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Business Leaders Call on Gov. Hochul to Sign TREES Act

The bill passed with wide majorities in the legislature earlier this year and reached the Governor's desk today

ALBANY — Today, more than 40 businesses including household names like Eileen Fisher, Patagonia, Seventh Generation, Ben & Jerry's, and Tony's Chocolonely [sent a letter to Gov. Kathy Hochul](#) urging her to sign the New York's Tropical Rainforest Economic & Environmental Sustainability (TREES) Act, which moved to the Governor's desk for signature today.

The businesses state: "As businesses, we know the important role that government and governmental policy plays in the economic health of the state. We are convinced this bill would add to the health of the state's economy through the purchasing power of the government while helping to address crucial climate needs. As importantly, this bill is the practical embodiment of broad policies you have outlined in your last two State of the State addresses."

In addition to the 40+ businesses, the New York Sustainable Business Council, the American Sustainable Business Council, B Lab, Business Leaders of Colors, and Fairtrade America – which represent thousands of additional businesses across their networks and certifications – also signed onto the letter.

The TREES Act would prevent New York State from purchasing products that contribute to tropical deforestation, one of the key drivers of climate change, or contribute to the associated abuses of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in forested regions. It also provides new business opportunities for New York small businesses, woman- and minority-owned businesses, and farmers.

"This nation-leading climate bill stands to strengthen New York's economy," said Bob Rossi, Executive Director, **New York Sustainable Business Council**. "By encouraging procurement from New York businesses, it supports these economic anchors and creates jobs across the state while keeping procurement dollars circulating through—rather than leaving—our state economy. This is a critical step towards localizing our economy and building resilience against international supply chain disruptions. We now look to Governor Hochul to sign the TREES Act and restore New York State as a climate leader."

Earlier this year, the Chief Operating Officer of **Tony's Chocolonely**, Pascal Baltussen, wrote New York will miss a critical opportunity and become a "[dumping ground for high-risk products](#)" if Governor Hochul does not sign the bill.

“Deforestation is one of the largest drivers of global warming, and New Yorkers can help stop it -- if Governor Hochul signs the TREES Act,” **said Vanessa Fajans-Turner, executive director of Environmental Advocates New York.** “We can use our state’s purchasing power to combat climate change and give future generations a shot at a livable planet, by changing the way big corporations do business and making sure our tax dollars don’t drive rainforest destruction.”

Governor Hochul vetoed a previous version of the TREES Act in 2023. Sponsors amended the bill to address concerns raised by the governor, while maintaining its original climate impact provisions.

Over [100 organizations](#) representing civil society, faith, environmental, and sustainability advocates, [24,000+ petition signatures](#), and [38 lawmakers](#) have also urged Governor Hochul to sign. More than 6,000 New Yorkers have sent letters or made phone calls to Hochul's office supporting the bill, which requires her signature by December 31.

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