

Overview

NCEL began 2026 by engaging with legislators and providing education on the key environmental issues and [policy trends](#) shaping this legislative session. These efforts included welcoming newly elected lawmakers into the network, developing new resources, and conducting state visits to support legislators on the ground. NCEL also published its [2025 Annual Report](#), showcasing the organization's growth and impact over the past year — now available to view online.

Events

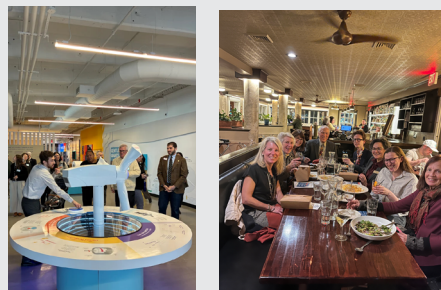
NCEL 2026 Session Kickoff — Emerging Environmental Policy

Trends From the States: On February 24, NCEL hosted a kickoff webinar highlighting key trends in state environmental policymaking for the 2026 session, complemented by a blog post that explores the broad range of policies under consideration. [Learn more.](#)

Hawai'i Outdoor Preschool & State Visit: From January 5-6, NCEL partnered with the Imua Family Services, the Children & Nature Network, and the North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE), to host a convening in Hawaii bringing together legislators and early childhood education stakeholders to tour an outdoor preschool, discuss nature-based learning policies, and build partnerships around outdoor early childhood education licensing.

New York Offshore Wind Tour: In January, NCEL brought together 18 legislators from five states to tour WindScape Brooklyn, an offshore wind learning center in South Brooklyn, where lawmakers explored the Empire Wind 1 project and discussed workforce development, climate goals, and community engagement opportunities. [Learn more.](#)

State Visits: NCEL staff traveled to nine state capitols and met with state legislators during the first three months of the year.



The photos above were taken during NCEL events in the first quarter of 2026.



Policy Movement

Bill Tracking: NCEL is [tracking](#) over 2,200 bills in 45 states and territories.

Session Kickoff: NCEL released a [Session Kickoff Blog](#) in February, highlighting the policy focuses and trends forecasted for this legislative session, including: energy affordability, outdoor education, nature-based solutions, watershed health, and more.

Policy Updates: NCEL staff published policy updates covering state action to boost [rooftop solar access](#), reduce [plastic waste](#), and address [climate risk](#).

Resources

Recent Blogs: As federal climate and energy policy continues to shift, NCEL published timely blogs on the impacts and emerging solutions for states, including the [repeal of the Endangerment Finding](#), the rise in [plug-in solar](#) technologies, and the potential to use [indirect source rules](#) for regulating vehicle emissions.

Outdoor Risk & Safety Briefing Book: This new [resource](#) offers an overview of key outdoor engagement and risk management policy issues that state legislators are addressing, highlighting successful policy examples to demonstrate the benefits of outdoor play.

Outdoors as an Accessibility Solution Briefing Book: The new [briefing book](#) provides a summary of outdoor accessibility policy issues for state legislators looking to increase access to nature for those with disabilities.

New Fact Sheets: [Offshore Wind Coexistence](#), [Agroforestry](#), [U.S. Public Trust Doctrine and Wildlife](#), [Treated Seeds](#), [PFAS](#), and [Atlantic Menhaden](#).

Partnership

Model Climate Laws Initiative (MCLI): NCEL recently launched a new partnership with the [Model Climate Laws Initiative \(MCLI\)](#), designed to equip state leaders with educational opportunities and resources to help them champion strong climate policies in the years ahead. Since the partnership's launch in December, NCEL and MCLI have co-hosted a [webinar on the federal climate law landscape](#) and published a [joint blog](#) on the implications for state climate action amidst the repeal of the Endangerment Finding.

NCEL in the News

- **KOAM:** "[Missouri data center growth fuels energy debate](#)"
- **Illinois House Democratic Caucus:** "[State lawmakers propose ban on surfboard wax made with 'forever chemicals'](#)"
- **The Reflector:** "[Coal ash leaks pose significant risk to Mississippi water](#)"
- **CleanTechnica:** "[How States Are Powering America's Clean Energy Future](#)"



NCEL

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