



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



American Sustainable
Business Network

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LETTER FROM ASBN'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2025 was a year like no other.

Over the past year, we have watched many of the political frameworks that scaffold our country slow, and in some cases, be swiftly dismantled. We have seen silence from Congress as core authorities, including the power of the purse, were strained and reallocated. Power consolidated. Accountability blurred. And at times, the quiet in the face of these shifts has felt deafening.

When I look back on 2025, I see chaos. I feel the fatigue that so many of us carry.

But that is not the whole story.

I have also witnessed something else: communities rising. Grassroots leaders organizing to shield families. Consumers holding companies accountable. Volunteer-run nonprofits raising funds to ensure children receive school lunches. Small business owners stepping forward, not stepping back, asking how they can help.

Where leadership faltered, everyday people led.

2025 forced all of us to live inside the question: What did you do when it mattered?

I am proud of our answer.

Our network came together in community. Our team showed up, every day, to listen, translate complexity, convene unlikely allies, organize campaigns and advocate on the Hill. We created spaces for businesses to stand for something bigger than themselves.

We showed up. And we will continue to show up.

Because together, we are stronger. Together, we are the pro-business voice our economy and our democracy need.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Canell' followed by a stylized flourish.

LETTER FROM ASBN'S CO-FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT

Silence is not a solution in these times when the values that we, our members, our allies and so many in this country hold dear are being threatened. True to our founding mission, 2025 was a year where we remained committed to lifting up the voice of responsible and sustainable business and taking bold actions to both counter these threats and to build pathways toward solutions for our economy and our democracy.

From safer chemicals, clean energy, regenerative agriculture, immigration, small business and local economies, to inclusive economies, we stood before legislators in Congress and in state capitals around the country and made the sustainable business case.

We stayed strong in our lawsuit against Texas' Senate Bill 13, known as the "business blacklist law," which punished businesses and pension funds for responsible, sustainable investment decisions. We helped organize and file two business-focused amicus briefs challenging the President's anti-Diversity, Equity and Inclusion executive orders. We argued that diversity benefits businesses and that businesses have a constitutional right to choose the most beneficial practices for their companies.

We strengthened support for small businesses and local economies by building a network of local, state and national organizations working collaboratively to develop strategies and advance policies. We mobilized early and helped build a strong business coalition to challenge the elimination of the EPA's Safer Choice program, which remains intact.

As part of our long-standing commitment to building an interconnected power network, we continued to strengthen existing relationships and bring on new organizational members at the local and state levels and across diverse sectors.

As we look forward to the important work that lies ahead, we know that we need each other. Collaboration will be essential as we are smarter and stronger together. We remain committed to taking the bold actions that protect our economy, our democracy, our country and the planet.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Levine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

WHO WE ARE

Where businesses build the case for a regenerative economy.

The American Sustainable Business Network (ASBN) is more than a network — it's a catalyst for action. ASBN gives members a central hub to drive advocacy, collaboration and systemic change.



We are a member organization of businesses that value sustainability and policies like transitioning from:

- Fossil fuels to clean energy
- Extractive farming to regenerative agriculture
- Chemicals of harm to safer chemicals
- A single-use economy to a regenerative circular economy

Some of our members work directly in these spaces (like clean energy companies, food producers prioritizing sustainable and regenerative operations, etc.), and some center these values in their marketing (such as Naturepedic — one of our early members).

Our staff leverages member business voices and perspectives in op-eds, congressional testimony, comments on agency rulemaking and other opportunities to shift the narrative that sustainable business practices are simply smart business practices. In the next economy, the new pro-business means being pro-stakeholder.

OUR MISSION is to inform, connect, mobilize and amplify the collective voice of sustainable business leaders to transform the public and private sectors toward a just and regenerative economy.

OUR VISION is a regenerative economy that is stakeholder-driven, sustainable, just, and prosperous.

OUR VALUES put justice, equity, diversity and inclusion at the foundation of our conduct, our policy advocacy and our business and investment activity. With clear intent and earnest effort, we will engage our community and seek leaders in the field to ensure that our impact matches our vision.

AT-A-GLANCE DASHBOARD

NETWORK GROWTH

- **60** Organizations collectively representing hundreds of thousands of businesses joined the newly launched Small Business, Social Enterprise & Local Economy initiative
- Grew by **50** new members
- Created **30** new partnerships
- Featured **30** members for #MemberMonday

POLICY WINS

- **41** Trainees at our first Advocacy 101 training with B Corp U.S. & Canada in December
- **5** States engaged on PFAS legislation: CA, CT, MA, NY and VT

LEGAL ACTIONS

- **2** Amicus Briefs with **75+** businesses
- Helped to secure **26** businesses to support [*National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education v. Trump*](#) (U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit)
- Helped secure **50** businesses to sign on to the brief in the [*Chicago Women in Trades v. Trump*](#) case (U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit)

AT-A-GLANCE DASHBOARD

COLLECTIVE BUSINESS VOICE

- **825** Emails to representatives
- **300+** Businesses mobilized via the [EPA's Safer Choice campaign](#)
- **252** Sign-ons to letters
- **141** Regulation comments
- **29** Stories shared for the Tell Your Story campaign
- **21** Calls to Representatives

WEBINARS & EVENTS

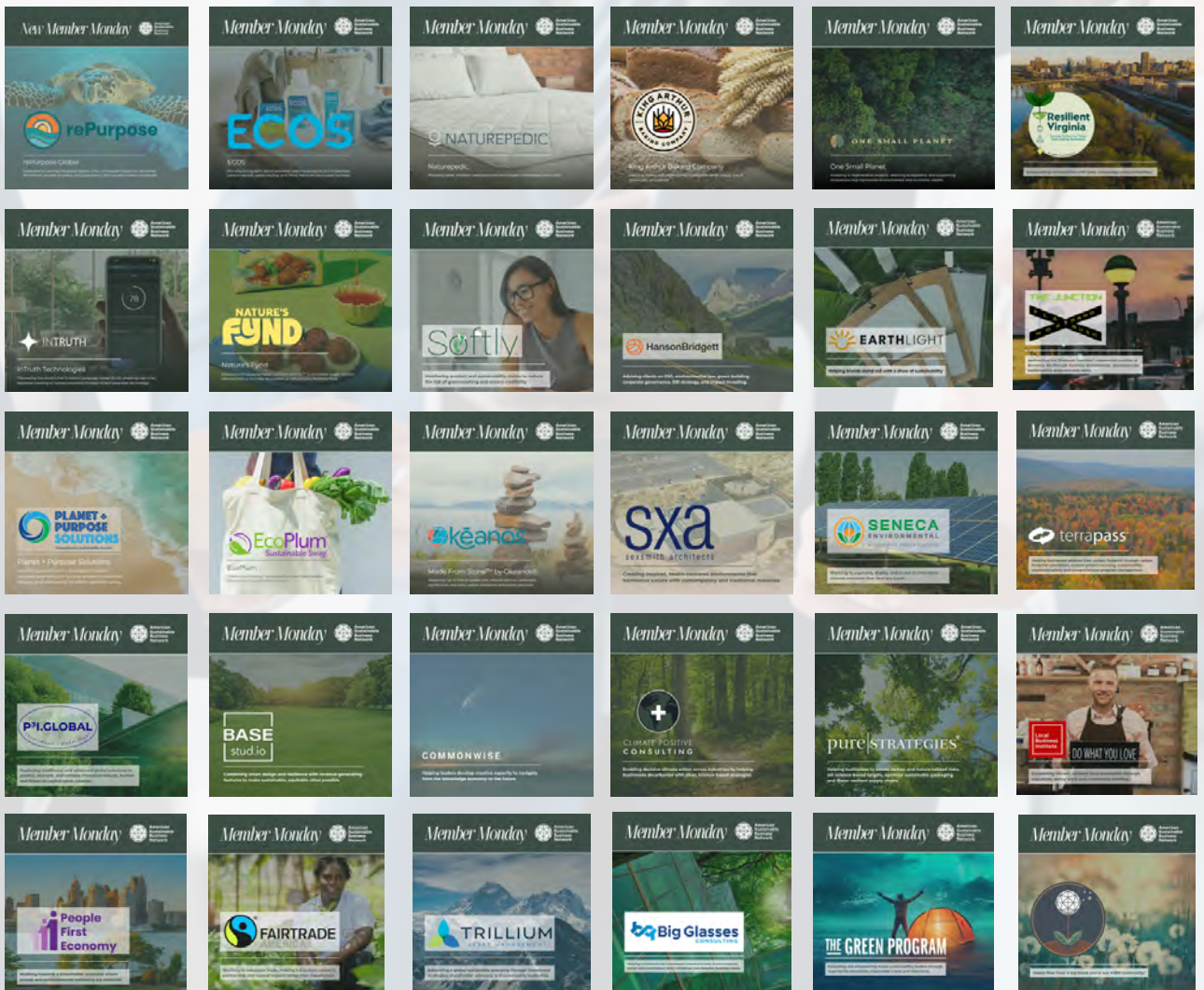
- First [Business, Policy and Purpose: The Business of Democracy Conference](#) with **80+** speakers and **350+** attendees
- **144** In-person networking attendees
- **10** In-person events in **9** states
- **4** Virtual member networking events
- **1** Impact Forum with **188** attendees

MEDIA REACH

- **679** Mentions
- **1.08B** Editorial reach
- **110M** Reached through ASBN opinion piece "[Defunding Energy Star will harm small businesses and US competitiveness](#)"
- **110M** Readers saw "[Texas allows state agency investment in BlackRock after firm steps away from climate initiatives](#)"

NEW MEMBERS & PARTNERS

- **Partnerships:** ASBN formalized around 30 partnerships and strengthened collaborations
- **Memberships:** ASBN updated membership tiers and benefits, enhanced member experience, posted 30 Member Monday features, and launched member networking events.
- **Bottom line:** Strengthened impact on protecting and promoting initiatives that lead to advancing a regenerative economy by recruiting more members and reaching more businesses through our expanded partnership networks



ASBN'S THEORY OF CHANGE

ASBN operates on the principle that sustainable business practices are not just responsible, they are essential to long-term economic prosperity. When the responsible business voice is the pro-business agenda, the economy, the planet and communities benefit. By stewarding a powerful, inclusive national business network to uplift their collective voice for policy advocacy, we are making the business case for systemic change.

When businesses across sectors, sizes and geographies unite to demonstrate that stakeholder-driven practices drive innovation, resilience and long-term profitability, they shift the narrative in both public and private sectors. This shift creates the conditions for policy transformation at local, state and federal levels, establishing new standards that mutually reinforce environmental stewardship, social equity and economic vitality.

Through this catalytic approach — combining education, coalition-building and strategic advocacy — **ASBN accelerates the transition from an extractive economy to a regenerative one that benefits all stakeholders and secures prosperity for future generations.**



WHAT IS A REGENERATIVE ECONOMY?

Our Approach to a Regenerative Economy

A regenerative economy is an economic system that focuses on moving beyond merely sustaining resources to actively regenerating and revitalizing them. Its goal is to move beyond the status quo to improve and enhance the health and well-being of both people and the planet.

In the current political and regulatory landscape—marked by economic uncertainty, shifts in Environmental, Social and Governance regulation, and new narratives around stakeholder capitalism—a regenerative economy provides a framework for businesses and communities to create value that is resilient, inclusive, and long-term. Unlike traditional economies, which often promote uncapped growth at the expense of environmental and social well-being, a regenerative economy aims to restore and renew natural resources, rebuild and protect communities and create lasting, long-term value.

Transforming economic systems toward regenerative practices for shared prosperity is central to achieving a stakeholder-driven economy. This shift encourages long-term societal and environmental well-being.

AREAS OF IMPACT OVERVIEW

Key principles of the stakeholder-driven, regenerative economy include:

- **Governance and Accountability:** Safeguard transparent, inclusive decision-making and alignment of organizational strategies with long-term ecological, social and economic resilience.
- **Sustainability and Regeneration:** Restore ecological balance and address environmental challenges.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Ensure equitable access to resources, opportunities and benefits for all communities, addressing historical injustices.
- **Regenerative Economics:** Redefine success to include environmental health, human well-being and social equity alongside economic prosperity.

GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

A strong, accountable democracy, good governance practices and clear standards of accountability are essential for a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial economy where stakeholders have a voice. Effective governance ensures that organizations prioritize stakeholder interests and align their strategies with long-term value creation.

KEY INITIATIVES:

- Protecting the Freedom to Associate, Assess & Invest
- Governance & Accountability
- Tell Your Story

GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

- Helped secure 26 business leaders and investors for an Amicus Brief in support of the [National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education](#)
- Helped secure 50 businesses and investors who joined the Amicus Brief in support of the [Chicago Women in Trade lawsuit](#)

TELL YOUR STORY MARKETPLACE ARTICLE QUOTES

- “I would not call us thriving in any stretch of the imagination,” —[Jennifer Luna, Owner, Curious Bear Toy and Bookshop \(July, 2025\)](#).
- “It's so hard, you know, trying to even project these things and just knowing that it could potentially change at any day. It's like, how can you run a business like that? —[Heather Bickford, Chief Operating Officer, Death By Audio \(September, 2025\)](#).
- “So the coffee we're buying from Guatemala, Colombia, Honduras, you know, has been, on average, an additional \$20,000 per container,” —[Nicole Vitello, Vice President, Equal Exchange \(June, 2025\)](#).

In these very challenging times, we need the power and influence of ASBN more than ever before to counteract the influences that threaten our progress on environmental, social and governance and diversity, equity and inclusion.”



Jeffery Hollender
Adjunct Professor at New York University's Stern Business School & ASBN member Seventh Generation Co-Founder



PROTECTING THE FREEDOM TO ASSOCIATE, ASSESS & INVEST

Last year, federal and state actions challenged just and fair legal frameworks. Under political and regulatory pressure, businesses and investors were restricted in how they considered sustainability factors, and small businesses were disadvantaged by efforts to limit credit opportunities and by regulations intended to protect them. Texas' Senate Bill 13 (SB-13) particularly harmed businesses that sought to invest in Environmental, Social and Governance standards. The "business blacklist law" punished investors and businesses for responsible, sustainable investment decisions. This unconstitutional law cost Texans millions while silencing businesses that considered climate risk.

ASBN Response

In response, ASBN and ASBC—our 501 (c) (4) affiliate—advocated, in collaboration with a wide range of partners, to protect constitutional rights, democratic systems and fair legal frameworks. In 2025, we:

- **Advocated for the freedom of all businesses to make informed decisions** for their clients, stakeholders and communities by continuing to pursue our lawsuit against the State of Texas for SB-13 through the plaintiff ASBC, on behalf of two of our members, Etho Capital and Sphere, who had been blacklisted.
- **Took a stand to protect fair lending rules** by providing public comments to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau against changes to the Equal Credit Opportunity Act that could increase discrimination and lessen credit opportunities.
- **Sought to protect the Small Business Regulatory Reduction Act** by providing public comments and helping business leaders to make the small business case to legislators for why transparent regulations promote fair competition.
- **Advocated against H.R. 4305**, the "Destroying Unnecessary, Misaligned and Prohibitive" (DUMP).
- **Joined efforts to call out the Red Tape Act of 2025** for being a vehicle for special interests to influence Congress regarding regulations.

BUSINESS FOR DEMOCRACY

In 2025, Business for Democracy transformed into an initiative focused on advancing an inclusive economy by defending Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and the rights of immigrants and undocumented workers.

DEI faced significant challenges in 2025 due to political, legal, and economic pressures. Executive actions and policy proposals sought to restrict or eliminate DEI-related programs in government, education and contracting, while high-profile legal challenges increased scrutiny on corporate DEI initiatives.

Also in 2025, federal action changed immigration policy by emphasizing stricter enforcement and by focusing on detention, deportation and border control. These actions not only harmed the lives and livelihoods of millions of undocumented workers and immigrants, but also created uncertainty, and in some instances, havoc for businesses that rely on immigrant labor.



**PROUD TO DEFEND DEI
AND FREE SPEECH!**

ASBN Response

In response, ASBN, through ASBC, our 501 (c) (4) affiliate, advocated, in collaboration with a wide range of partners, to protect constitutional rights, democratic systems and fair legal frameworks. In 2025, we:

- **Argued that certain executive orders targeting DEI created legal uncertainty** and posed risks to both compliance and business success, alongside PolicyLink and other partners.
- **Challenged the Administration’s anti-DEI executive orders** by helping to secure 26 business organizations, companies and investors to sign on to the amicus brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in support of the [National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education](#).
- **Continued to challenge such executive actions through a similar brief** in the U.S. we helped secure 50 businesses to sign on to the brief in the [Chicago Women in Trades v. Trump](#) case in the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.
- **Supported the Dignity Act of 2025 (H.R. 4393)**, a bipartisan immigration reform bill designed to modernize the U.S. immigration system.

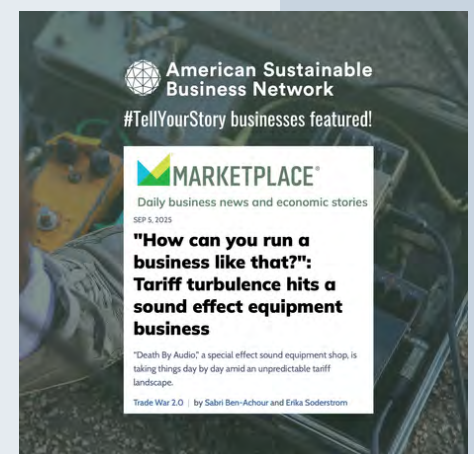
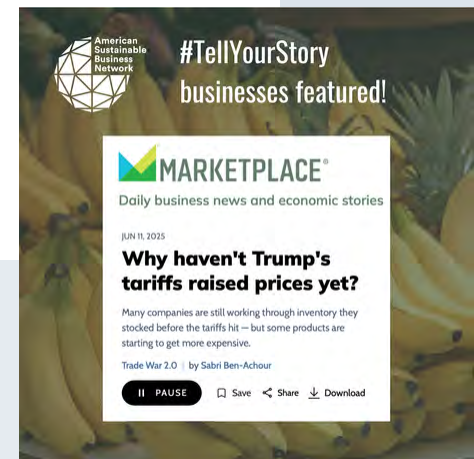
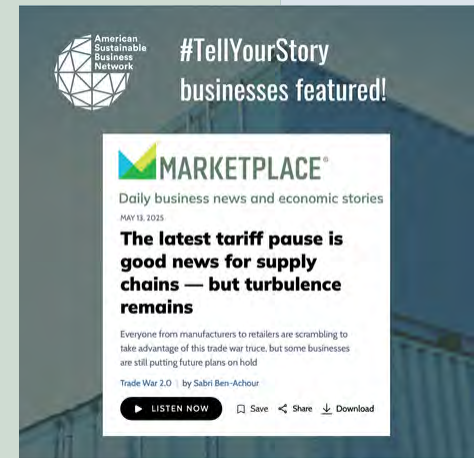
TELL YOUR STORY

In 2025, the federal administration unleashed a series of changes that greatly affected Americans and businesses. From dismantling federal agencies to tariff hikes, government shutdowns and federal freezes, federal action and policies created a high degree of uncertainty.

ASBN Response

In response, ASBN connected business stories to legislators and the media through our Tell Your Story Campaign. This ongoing campaign centers on how new policies affect the business community. The *Tell Your Story* campaign successfully mobilized members to speak out on tariffs, clean water protections, immigration and more. In 2025, we:

- **Created 12 *Tell Your Story* campaigns** centering on how different federal actions have affected the business community.
- **Connected 6 business leaders to NPR Marketplace** over multiple episodes.
- **Marketplace's "[How We Survive:](#)"** ASBN member Alex Wright-Gladstein (founder of Sphere) was featured in an April 2025 episode discussing the impact of shifting retirement savings to climate-friendly funds.
- **Through ASBC, we uplifted the small business voice** in partnership with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, with representation by ASBN board member and Executive Director of the North Carolina Sustainable Business Network, Vicki Lee Parker-High, to speak out against tariffs.
- **Provided legislators with business owner stories and contact information** to help inform policymaking on issues such as AI data centers.
- **Podcasts & Radio:** ASBN was spotlighted on the [LIFT Economy Next Economy Now Podcast](#) for its Tell Your Story campaign, and David Levine was featured on the [Go Green Radio Show](#) to discuss ESG and the EPA Safer Choice program alongside several ASBN member CEOs.



SUSTAINABILITY & REGENERATION

Balancing economic activity with planetary boundaries, conserving the environment and reversing the harms caused by human activity is critical for future resilience and a thriving regenerative economy.

KEY INITIATIVES:

- Regenerative Agriculture
- Climate & Energy
- Clean Water

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE HIGHLIGHTS

- **229 Advocacy actions** for Farm Bill and soil health advocacy efforts
- **14 Hill engagements** to uplift business support for regenerative agriculture
- **12 Regenerative Agriculture Steering Committee** convenings
- **3 Policy Briefing Calls** launched for rapid updates and engagement
- **2 In-person speaking** engagements at the Rural Coalition Winter Forum in Washington, DC and Climate Week in New York
- **2 Farm Bill Policy Forums**, featuring Campaign for Family Farms, Rural Coalition, Land Core, National Family Farming Coalition and National Wildlife Federation

CLIMATE & ENERGY HIGHLIGHTS

- **90 participants signed on** to oppose the repeals of the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS) and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards (GHG)
- **60 participants signed on** to urge the EPA to protect ENERGY STAR
- **9 Policy Brief Calls** educating members about federal policy
- **1 Policy Forum** “Solar at a Crossroads: Navigating Tax Credits, Tariffs and Your Bottom Line” and follow-up blog
- **1 delegation of ASBN members**, representing U.S. private sector interests in climate and clean energy, sent to COP30 (Belém, Brazil)

CLEAN WATER HIGHLIGHTS

- **117 actions taken to protect clean water** through sign ons aimed at stormwater infrastructure investment, safeguarding the Clean Water Act and more.
- **6 Hill visits**
- **6 Steering Committee meetings**
- **4 webinars** covering Waters of the United States, *Sackett v. EPA*, federal stormwater policy and how businesses can protect water
- **4 blog articles** on The Clean Water Act and other issues
- **2 Regional Executive Committee meetings**
- **2 newsletters**



REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

ASBN spent 2025 making the economic case for regenerative agriculture and protecting existing soil health and conservation investment despite a tumultuous federal policy environment. The Farm Bill, the primary vehicle for advancing and modernizing conservation and soil health programs, was scheduled for renewal but stalled due to congressional gridlock, resulting in yet another one-year extension. This delay prevented critical updates needed to strengthen and expand support for regenerative practices.

At the same time, the federal government weakened incentives and shifted priorities away from climate-smart agricultural practices. New policies led to decreases in climate-related funding, which regenerative agriculture initiatives rely on, as well as broad efforts to weaken environmental protections around standards related to water, soil and emissions. Additionally, cuts or constraints affecting agencies and programs that provide technical assistance—such as conservation programs and extension services—limited the support available to farmers transitioning to regenerative practices. Together, these factors slowed adoption, increased financial risk and weakened momentum toward more sustainable and resilient agricultural systems.

“

We're focused on transforming agriculture to **advance equitable food systems, sustainability and resilience.**



Liza LaManna,
ASBN Agriculture & Clean
Water Policy Manager
2025 ASBN Impact Forum



ASBN spotted
Liza LaManna, Agriculture and Clean Water Policy Manager

Attended "Cultivating the Future of Organic Agriculture in the Southeastern US: How Advancing Equity and Inclusion will Strengthen the Organic Movement."




The Policy Forum:
Two-Part Virtual Series

- August 27:** The Farm Bill Explained: Foundations, Framework & Why It Matters
- September 10:** Leveraging the Farm Bill: Crop Insurance, Conservation & Diversified Agriculture

🕒 1 PM ET | 12 PM CT | 11 AM MT | 10 AM PT

*Members Only




ASBN spotted
Liza LaManna, Agriculture Policy Manager

Advocated alongside member of Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, Inc. for farmworker rights such as fair wages and workplace protections.



“

A unified framework can help the private sector support regenerative agriculture because **“businesses play a critical role in driving demand, shaping supply chains, and influencing consumer perception.”**

“A well-defined standard ensures that regenerative agriculture delivers real environmental and social benefits, rather than serving as a marketing buzzword.”

—Liza LaManna
ASBN Agriculture & Clean Water Policy Manager

“Everyone Loves Regenerative Agriculture — But No One Agrees on What It Is” | Ambrook Research



ASBN’S RESPONSE

ASBN Response

In response, we worked to build coordination between businesses, rural advocates, farmers and frontline stakeholders to elevate business voices on Capitol Hill and in public discourse. Over the past year, we:


- **Reframed soil health and conservation programs as economic risk management tools** underpinning supply chain stability to appeal to a broader political base.
- **Strove to embed justice and equity perspectives within agricultural policy advocacy** by elevating frontline and farmworker voices in federal advocacy spaces.
- **Increased member confidence in engaging directly on federal agriculture policy** by preparing businesses for potential Farm Bill outcomes, educating members on draft text and mobilizing business voices to defend soil health programs.
- **Strengthened alignment between business leaders and rural coalition partners** around shared Farm Bill priorities by regularly convening the Regenerative Agriculture Steering Committee to guide strategy.
- **Prevented business disengagement during periods of legislative uncertainty** by launching Public Policy Briefing Calls to provide timely updates and low-lift engagement opportunities for members.




The Policy Forum:

Two-Part Virtual Series

September 10: (Part 2) Leveraging the Farm Bill: Crop Insurance, Conservation & Diversified Agriculture

1 PM ET | 12 PM CT | 11 AM MT | 10 AM PT

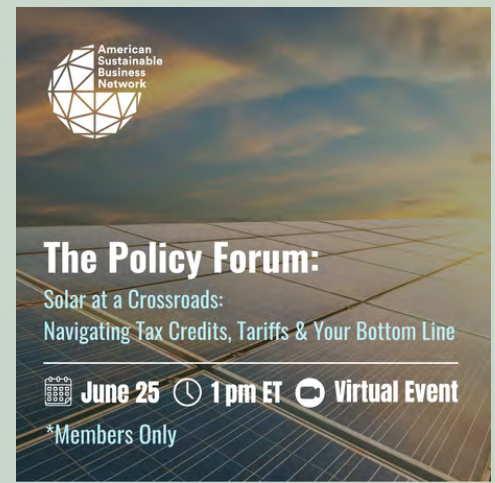


			
Liza LaManna Manager of Agriculture and Water Policy	Aria McLaughlan Land Core Co-founder and Executive Director	Ben Knuth National Wildlife Federation Policy Analyst	Austin Bryniarski National Family Farm Coalition Government Relations Coordinator

Blog Post 

CLIMATE & ENERGY

Over the past year, ASBN has been on the front lines responding to federal efforts to roll back critical climate policies and regulatory authorities. The administration has targeted foundational climate policies designed to unlock private-sector investment and provide long-term regulatory certainty. At the center is the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), whose clean energy tax credits and market-based incentives have catalyzed significant private investment in renewable energy, clean manufacturing, energy efficiency, clean vehicles and domestic supply chains. Federal actions have also sought to weaken methane and other super-pollutant standards, reduce EPA enforcement authority and challenge the Endangerment Finding—the legal basis for federal climate regulation. Additional rollbacks of environmental and climate justice frameworks threaten protections for frontline communities and erode principles many businesses view as essential to responsible development and long-term stability.



ASBN Response

In response, ASBN mobilized its national network to ensure business voices remain central in climate policymaking. Over the past year, we:

- **Organized direct engagement with Congress, federal agencies and the EPA,** elevating the perspectives of small and mid-sized businesses that depend on regulatory certainty.
- **Submitted formal comments, sign-on letters and testimony** opposing efforts to weaken the IRA, EPA authority, super-pollutant regulations and environmental justice protections.
- **Activated member companies across sectors** to share real-world impacts and demonstrate that climate action is a business imperative.
- **Built coalitions with labor, environmental justice organizations and trade and state groups** to reinforce that strong climate policy supports economic resilience and competitiveness.
- **Held the administration publicly accountable** by pushing back against narratives framing climate policy as anti-business and reaffirming that durable, enforceable rules are essential for fair markets. *(Continued on next page.)*

Holding the administration publicly accountable continued:

- ASBN Senior Policy Advisor, Michael Green, published an [op-ed arguing that defunding the ENERGY STAR program](#) will harm small businesses and U.S. competitiveness.
- ASBN Executive Director, Camilla Taylor, was featured at the [ReImagine Appalachia Summit \(covered by The Charleston Gazette-Mail\)](#), spoke at the Green Business Engagement National Network (GBENN) and was interviewed by [Premiums for the Planet regarding the power of insurance as a climate tool](#).
- Strong regional visibility was achieved through op-eds, including PASBN Director [Lou Tierno in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette \(advocating against a methane-powered plant\)](#).

“

Solar and storage can provide real energy freedom for our commercial entities across the country. ... If you reduce the ability for a client to pursue solar and storage projects, you're just limiting the available tools in our toolbox and making us less competitive.

Jon Bunyaratapan
Solar Business Development Manager
Envivity Inc.



Quoted in ASBN June Policy Forum:
"Solar at a Crossroads—Navigating Tax Credits, Tariffs & Your Bottom Line."



ASBN spotted - COP30 Brazil

ASBN Senior Advisor on Climate & Energy, Mike Green, at COP30 Brazil, November 2025.

“

These abrupt and unpredictable changes create uncertainty for businesses, undermine investments in clean technology, and ultimately serve only the interests of big polluters, not American communities or the environment.

”

Abby Maxwell ASBN Senior Policy Associate



In response to recent EPA deregulation announcements



CATCH ASBN AT CLIMATE WEEK!

Connect with Abby Maxwell (ASBN Senior Policy Associate) and Liza LaManna (ASBN Agriculture and Water Policy Manager)


“

From a purely business perspective, the elimination of ENERGY STAR isn't merely about labels on appliances; it **directly impacts operational costs, performance consistency, and market competitiveness.**

Michael Green
ASBN Senior Advisor on Climate & Energy



Stated in "Defunding Energy Star will harm small businesses and US competitiveness," an opinion article for The Hill



Statement

American Sustainable Business Network

CLEAN WATER

ASBN's Clean Water Is Good For Business initiative is empowering businesses to champion policies and practices that protect water resources and advance investments in water infrastructure, positioning clean water as a cornerstone of economic and community resilience. In 2025, the Clean Water is Good for Business campaign operated in a volatile policy environment shaped by ongoing changes to federal water protections and continued debates over the Clean Water Act and other fallout from the Supreme Court's *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency* decision.

The *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency* decision significantly narrowed the scope of waters protected under the Clean Water Act by limiting federal jurisdiction primarily to wetlands with a continuous surface connection to navigable waters. This ruling created regulatory uncertainty, leaving many previously protected wetlands and streams vulnerable to pollution or development. Ongoing threats to further weaken federal protections have compounded this uncertainty, increasing risks to water quality, ecosystems and the businesses and communities that rely on clean, reliable water resources for operations, supply chains and public health.



Sign On & Protect
The Clean Water Act!



SIGN ON
PROTECT CLEAN WATER
Don't let the PERMIT Act Pollute Our Future

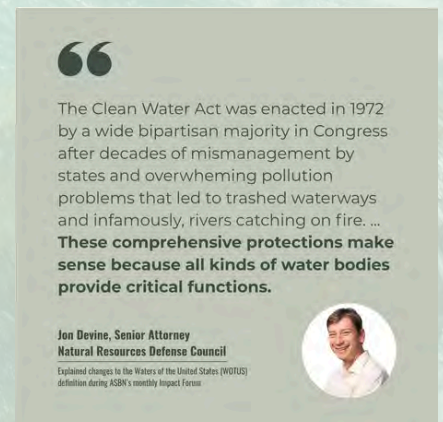
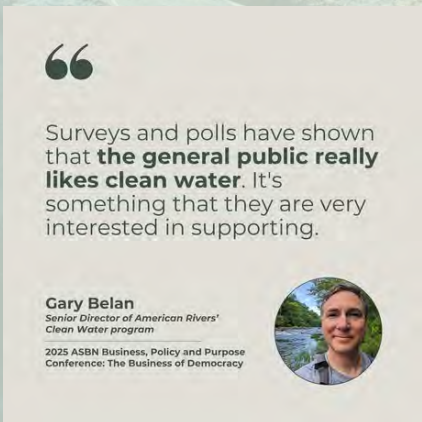


SIGN ON
PROTECT CLEAN WATER
Uphold state & Tribal rights to prevent pollution

ASBN Response

In response, ASBN centered on building a unified coalition of business advocates to make the economic case for clean water. Over the past year, we:

- **Elevated business voices in support of water protections** by providing opportunities for stakeholders to take action in support of clean water, organizing Steering Committee meetings and two Regional Executive Committee meetings.
- **Informed businesses about policy changes and associated business risks** through educational webinars focused on federal water policy and stormwater management.
- **Reinforced clean water as essential economic infrastructure that supports supply chains, workforce stability and regional growth** through public engagement, including an op-ed highlighted by The Nature Conservancy in New York.
- **Collaborated with coalitions such as Clean Water for All and the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed**, engaging in advocacy efforts including a Hill Day with the New York delegation and meetings with key federal lawmakers.
- **Reassessed long-term strategy** by focusing on strengthening internal infrastructure, aligning leadership and expanding education for businesses navigating increasing regulatory uncertainty.
- **Created strong regional visibility** through op-eds, including Liza LaManna in the *Times Union* ([on wetlands and the Clean Water Act](#)).



EQUITY & INCLUSION

A stakeholder-driven economy prioritizes human well-being and inclusivity to address systemic inequities. The actions taken in this area empower communities and promote a regenerative future for all.

Key Initiatives:

- Small Business, Social Enterprise & Local Economies
- Advancing Economic Opportunity For Tribal Nations & Communities

SMALL BUSINESS, SOCIAL ENTERPRISE & LOCAL ECONOMIES HIGHLIGHTS

- **Built a convening of 60 plus organizations** to coordinate on strategies to support small business and local economy strategies and policies.
- **Engaged 6 communities** to improve access to capital and support inclusive entrepreneurship
- **Held 2 webinars on CDFIs** to help individuals understand and navigate CDFI investment opportunities.

ADVANCING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR TRIBAL NATIONS & COMMUNITIES

- **5 Youth Program Alumni** Success Highlights on ASBN Channels
- **4 International conferences** attended
- **4 BCCA Steering Committee** Meetings convened
- **3 webinars** planned and executed
- **2 Youth Steering Committee** exploratory meetings held



SMALL BUSINESS, SOCIAL ENTERPRISE & LOCAL ECONOMIES

Last year, uncertainty around financial regulations and federal priorities threatened to weaken critical sources of funding for small businesses and community development. Proposed cuts or reallocations to the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund in federal budget negotiations would have reduced grants, technical assistance and financing capacity for local lenders. And broad efforts sought to scale back or restructure federal programs that channel capital into community lending, which would limit access to affordable credit for small businesses and low-income communities.

Access to capital is both necessary and challenging for small businesses because it directly determines their ability to start, operate and grow. However, small businesses often face significant barriers in obtaining funding. Traditional lenders may view them as higher risk, especially if they lack long credit histories, collateral or consistent revenue. Many entrepreneurs—particularly those in underserved communities—also face structural inequities in lending, including limited relationships with financial institutions and fewer opportunities to build credit.

FEATURING

Liz Rogers
CEO
Tern Strategies, LLC

Pam Porter
Managing Partner
Stepping Stone Partners, LLC

Helping Individuals Navigate
CDFI Investment Opportunities

Webinar

Sept 17
1 pm ET

American Sustainable Business Network Tern Stepping Stone THE MAIN STREET JOURNAL

Helping Individuals Navigate
CDFI Investment Opportunities

Webinar

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ASBN Response

In response, ASBN's Small Business, Social Enterprise and Local Economy Initiative brought together a broad coalition of more than 60 organizations representing hundreds of thousands of businesses to strengthen the collective voice of small businesses. In the past year, we:

- **Mobilized business and investor support to protect CDFIs** from policy threats by highlighting their role in supporting local economies.
- **Supported the Small Business Truth in Lending Act in New Jersey (S1397)**, which aimed to establish clear price transparency standards for nonbank small business lending working with the Responsible Business Lending Coalition.
- **Worked to catalyze community well-being** through a project supported by the Kauffman Foundation. This effort engaged six communities—both urban and rural—using participatory action research to identify scalable best practices to improve access to capital and support inclusive entrepreneurship
- **Collaborated on webinars with partners such as Tern Strategies and Stepping Stone Partners** to encourage mission-driven investors to participate in CDFI investment opportunities.

ADVANCING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR TRIBAL NATIONS & COMMUNITIES

Tribal businesses and communities faced several significant threats in 2025, largely tied to federal policy uncertainty and structural challenges. There was instability in federal funding and programs that support Tribal economic development, infrastructure and entrepreneurship. Delays, proposed cuts and shifting priorities affected access to capital, technical assistance and essential services that many Tribal businesses rely on.

Broader structural barriers compounded these challenges. Limited access to credit, persistent gaps in federal procurement opportunities and insufficient investment in Native-owned enterprises continued to suppress economic growth across Tribal communities. These barriers make entrepreneurship support and Tribal public-private partnerships not just beneficial but essential — they create direct pathways to economic self-determination, community wealth-building and long-term resilience. Robust ecosystems of training, mentorship and technical assistance equip entrepreneurs to launch and grow businesses that are rooted in local needs, cultures and priorities, generating jobs while keeping wealth circulating within the community.

“

Substantial benefits are derived from the conservation policies that drive **equitable, inclusive, community-based, and resilient conservation.**

Terrius Harris,
ASBN Director of Indigenous
Partnerships & Inclusive Economy

2025 ASBN Impact Forum



Alumni Spotted

Alex Armendariz

Inaugural fellow of ASBN's Indigenous Youth Climate Resiliency Through Public Policy Program (IYCRTPPP)

Recently began new position as Director of Tribal Relations at Cal State San Bernardino



ASBN'S RESPONSE

In response, ASBN is collaborating with Indigenous and Tribal Nations to build an inclusive, sustainable and just business ecosystem through a range of interconnected initiatives. This partnership empowers Tribal communities through capacity building, entrepreneurship support and access to Tribal public-private partnerships. In 2025, we:

- **Expanded visibility and impact of The Indigenous Youth Climate Program through national and international engagement** by sharing the program's success at major global convenings, including the inaugural Obama Foundation Brazil Climate Convening and the 2025 Balaton Group Meeting in Japan.
- **Identified Indigenous-led enterprises to participate in a free business training program**, helping build capacity and economic opportunity within these communities.
- **Championed student engagement by securing free tickets** for college students from the University of Chicago, Obama Scholars from the Obama Foundation, and Ilíiaitchik: Indigenous Correspondents Program (ICP) Correspondents from the University of Arizona, amongst other youth, to attend the 2025 Sustainability Live Conference.
- **Presented at the 2025 Small Business Anti-Displacement Network Conference** on strategies to sustain small businesses amid challenges related to equity, financing and climate resilience.
- **Further uplifted Tribal Bison Restoration Efforts** through our Growing GRASS work, highlighting and finding pathways for untapped opportunities for collaboration and private investment.
- **Landscaped issues and priorities in Indian Country** through a Department of the Interior [Memorandum of Understanding initiative](#).
- **ASBN Director of Indigenous Partnerships, Terrius Harris, participated as a panelist at the Smithsonian National Youth Summit on Education** in Jackson, Mississippi, and served as host of the 31st Annual African American Contractors Association Gala in Chicago.



ASBN's Terrius Harris speaking at the Smithsonian National Youth Summit on Education.

REGENERATIVE ECONOMICS

A regenerative economy is an economic system that focuses on moving beyond the sustainability of resources to actively working to regenerate and revitalize them. Its goal is to improve and enhance the health and well-being of both people and the planet.

Key Initiatives:

- Safer Products, Chemicals & Circular Economy

SAFER PRODUCTS, CHEMICALS & CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Highlights

- **300+ Businesses mobilized** to protect the U.S. EPA's Safer Choice Program
- **319k est. reach from 8 articles** covering the Safer Choice campaign picked up by *Chemical Watch News*, *Toxic-Free Future* and multiple industry-specific management publications.
- **Aided 6+ legislative efforts** and policy wins across the U.S.

In 2025, safer chemical policies faced challenges from federal actions that weakened regulatory oversight and slowed progress on chemical safety. Efforts to limit the authority and enforcement capacity of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reduced the government's ability to evaluate and restrict hazardous substances. This affected the implementation of key laws like the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), making it harder to phase out harmful chemicals and promote safer alternatives.

There were also delays and rollbacks in regulating high-risk substances, including PFAS “forever chemicals” and other toxic compounds. At the same time, political and industry pressure pushed back against stricter chemical standards, often prioritizing cost concerns over health and environmental protections. These actions created uncertainty for businesses investing in safer products and slowed the transition toward a more transparent, health-protective chemicals market.

ASBN Response

In response, ASBN focused on advancing policies and business practices that reduce toxic chemical exposure and promote safer alternatives. In 2025, we:

- **Mobilized more than 300 businesses**, in collaboration with multiple trade associations, to successfully protect the U.S. EPA’s Safer Choice program from elimination.
- **Contributed to the inclusion of a provision in the FY2025 National Defense Authorization Act** that requires the Department of Defense to purchase Safer Choice–certified or equivalent cleaning products.
- **Produced a range of resources to strengthen the business case for safer chemicals and a circular economy**, such as a report outlining the benefits of eliminating PFAS chemicals from consumer products, business support letters advocating for policy change and a fact sheet highlighting the risks associated with plastics and their toxic additives.
- **Supported state legislation aimed at reducing exposure to PFAS and other harmful chemicals** such as phthalates, bisphenols and parabens through written and in-person testimony in coordination with state-based partner organizations.
- **Aided policy wins** such as Vermont legislation to expand the state’s existing [PFAS ban \(H.238\)](#), and a [New York ban on PFAS in menstrual products \(S1548\)](#), as well as the approval of the [Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act \(PRRIA\)](#).
- **Provided support for key bills** such as Massachusetts’ Toxic-Free Kids legislation and California’s measures addressing PFAS in consumer products and plastic microbeads.

“ASBN has been an invaluable partner in this mission, championing policies and business practices that prioritize sustainability and create lasting, positive change.

Together, we are proving that business can, and must, be a force for good.”

Barry Cik

Founder &
Technical
Director,
Naturepedic,
ASBN Member



American Sustainable Business Network

The Policy Forum:

Plastics in Perspective:
Promise, Pollution & Paths Forward

Oct 1
1 pm ET
Virtual Event

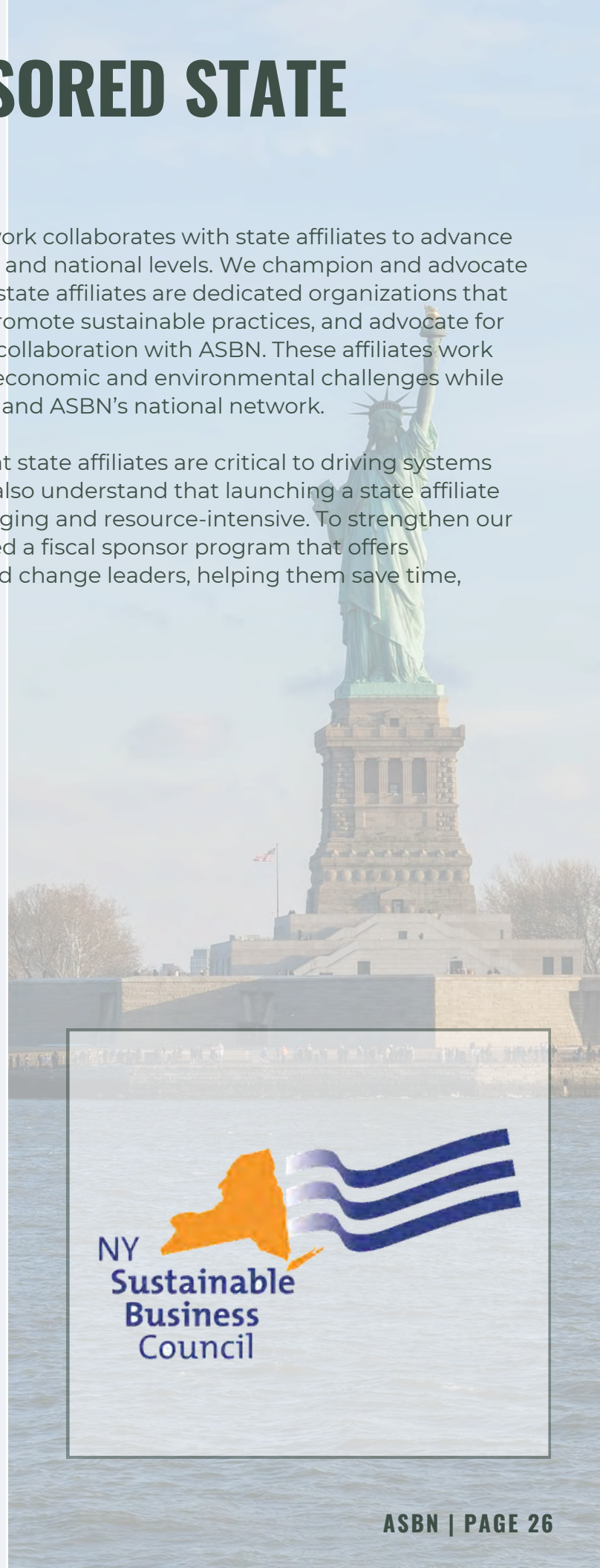
FISCALLY-SPONSORED STATE AFFILIATES

The American Sustainable Business Network collaborates with state affiliates to advance sustainability and equity at both the local and national levels. We champion and advocate alongside partners in over 40 states. Our state affiliates are dedicated organizations that engage diverse business communities, promote sustainable practices, and advocate for policies that drive meaningful change in collaboration with ASBN. These affiliates work across sectors to foster local solutions to economic and environmental challenges while building connections with other affiliates and ASBN's national network.

Since our inception, we've recognized that state affiliates are critical to driving systems change for a regenerative economy. We also understand that launching a state affiliate organization can be operationally challenging and resource-intensive. To strengthen our commitment to local efforts, we've created a fiscal sponsor program that offers operational expertise to regionally focused change leaders, helping them save time, energy, and resources.

New York Sustainable Business Council (NYSBC)

In 2025, NYSBC received its 501(c) (3) charitable status. NYSBC participates in coalitions including the JustGreen Partnership, Energy Democracy Alliance, TREES Coalition, NYS Fights Data Centers and PFAS-Free NY. NYSBC secured \$2M in the state budget for the Green Affordable Pre-electrification Fund, helping low-income residents become eligible for home electrification and weatherization programs. In December, NYSBC celebrated the signing of the PFAS and Toxics in Menstrual Products bill, which bans toxics in menstrual products. NYSBC also supported ASBN's broader efforts by identifying businesses impacted by tariffs and recruiting a farm for a *Newsweek* article.



New Jersey Sustainable Business Council (NJSBC)

To meet the policy and political moment, NJSBN did a soft relaunch in summer 2025. The relaunch included bringing Dr. Rebecca Lubot on board as executive director, a new advisory board, an updated website that allows for calls to action and houses news and other resources, and the formation of new membership categories. Since then, NJSBN has amplified the sustainable business voice at the State House and has successfully published several op-eds. Dr. Lubot participated in the Power Play NJ campaign targeting ways that policymakers can make energy more affordable, recently meeting with the Governor-elect's transition team on that initiative.



"Our affiliation with ASBN enhances NJSBN's credibility with New Jersey policy makers, business leaders and members of the press. The ongoing ability to engage with ASBN and its network helps us to better serve our members as we work together to influence positive systemic change at the state level."



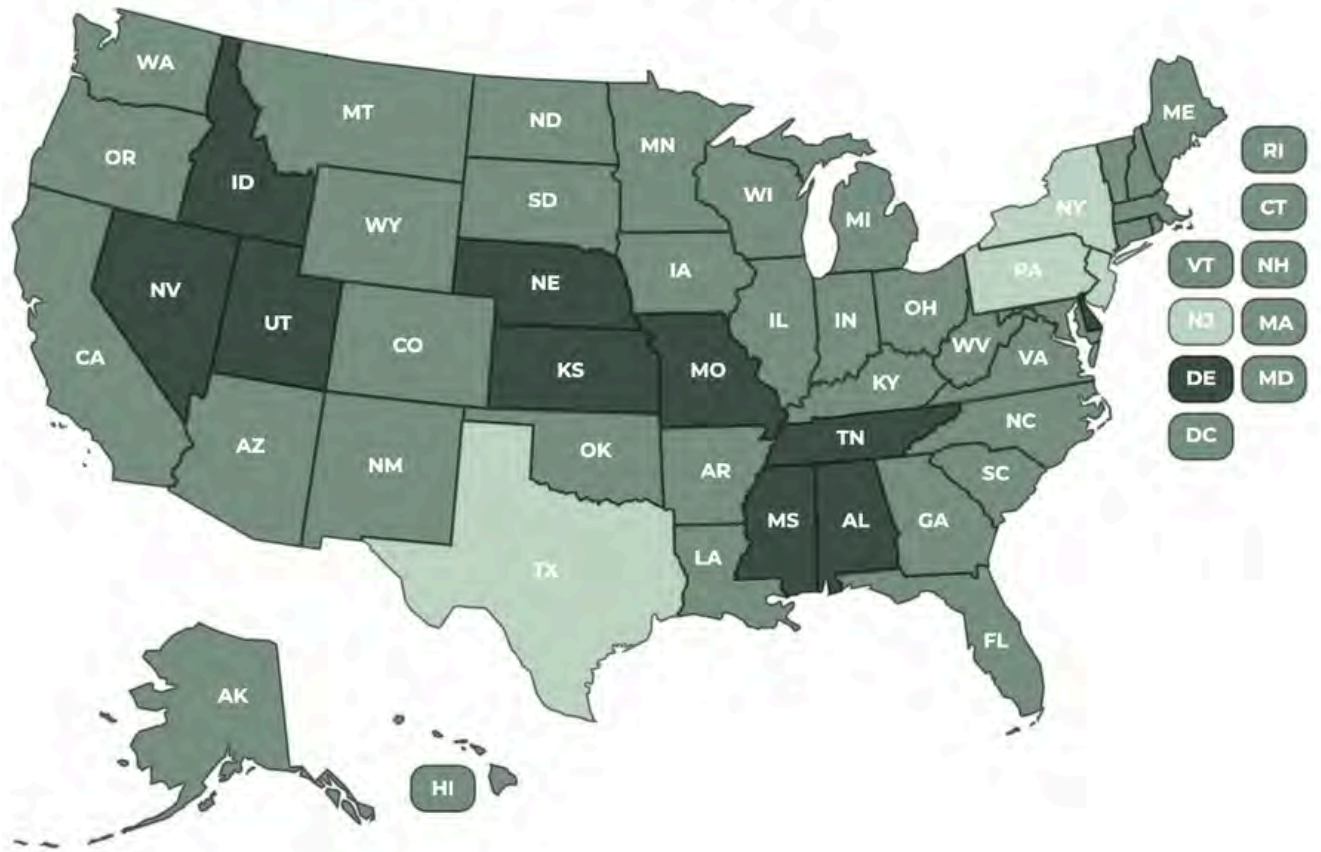
Rebecca C. Lubot, Ph.D., M.Sc.
Executive Director, New Jersey
Sustainable Business Network

Pennsylvania Sustainable Business Network (PASBN)

PASBN strengthened its role in advancing sustainable business engagement and policy advocacy across Pennsylvania in 2025. It expanded capacity by bringing on Michael Jarrett, Clean Energy Advocate & Strategist, and growing its network through new members and partnerships, including absorbing The Good Business Network. PASBN maintained active engagement with its Western PA Steering Committee and convened business leaders through events and panels. It deepened advocacy through submitting EPA comments, participating in local climate planning, and developing business case studies. Collaborations with partners like PennFuture and the University of Pittsburgh helped drive progress toward a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable regional economy.



State Affiliates **Fiscally Sponsored State Affiliates**



2025 STATE AFFILIATE SPOTLIGHT

North Carolina Sustainable Business Council (NCSBC)

In 2025, NCSBC raised \$120,000 in grant and program funding to advance our nonpartisan advocacy and sustainable business development services. Their signature issue was working on fair elections. Through dozens of weekly e-blasts reaching thousands of subscribers, they shared critical voting resources for hundreds of municipal elections, including polling locations and updated voting regulations. In partnership with community organizations, these efforts contributed to a record turnout in North Carolina municipal elections—exceeding 19% of registered voters, up from the 14–17% range seen between 2015 and 2023.



Vicki Lee Parker-High (NCSBS) represented the ASBC by joining small business owners and Senate Democrats to protest against exorbitant tariffs in May, 2025.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

Looking ahead, ASBN remains committed to lifting up the values-based, responsible and sustainable business voice to work toward solutions for our economy and our democracy.

In 2026, we are advocating for three core pillars: **Security**, **Affordability** and **Economic Opportunity** through initiatives such as:

- **Businesses United in Leading Democracy (BUILD) campaign:** a free, nonpartisan resource hub for business owners who want to engage in the 2026 midterms on the issues that actually affect their bottom line. [Visit the resource hub.](#)
- **Ongoing Midterm Elections webinars:** to inform and mobilize the business community around protecting the democratic systems that make climate progress possible. [See our events.](#)
- **Advocacy 101 Trainings and Resources:** workshops and toolkits aimed at demystifying the advocacy process to empower business leaders with concrete tools to create change! [Express your interest.](#)

As we move into this next year, we stay dedicated to advancing sustainability and social responsibility across every facet of business.

We invite businesses, individuals and organizations to join us in this effort.

By supporting ASBN's initiatives, you can help champion regenerative practices, uplift Indigenous youth and advocate for policies that prioritize a stakeholder-driven economy. Together, we can build a more just and sustainable future for all.

For general inquiries, get in touch at hello@asbnetwork.org, to learn about membership email membership@asbnetwork.org, and sign up for our newsletter to stay up to date on the latest actions, events and opportunities!

Visit ASBNetwork.org.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



This work would not be possible without the generosity and shared commitment of our donors, partners, and members, as well as the strength and diversity of our boards, staff and contractor team. Special thanks to Anayana White, ASBN Head of Communications, and Claire Duncombe, ASBN Communications Contractor, for their editorial and design skills. We are especially grateful to ASBN members Ecos and Naturepedic for their direct support of our safer chemicals and circular economy work. From state affiliates to Indigenous partners to national foundations, the breadth of this network reflects how many sectors recognize what's at stake — and we are grateful to every organization named in these pages for being part of this.

If you'd like to join us as a funder, partner, or member, we'd love to hear from you at team@asbnetwork.org.

Donors

- Children's Environmental Health Network
- Climate Power
- ECOS
- Energy Action Fund
- Heinz Endowments
- Moore Charitable Foundation
- Naturepedic
- New Venture Fund
- New York Sustainable Business Council
- Park Foundation
- Purchasing with Purpose
- Regenerative Agriculture Foundation
- Skoll Foundation
- Sunrise Foundation
- U.S. Energy Foundation
- US Impacting Investing Alliance
- Wallace Global Fund

Media Partners

- Impact Entrepreneur
- The Main Street Journal

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- Premiums for the Planet
- 929 Design

Partners

- American Rivers
- American Independent Business Alliance
- B Lab U.S. & Canada
- ClimateVoice
- Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed
- Environment America
- Environmental Working Group (EXG)
- Forum for the Future
- Freedom Economy Business Association
- Institute of Sustainability of Environmental Professionals (ISEP)
- International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP)
- Investors Circle (IC)
- Minorities in Aquaculture (MIA)
- National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC)
- National Wildlife Federation (NWF)
- National Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
- North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association (NCSEA)
- Policy Link
- Purchasing with Purpose
- Regenerative Organic Alliance (ROA)
- Rodale Institute
- Rural Coalition
- US Green Building Council California (USGBC)
- We the Change
- Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP)
- Zero Foodprint

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS - CONT.

State Affiliates

- Connecticut Sustainable Business Council
- Good Business Colorado
- Sustainable Business Network of Massachusetts
- New Hampshire Business for Social Responsibility
- New Jersey Sustainable Business Network
- SEED NM (Sustainable Equitable Economic Democracy NM)
- NY Sustainable Business Council
- North Carolina Sustainable Business Council
- Great Lakes Business Network
- People First Economy
- Ohio Sustainable Business Council
- Pennsylvania Sustainable Business Network
- Sustainable Pittsburgh
- Texas Sustainable Business Network
- Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility
- Resilient Virginia

Local Affiliates

- Flatbush Nostrand Junction BID
- Sustainable Pittsburgh
- Greater-Birmingham Alliance to Stop Pollution (GASP)

Indigenous Partners

- Department of the Interior Office of Strategic Partnerships
- Native Americans in Philanthropy
- Planet Forward
- Alliance for Tribal Clean Energy
- Intertribal Buffalo Council
- Tunka Fund
- NDN Collective
- Aleut Community of St. Paul Island Tribal Government
- Intertribal Ag Council

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