As a direct result of strategic campaigning over the course of five months, Audubon secured stunning victories for new clean energy laws in three key states — Arkansas, South Carolina, and Washington. These wins show that organized people power can win against powerful special interests like energy utilities and are testaments to Audubon’s work in building power through strategic state-based campaigns.

The take-home message from these three campaigns is clear: When we start with a smart strategy, give local grassroots networks the tools and opportunity to engage legislators, and build partnerships with like-minded interests — as we did in these three cases — we can accomplish incredible policy victories for birds and the places they need.

One of our campaign team’s frequent tag lines is: How we win is just as important as the win itself. In other words, we’re making a concerted effort to run campaigns in a way that builds volunteer leaders — and with them our shared political power. We don’t only want to achieve our short-term goals, but to set ourselves up to win bigger tomorrow.

These leaders will move climate change solutions forward no matter who’s in office. That’s power, and it’s how we’re going to transform the potential of our network into a dynamic political force.
Local Audubon Wins

Arkansas
Volunteers traveled from across Arkansas for Audubon’s first ever grassroots lobby day in Little Rock, advocating for the Solar Access Act. Audubon led the work to engage large corporate partners like Walmart and Tyson to support the measure. Ultimately, the bill, which allows homeowners and organizations who install their own panels to sell excess energy back to the grid, successfully passed and was signed into law in May.

Washington
In Washington, Audubon advocates helped pass one of the strongest clean electricity bills in the country. Audubon worked months before the vote mobilizing business leaders, elected officials, and constituents to take thousands of actions in support of the bill.

The new law, which was signed in May, mandates that all electricity in the state come from clean sources by 2045, meaning Washington must phase out coal-generated electricity from the grid by 2025.

South Carolina
In early May, the South Carolina legislature passed the Energy Freedom Act of 2019. This bill will expand the renewable energy market in the state by making it easier for private homes and businesses to sell electricity back to the grid and receive a fair price for it.

Audubon members helped to build momentum across the state to help pass the bill. During the campaign, Audubon South Carolina doubled its contingent from the previous year.

Audubon’s 2019 Birds and Climate Change Report

In 2014, Audubon released the groundbreaking Birds and Climate Change Report. The first-of-its-kind study covered Alaska, Canada, and the lower 48 states and predicted how climate change could affect the ranges of nearly 600 North American birds.

This October, after years of research and analysis, Audubon is releasing an even more extensive update of this critical report. The overhaul includes data for all of North America and uses updated models and in-depth threat analysis considering factors like sea-level rise, land use, and development of urban areas, in conjunction with range shifts, to see where birds will end up and how climate will affect them.

Insights from this report are invaluable in helping us understand how birds are reacting to their changing environments — and how to best support their shifting ranges. And as a Great Egret Society member, you’ll not only get a special sneak-peek once the updated report is released, but you’ll also receive an exclusive invitation to learn more about its findings. Stay tuned!