulus investments in clean energy to work, New York needs a trained green workforce. This plan, proposed by Lawyers for Green Jobs, helps bring us closer than ever to New York's clean energy future, while protecting the environment and opening new career paths to tens of thousands of New Yorkers."

While intended for adoption in New York State, L4GJ's model legislation is also appropriate for use by other states, municipalities and regions throughout the nation that are planning to implement their own green workforce legislation and programs.

"We wanted to draft a green jobs bill because we believe in the promise of the new green economy, not only to turn our economy around from its deep recession, but to provide people with meaningful work that helps them better their lives while helping to fight climate change," said Giselle Vigneron, L4GJ's National Policy Coordinator. "Other states, like Massachusetts, California and Washington, already have their own green jobs policies, but New York has no legislation on this issue. Drafting a green jobs training bill for New York is a first step that we can take to promote a healthy transition to a clean energy economy."

L4GJ invites interested organizations and the general public to learn more about the proposed bill and express support for statewide green jobs legislation by sending an email to [lawyersforgreenjobs@gmail.com](mailto:lawyersforgreenjobs@gmail.com). L4GJ also encourages all New Yorkers to call their state representatives to demand statewide green jobs legislation. Log on to L4GJ's website at <http://www.lawyers4greenjobs.wordpress.com> for more information.

### About Lawyers for Green Jobs

Lawyers for Green Jobs (L4GJ) is a non partisan group of young environmental attorneys passionate about the synergistic link between the economy and the environment. The group's primary goal is to urge the New York Legislature to pass an effective green jobs bill in New York State. L4GJ believes that legislative and policy advocacy holds the key to a long-term green workforce development program which would provide people with well-paying, family-supporting jobs in the new clean energy economy, and build pathways out of poverty for traditionally underserved and disadvantaged sectors of the workforce. Formed in 2008 when its members were attending a seminar at the New York City Environmental Law Leadership Institute (NYCELLI), the group is run on a completely pro bono basis and is not affiliated with any legal, political or business interests. Learn more about Lawyers for Green Jobs at <http://lawyers4greenjobs.wordpress.com>.

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### Delight Balducci

Associate Attorney, Periconi, LLC

Delight Balducci is an associate attorney at Periconi, LLC, an environmental law firm in Manhattan, where her practice includes the defense of private and government cost recovery actions, defense of governmental enforcement actions, brownfields development, remediation of Superfund sites, state and federal environmental review processes and litigation, and advising property owners and developers in environmental due diligence.

Prior to joining Periconi, LLC, Delight practiced at an insurance boutique firm, focusing on coverage litigation and professional liability claims. Delight graduated from Pace University School of Law, where she also received a Certificate in Environmental Law. She holds a Bachelors of Science degree in Biology and a minor in French Language and Culture from The University of Scranton.

### Stephanie Haas

Attorney, New York Environmental Law and Justice Project

Stephanie Haas is a European public interest attorney dedicated to social justice work, particularly interested in the human rights aspect of legal issues. She currently works for the New York Environmental Law and Justice Project, a non-profit organization that represents local communities affected by toxic pollutants, privatization of public spaces, land and water contamination, and many other environmental justice issues.

In 2008, Stephanie was part of a women's delegation that met with Native Women in the Southwest to witness the struggles faced by Native Peoples, and to assist them on a pro-bono basis for any legal work they need.

Previously, Stephanie worked for several non-profit organizations in Washington D.C. and New York. She holds an L.L.M in Environmental Law from Pace Law School.

### Cullen Howe

Attorney, Arnold & Porter, LLP

Cullen Howe is an environmental law specialist in Arnold & Porter LLP's environmental practice group. He is the managing editor of *Environmental Law in New York*, and edits the *Environmental Law Practice Guide*, *Brownfields Law and Practice*, and *Environmental Impact Review in New York*. He recently co-authored chapters on climate change and green buildings for the *Environmental Law Practice Guide*. He is the co-editor of an upcoming book entitled "The Law of Green Buildings," scheduled for publication by the American Bar Association in the fall of 2009.

Prior to joining Arnold & Porter, Cullen practiced commercial litigation and employment law for six years at two litigation boutiques in New York City. Cullen is a graduate of Vermont Law School, and DePauw University, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

### Kara Murphy

Assistant Regional Counsel, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Kara Murphy found her passion for protecting the environment while working for Congresswoman Nita M. Lowey. While there, Kara worked on environmental issues concerning Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant and Iroquois Gas Pipeline. Today, Kara is an Assistant Regional Counsel for the Office of Regional Counsel at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2 office. Prior to joining Region 2, Kara worked as a Staff Attorney for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Administrative Law Judges located in Washington, DC.\*

Kara is a graduate of the joint program between Pace University School of Law, where she received her Juris Doctor with a Certificate in Environmental Law, and the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, where she received a Masters in Environmental Management with a focus in water science, policy, and management.

*\* Nothing herein is to be construed as an official pronouncement of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*

### Giselle Vigneron

Environmental Public Policy Attorney (Pro Bono)

Giselle Vigneron is a Policy Intern at Green For All, a national green jobs advocacy non-profit organization. Previously, Giselle worked for a number of environmental non-profits, the private sector and California State Government. In 2002, Giselle was appointed by former California Governor Gray Davis to serve as Assistant Secretary of the California State and Consumer Services Agency. In this capacity, she launched and implemented California's first state-run energy efficiency education program and directed a network of public and private partnerships.

Giselle currently serves as a Board member of Solar Richmond, a nationally recognized non-profit that trains local residents for green collar jobs. She earned her law degree at the University of Paris in France and an LL.M. in International Environmental Law at the University of Washington in Seattle.

### Jason Wiener

Staff Attorney, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison

Jason is a Staff Attorney in the litigation department of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison. He focuses on international corporate litigation and devotes considerable energy to pro bono work. He is the Secretary of the New York City Bar Association's International Environmental Law Committee and the author of five law review articles on various international and environmental law topics in U.S. and British law journals.

Jason is a 2005 graduate cum laude from Suffolk University Law School where he completed a concentration with honors in international law. Jason graduated with a B.S. from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Melding his interests in labor and the environment, green collar jobs represent the nexus of his intellectual and professional pursuits.

*Disclaimer: Nothing contained herein shall be construed as an endorsement by or on behalf of any entity with which the principals of L4GJ are affiliated.*

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The group met in 2008 while attending the New York City Environmental Law Leadership Institute (NYCELLI), which provided a forum for the group's discussions of New York's environmental problems. Their idea to propose green jobs legislation for New York State grew in part from their coursework in NYCELLI and in part due to the fact that there currently exists no such law in the State. The group felt that the environment should no longer be framed in opposition to the economy or the creation of new jobs. For environmental protection to truly work, it must benefit people's daily lives in concrete ways, most importantly by providing jobs. Given the simultaneous threats of global warming, U.S. dependence on fossil fuels, the traditional high cost of energy and a severe economic recession, encouraging a clean energy economy makes sense. Such an economy, the group strongly felt, would help the state fight climate change, promote clean energy industries, and create well-paid, family sustaining jobs.

Inspired by green jobs legislation in other states, L4GJ set out to draft a green jobs bill for New York State. After months of consulting with various green jobs organizations around the country, L4GJ drafted a proposal for innovative model legislation that would provide the State of New York with the legal framework and foundation for an inclusive, efficient green jobs training and education program.

L4GJ believes that legislative and policy advocacy holds the key to a long-term green workforce development program which could provide people with well-paying, family-supporting jobs in the new clean energy economy, and build pathways out of poverty for traditionally underserved and disadvantaged sectors of the workforce.

With the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, billions of federal stimulus dollars channeled into investments in clean technology, and an overall goal of doubling renewable energy and weatherizing millions of homes, L4GJ believes that the time is ripe for New York to enact legislation for green workforce development.

## Lawyers for Green Jobs are:

- Delight Balducci, Legislative Coordinator
- Stephanie Haas, Environmental Justice Outreach Coordinator
- Cullen Howe, State Policy Coordinator
- Kara Murphy, State Policy Coordinator
- Giselle Vigneron, National Policy Coordinator
- Jason Wiener, Media Outreach Coordinator

## Our goals are to...

- Pass a comprehensive statewide green jobs bill
- Advance an inclusive stakeholder approach to green jobs and economic enfranchisement
- Urge the New York State legislature to adopt comprehensive green jobs training legislation
- Provide new opportunities for youth to gain access to green jobs in their communities
- Empower environmental justice communities by providing sustainable pathways out of poverty
- Train New York's workforce to become the best in the country for green jobs
- Help New York State push for a transition to green manufacturing and re-training of workers
- Use this legislation as a model for other states and municipalities

Learn more about Lawyers for Green Jobs at <http://lawyers4greenjobs.wordpress.com>.