



## EANY SUPPORTS



Memo #7

# Equity in Environmental Conservation Law

[A.9057 \(Galef, et al.\)](#)

[S.1232 \(Gianaris, et al.\)](#)

### Explanation:

This bill provides additional protections to New Yorkers under the Environmental Conservation Law by affirming that all people must be treated equally regarding the development and enforcement of policies and regulations of environmental laws. Given the disproportionate burden of environmental harm that marginalized communities have historically faced, codifying equal treatment of all people under environmental law is a necessary step towards environmental justice.

In New York state and across the nation marginalized communities have been subjected to environmental harms through siting and development decisions that have generational impacts. Power plants, traffic corridors, waste sites and depots are all more likely to be sited in low income, immigrant communities and communities of color. In New York, the communities that suffer from the most air pollution have high populations of Black and Latino residents and are among the [poorest in the state](#). This is a trend that can be reversed if equal treatment is applied to all communities.

By explicitly stating that all people must be treated equally under environmental laws, the intent of the State is made clear and can be used to guide decision-making. Policies and regulations will need to take into account the mandate of equal treatment with respect to environmental regulations and policies at all levels which will provide protection to disadvantaged communities that have been the targets of environmental harm. This bill will ensure that the environmental philosophy and policy which guides the State of New York provides much needed environmental justice for all people.

### Summary:

This legislation amends the Environmental Conservation Law, subdivision 1 of section 1-0101 by adding paragraph b to declare that all people regardless of any identity, status or orientation are treated equally regarding the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental policies and regulations of the state of New York.