We enthusiastically support MASSPIRG because it provides students with the knowledge and skills needed to become advocates for issues that are important to them and their communities. Having MASSPIRG as a partner with this work and with voter engagement work increases the breadth and deepens the impact of civic engagement on campus.”

John Keenan
President, Salem State University

Wow, the excitement and joy working with energized students, like those in PIRGIM, to engage other students on voter and civic initiatives has been a moving experience. I am proud of all of the effort and support our student leaders showcased on educating their peers on the importance of voting. This is the reason why I go to work every day. By setting the path as administrators, we can further the voices for our students.”

Brandon Shamoun, M.Ed.
Assistant Director of Student Involvement, Wayne State University
The 2022 - 2023 school year was our first year fully back in person since the pandemic hit, and our team was ready to meet the moment and rebuild the infrastructure for student organizing on campuses across the country.

For more than 50 years, we’ve developed a model that has trained over 100,000 students in effective activism. We are the only student-led and student-funded grassroots organizing network in the country, and this year, students reaffirmed their commitment to funding student-led organizing by overwhelmingly supporting PIRG fees in Washington, California, Massachusetts, and New Jersey.

In total, more than 250,000 students are dues paying members of the Student PIRGs network. With the help of supporters like you, we were able to expand our training program beyond these traditionally student-funded chapters by investing in PIRG clubs in Wisconsin, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Arizona, and Florida.

Together, our network helped pass major policies along the west coast to curb the use of plastic pollution, made more than 200,000 peer-to-peer get-out-the-vote contacts, secured new investments for free open textbooks, did thousands of hours of service in our communities, and more.

We’re incredibly proud of our student board members, 1,600+ student volunteers, and our professional staff who worked to make sure young people’s voices were heard.

Thank you for taking the time to celebrate another year of youth-led grassroots organizing, and thank you for supporting our work along the way.

– Student PIRG Board Chairs: 
Ashley Agostinelli | UMass - Amherst, Class of 2023
MASSPIRG Students
Chloe McKenna | Eckerd College, Class of 2023
Florida PIRG Students
Clara Castronovo | UCLA, Class of 2024
CALPIRG Students
Emma Hersom | Trinity College, Class of 2024
ConnPIRG Students
Hibah Hammad | University of Oregon, Class of 2023
OSPIRG Students
Jackson Hoppis | The Evergreen State College, 2024
WashPIRG Students
Maggie Lu | Rutgers - New Brunswick, Class of 2026
NJPIRG Students
Sophia D’Alonzo | University of Maryland - College Park
Class of 2024 | MaryPIRG Students

I am consistently amazed by our CALPIRG Students. The dedication, knowledge and persistence of the group has clearly translated into successful advocacy in a variety of initiatives.”

Monroe Gorden, Jr.
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
University of California, Los Angeles
Students are making real change, right now, to build a greener, healthier future. In the process, we give students the opportunity to take on real leadership:

• Students vote on which campaigns to run, and then run them, with the support of our experienced staff.
• The boards of our state organizations are composed of students elected by their peers.
• Students lead opportunities for thousands of their peers to get involved with issues that they care about, and make a real difference on campus and in their broader community.

We work with as many people on campus as we can, regardless of ideology, to bring people together around our shared problems and common sense solutions to build a better future.

In this hyper-polarized, social-media-bubble-dominated political environment, our work is a rare opportunity for students to get outside of their bubbles and find common ground. And there's a lot we can get done when we focus on what we do agree on!

I have learned so many new ways to engage with people on issues I care about... I have learned how important and accessible grassroots activism is. Every single day, I feel like I am helping our environment and our people.”

Nataly Villaseñor
New Voters Project Campaign Coordinator
Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology Major
University of California, Los Angeles

We are the nation’s oldest and largest student-funded state based organizations, and we know we’re doing something right when year after year, students vote to support their campus PIRG chapter with a small fee on their tuition bill. A BIG THANK YOU to the 25,000 students that voted YES this year to support their PIRG fee, or signed up to pay their fee each term. And THANK YOU to our 250,000+ dues-paying student members across the country that make this work possible!

• In California, CALPIRG signed up 16,000 new dues paying members to add the $10 CALPIRG fee onto their tuition bill and support CALPIRG’s work to protect our oceans.
• In New Jersey, NJPIRG ran a massive referendum at Rutgers University to reaffirm support for the group through a $13.01/semester waivable fee. Over 9,000 students participated and over 80% of students voted yes!
• In Massachusetts, MASSPIRG won seven funding votes to reaffirm support for funding their chapters through a $9-11/semester waivable fee.
• In Washington, students at the Evergreen State College reaffirmed their support for WashPIRG, with 80% of students voting in support of the waivable fee.
I was thoroughly impressed by the activism and support NCPIRG was able to provide to our institution and our students at Central Piedmont Community College! As an institution we were able to successfully build a stronger focus on voter engagement and democracy! I am honored to have worked with such a wonderful organization, and I look forward to seeing our students use their voices to make our communities and world a better place.”

Whitney Williams, M.S. Ed.
Assistant Director, Service Learning and Civic Engagement Central Piedmont Community College

“CALPIRG Students is an integral part of the UCSD campus community. They help advance the education and public service mission of the university by running a training program to teach students to be leaders in addressing basic needs and advancing sustainability.”

Pradeep Khosla
Chancellor, University of California, San Diego

I am so proud to support MASSPIRG. The organization has been visibly connecting with UMassD students to engage them in advocating for college affordability, understanding and participating in national elections, and tackling poverty. As Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs, I believe MASSPIRG has been an integral part to enhancing the student experience.”

Dr. Kimberly Scott
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, UMass Dartmouth
Building a Culture of Civic Engagement

2022 Midterm Election

Over the last year, 800 student volunteers, interns, and fellows working on more than 150 campuses across the country (including public and private four-year schools and 100 community colleges) helped hundreds of thousands of their peers make their voice heard in our democracy.

Our team made more than 200,000 get-out-the-vote contacts to help students make a plan to vote and organized hundreds of campaign actions to engage students through in-person events, class announcements, phone calls, text messages, and on social media.

We know organizing works! Based on our research, while the average voter turnout for young people reached 23% nationally, 41% of the young people who the Student PIRGs’ New Voters Project helped to register over the last year turned out to vote, along with 46% of the young people contacted through our peer-to-peer GOTV program.

In Illinois, we made more than 55,000 peer-to-peer get-out-the-vote contacts on 20 campuses, helping students get the information, resources, and reminders to vote by Election Day. Based on voter records and internal tracking, we calculated that 49% of those whom we contacted before Election Day voted, more than double the national average.

In Georgia, we partnered with PoderLatinx GA Latina Civic Engagement Day to encourage Latinas to vote—while learning how to dance.

In Texas, PIRG organizer Gracie Coates was featured in an ABC news story for her work to help register voters at Austin Community College in Texas (right). “Our generation is the demographic with the lowest voter turnout...It has been surprising getting over 100 people registered in about five days,” Gracie said.

Students are leading the way

The Student PIRGs’ New Voters Project received the Centering and Trusting Local Leaders Award by the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition for the work students did across the country to recruit and train leaders who helped their peers to vote in the midterm election.

We also had a number of student leaders recognized as a part of the 2023 ALL IN Student Voting Honor Roll. The annual ALL IN Student Voting Honor Roll recognizes college students at participating campuses who are advancing nonpartisan student voter registration, education, and turnout efforts as well as ensuring equitable access to the polls.

Student PIRG leaders Andres Cubillo (Florida State University) and McKenzie Roller (University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill) serve as advisory committee members of the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition, the national hub and largest nonpartisan network in the country dedicated to increasing student voter participation. As members of the committee, Andres and McKenzie represent the student voice on the committee that works to shape the future of the student vote movement for years to come.

Since 1984, the nonpartisan Student PIRGs’ New Voters Project has had one mission: to achieve full participation of young people (aged 18-29) in the democratic process. This year, we continued to make significant progress towards this vision.

Data from the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) found that the percentage of all eligible young voters, ages 18-29, who cast a ballot in 2022 midterms was 23%. While this was lower than in the historic 2018 midterm election cycle (28%) which broke records for turnout, this was much higher than the 2014 midterms, when only 13% of youth voted.

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The Road to 100% Renewable Energy

As one of the biggest climate polluters, the United States has a real responsibility to lead on climate action. Now, with recent federal investments and ongoing state progress, we have a realistic path to global climate leadership and preventing the worst impacts of climate change.

Students have been in the forefront of climate progress for decades. From MASSPIRG’s early renewable energy advocacy in the 1970s, to California’s landmark climate bill in 2006 that CALPIRG Students championed, to today, where young people are continuing to lead society down the road to 100 percent renewable energy and a cleaner, greener future.

State Progress

Massachusetts: Building off of our huge victory last spring of getting UMass Amherst committed to 100 percent renewable energy by 2032, we turned our attention to the state level:

We called for passage of the 100% Clean Act – which would get the state of Massachusetts on track to be clean energy powered – and the Million Solar Roofs Initiative – a state level commitment to install the equivalent of one million solar roofs by 2030. In total, more than 2,500 students took action to support our campaigns, as did 150 local officials and health professionals and 9 mayors. We then held over 40 lobby meetings to bring that support directly to decision makers at the State House!

California: Continuing our work in 2022 to speed up California’s timeline for 100 percent clean energy, CALPIRG organizers and student leaders held a rally and lobby day in Sacramento calling for California to go BIG on climate action and show young people’s support for the Governor’s climate package, which would require the state to reduce emissions dramatically and speed up the transition to 100% clean electricity. Thirteen students from six schools attended the events and did two dozen meetings with legislative offices!

Not long after, we saw a major win on climate! The new laws include setting a goal for 90% of the state’s electricity to come from clean sources by 2035; prohibiting new oil drilling within 3,200 feet of the places where Californians live, work, eat, shop, worship and go to school; and setting goals for removing global-warming carbon from our air and putting the state on track for carbon neutrality by 2045.

CALPIRG Students Organizing Director Veronika Michels was invited to the Governor’s bill signing event to celebrate all of the work CALPIRG did for climate action.

Federal Action

PIRG students supported and celebrated the adoption of key provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act which will help build a national network of electric vehicle charging stations, and give Americans the tools to reduce the carbon footprint of their homes, cars, appliances and more.

▸ PIRG leaders at the White House celebrating the Inflation Reduction Act (Student PIRGs Political Director, Dan Xie is third from left)
Break Free From Plastics

We’ve come a long way from our first campaigns to pass Bottle Bills in the 1970s and 1980s and the first plastic bag bans in the early 2000s. The impact of our addiction to single-use plastics on the environment and public health is now being taken seriously by many community leaders and elected officials. In the last decade, we’ve helped push decision makers to ban the most egregious single-use plastics and lay the groundwork for zero waste systems.

This year, our teams on the west coast made major progress towards eliminating single-use plastics.

**California:** After years of organizing, CALPIRG Students helped to pass Senate Bill 54, the Plastic Pollution Reduction Act. The new law will reduce the amount of plastic used in the state by an estimated 23 million tons over 10 years—that’s 26 Golden Gate Bridges or a forest of nearly 1 million giant redwood trees. The new law mandates significant reductions in single-use foodware and packaging, requiring that those items actually be recyclable or compostable, and holding producers financially responsible for the plastic they put into our communities.

In addition, students worked locally and successfully passed five new policies to curb plastic use:

- In San Diego, the UC San Diego chapter worked to pass an ordinance through the San Diego City Council that bans polystyrene foam.

- In Los Angeles, students helped pass three ordinances through the Los Angeles City Council banning polystyrene foam, reducing plastic in city facilities, and banning plastic bags in retail stores.

- The UC Berkeley chapter helped to pass the Better Berkeley Bag Ban through Berkeley City Council.

- Oregon – Lawmakers voted to phase out polystyrene foam foodware, packing peanuts and coolers statewide. All this wasteful plastic “stuff” sticks around for centuries after being thrown out and is nearly impossible to recycle -- instead clogging our landfills and polluting our environment. In recent years, OSPIRG Students has built student support on campuses, helped pass local polystyrene bans, and PIRG staff have knocked on tens of thousands of doors to build support for the legislation.

- Washington – In a state that already is a leader on reducing single use plastics, lawmakers passed a new WashPIRG-backed law that requires that new buildings constructed with water fountains also contain bottle filling stations; phases out the use of small plastic containers, wrappers and packaging for personal care items like shampoo or soap by hotels and other lodging establishments; bans soft film-wrapped floats and docks; and mandates a study of hard-shell foam-filled floats and docks.

“Dealing with the problem of waste in the environment is much easier to address at the source, before it gets into the environment in the first place.”

Mazzi Nowicki, Beyond Plastics Coordinator, WashPIRG Students, in the Mountlake Terrace News
Alleviating Hunger and Homelessness

Serving Our Communities:

For decades, we have co-sponsored the Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week with the National Coalition for the Homeless. This year, 40,000 people took action at H&H Week events around the country, and #HHWeek reached over 7.2 million people online.

In the spring, student PIRG volunteers held a hunger service competition and completed over 1,000 hours of service.

Oregon: OSPIRG at the University of Oregon won the competition, with 375 hours of service! The chapter held more than 25 hunger service events including holding food drives, volunteering at the local grassroots garden, making burritos for the local houseless population and more!

Florida: Florida PIRG at Florida State University held the biggest PIRG hunger event in years! The Tallahassee event, which was organized by PIRG student leader David Garner, was the first ever collaboration between Florida State University, Florida A&M University, and Tallahassee Community College. More than 30 volunteers participated, collecting 10,000 pounds of food items and basic necessities. The event was attended by a number of community partners and a staffer from U.S. Senator Marco Rubio’s office, and was covered in five media outlets including the local ABC news affiliate.

Connecticut: ConnPIRG at Trinity College partnered with a local food pantry and raised over $700 from a swipe a meal program in one day!

IN THE NEWS

"Hibah Hammad is the University of Oregon chapter chair for the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group, or OSPIRG...her organization is highlighting some of the services available for people struggling on U of O’s campus, and also putting together medical kits for people experiencing homelessness in the community."

—Public News Service, Nov. 14, 2022

Hunger Free Campus Legislation

In addition to fighting hunger through direct service, we also pushed for Hunger Free Campus legislation in a number of states including Florida, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Washington. These bills would help end food insecurity at public colleges and universities by providing funding for proven anti-hunger resources like on-campus food pantries, meal swipe donation programs, food vendors that take EBT/Snap benefits, and anti-stigma campaigns.

In Massachusetts, MASSPIRG hosted a lobby day with their statewide partners. Sixty students and community activists participated, and in just one day, they met with over 30 legislative offices and convinced five legislators to co-sponsor the Hunger Free Campus bill (photo immediate left).

PIRG students from Oregon, Florida, and Massachusetts hosted a panel at the Universities Fighting World Hunger Conference about their efforts to pass HFCB’s across the country.

Florida: Florida PIRG at Florida State University held the biggest PIRG hunger event in years! The Tallahassee event, which was organized by PIRG student leader David Garner, was the first ever collaboration between Florida State University, Florida A&M University, and Tallahassee Community College. More than 30 volunteers participated, collecting 10,000 pounds of food items and basic necessities. The event was attended by a number of community partners and a staffer from U.S. Senator Marco Rubio’s office, and was covered in five media outlets including the local ABC news affiliate.

Connecticut: ConnPIRG at Trinity College partnered with a local food pantry and raised over $700 from a swipe a meal program in one day!
Campuses across the country celebrated faculty who prioritize affordability when choosing course materials and are leading efforts on campus to increase open textbooks adoption by hosting “OER Oscars” events. Hundreds of students from across the country nominated their professors for awards. We’re thrilled to have been able to recognize these leading faculty partners in the open textbooks movement.

“Working with PIRG has reinvigorated our Textbook Affordability Team, and I feel more confident and steadfast in this work than ever before.”

Lindsey Wharton, Interim Director of Service Strategies and Department Head of Teaching, Learning, & Engagement, Florida State University Libraries

“MASSPIRG has played a pivotal role in promoting Open content. Knocking on faculty doors, making them aware of the benefits of OER, is a tireless task which MASSPIRG has taken on. We are so fortunate to have such an active chapter that works collaboratively with campus administration.”

Apurva Mehta, Associate Chief Information Officer, University of Massachusetts Boston Office of Information Technology

Making Textbooks Affordable

The cost of textbooks and course materials has increased at three times the rate of inflation since the 1970s. While the astronomical increase in textbook costs has plateaued in recent years, the student experience has remained the same. Students continue to skip buying assigned course materials due to cost at similar rates.

After a decade of education and advocacy, many faculty, colleges and universities, and university systems have embraced the cost-saving potential of free open educational resources (OER) - teaching, learning, and research materials that are openly licensed for use, adaptation, or redistribution at no cost. This shift in the landscape has resulted in new nefarious tactics by the publishing industry to keep students on the hook for high priced course materials.

Open Textbooks Advocacy

In California, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Oregon, students helped introduce legislation to tackle the high cost of textbooks by requiring course marking of textbook costs, investing in open textbook grant programs, or creating more open textbooks.

Additionally, our team met with more than 80 Congressional offices about the Affordable College Textbooks Act.

Open Textbooks: The Billion Dollar Solution (2nd Edition)

Though hundreds of Open Textbook Initiatives have launched, little has been done to document their impact or codify best practices. In the second edition of this report, the Student PIRGs undertook the first of its kind review of OER grant programs across the country to illuminate their successes and share recommendations from practitioners across the country.

This survey covers data from 61 grant programs in 32 U.S. states and British Columbia that have, to date, save students more than $310 million in textbook costs.

In THE NEWS

“According to a new report from the Student PIRGs late February that looked into university open education grants (which includes open textbooks), for each dollar invested into open education resource grants, students save between $10 to $20. The Student PIRGs found that grant programs started during the pandemic have already saved university students more than $2.5 million.”

—Business Insider
Conserving Our Wild Places

We envision a nation where our special places are protected and free from development and the extraction of fossil fuels or minerals. Our wild land and waterways should be permanently off limits to industry and taken care of for generations to come. This year, our team worked to make sure President Biden made progress toward his goal of protecting 30% of America’s land and waterways by 2030.

Elevating Student Voices

Thousands of students made their voices heard during official public comment periods in support of conservation proposals like ending a plan to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, protecting the Cashes Ledge underwater mountain range off New England’s coast, and adopting a strong plan to expand the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Students also called on Home Depot to protect our forests by sourcing lumber from sustainable sources.

Progress For More Nature

We helped make major progress this year toward the conservation movement’s goal of protecting 30% of our nation’s land and waterways by 2030 with the establishment of Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument, Castner Range National Monument, and Avi Kwa Ame National Monument. In addition, we helped win our campaign to protect the Tongass National Forest in Alaska, the largest intact temperate rainforest, by reinstating hard-won federal safeguards against logging and road building.

- Opposite page, top: Student leaders from WashPIRG attended a march and rally to save the orcas at the Washington State Capitol in Olympia. Close to 100 students and community activists marched in support of breaching the dams on the Columbia River to save the Chinook salmon – thereby protecting Puget Sound’s orcas from extinction.

Expanding Marine Protected Areas

California’s Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, is home to amazing wildlife like blue whales, sea otters, and dolphins. Unfortunately, oil drilling, impacts of large-scale fishing and climate change have put the health of this critical marine environment at risk. One of the best solutions is setting aside more untouched ocean space for wildlife to swim freely and recover, similar to national parks, but in our oceans! That’s why this year, CALPIRG Students ran a statewide campaign to call for the adoption of more highly and fully protected marine areas (MPAs), to help protect 30% of our ocean by 2030. Over the year, the CALPIRG team had over 14,000 one-on-one conversations with other students to educate them on the campaign. 50 CALPIRG leaders also came to the California State Capitol in Sacramento to lobby over 55 elected officials on the campaign!

CALPIRG Students helped organize California Ocean Day 2023, a day of action and education for the health and well-being of the Pacific, with Environment California and partners like Surfrider Foundation, Oceana, and Azul – and had 200 people in attendance. Students heard from ocean advocates from around the state and joined lobby meetings with elected officials to build support for more action on marine conservation.

In addition to pushing for stronger conservation policies to protect our terrestrial and marine habitat, we also made efforts to protect our pollinators and other key species locally.

“I appreciated the opportunity to work with NJPIRG students on behalf of our local honey bees. Honey bees are our most important pollinators. Without their actions, agricultural economies, our food supply and surrounding landscapes would collapse. We must continue to make people aware of the many challenges honey bees face today; climate change, loss of habitat, varroa mites, and insecticides like neonicotinoids, which has resulted in the bee population suffering severely and declining at an alarming rate. It was great to see the enthusiasm with which our message was received by the Rutgers community.”

- Kevin Roche, Central Jersey Beekeepers Association

- Florida PIRG at Eckerd College held a “Pollinator Picnic” round table discussion with professors on campus on the topic of saving the bees. They talked about bee research happening in Professor Scott Dobrin’s lab, initiatives at the Eckerd Community Farm, and how to access the on-campus seed library.

- NJPIRG at Rutgers University “Twitter-stormed” the Mayor of New Brunswick, calling on him to support a resolution to make the city Bee Friendly – after which he messaged the chapter asking to see the proposal and said he’s looking forward to working with NJPIRG on the issue! The chapter also spoke to the city council and hosted events on campus with the NJ Beekeepers Association.

- WISPIRG student leaders from UW Madison collect signatures to save the bees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison during Youth Earth Week.

- Kevin Roche, Central Jersey Beekeepers Association

Wildlife
Awards & Accolades

Stone & Holt Weeks Award
CALPIRG board chair and UCLA student leader Clara Castronovo was awarded the Stone and Holt Weeks Foundation Recruitment Award for her work this year building a strong team of leaders in her CALPIRG chapter at UCLA.

Student Vote Leadership Award
The Student PIRGs New Voters Project won the Centering and Trusting Local Leaders Award from the Students Learn Students Vote (SLSV) coalition. The award honors the hundreds of student leaders across the country who helped their peers turn out to vote in November.

ALL IN Student Voting Honor Roll
A number of current and former PIRG student leaders were recognized as 2023 ALL IN Student Voting Honor Roll recipients. The awards recognize college students who are advancing nonpartisan student voter registration, education, and turnout efforts.

Foundation & Donor Support
With the support of these incredible foundations and donors, we were able to reach beyond our core chapter campuses and help students on over 200 campuses in 41 states take action across the country this year.

FY23 Foundations & Institutional Supporters
- Allegany Franciscan Ministries
- Blueprint NC
- Break Free From Plastics
- Forney Family Foundation
- G. Lee and Diana Humphrey Charitable Fund
- The William And Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Lumina Foundation
- The McCance Foundation
- Michigan Voices
- Movement Strategy Center
- Nancy Stephens and Rick Rosenthal via the Rosenthal Family Foundation
- Naomi and Nehemiah Cohen Foundation
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Paul M. Angell Family Foundation
- Repair Preservation Group
- Shane McConkey Foundation
- Thomasine Herring Hayes Fund of the Winston-Salem Foundation
- The Climate Initiative
- Weeden Foundation
- Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

FY23 Donors ($100+)
- Bob Findley
- Dan Kaslow
- David Nicklin
- Elizabeth Samios
- Erin Kinikin
- John Grasso
- John Lynch
- Kathleen Swain
- Margaret Moxley
- Peter Briere
- Peter Stoughton
- Russet Eve Lederman

All of the Thanks!
All of this incredible work would not have been possible without the generous support of our student members, foundation partners, and individual donors. These funds allowed us to hire organizing and program staff to train hundreds of student leaders and make real progress for our health, environment, and democracy.

Student Members
From the beginning in 1971, the Student PIRGs have been a student-funded organization. Every few years, students on our chapter campuses vote to reaffirm support for funding their PIRG chapter. This year, we continued that legacy with 28,000 students either voting YES to support their PIRG fee or signing up to pay the PIRG fee each term. We are proud to have a total of over 250,000 dues paying student members at our chapter campuses across the country!

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In addition, we’d like to thank all of the anonymous donors that have contributed to our program this year.

Our FY22 budget reflects the combined income and expenses of the national and state Student PIRG entities including C3 and C4 corporations.