

# Making the Case for Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Programs

April 24, 2025



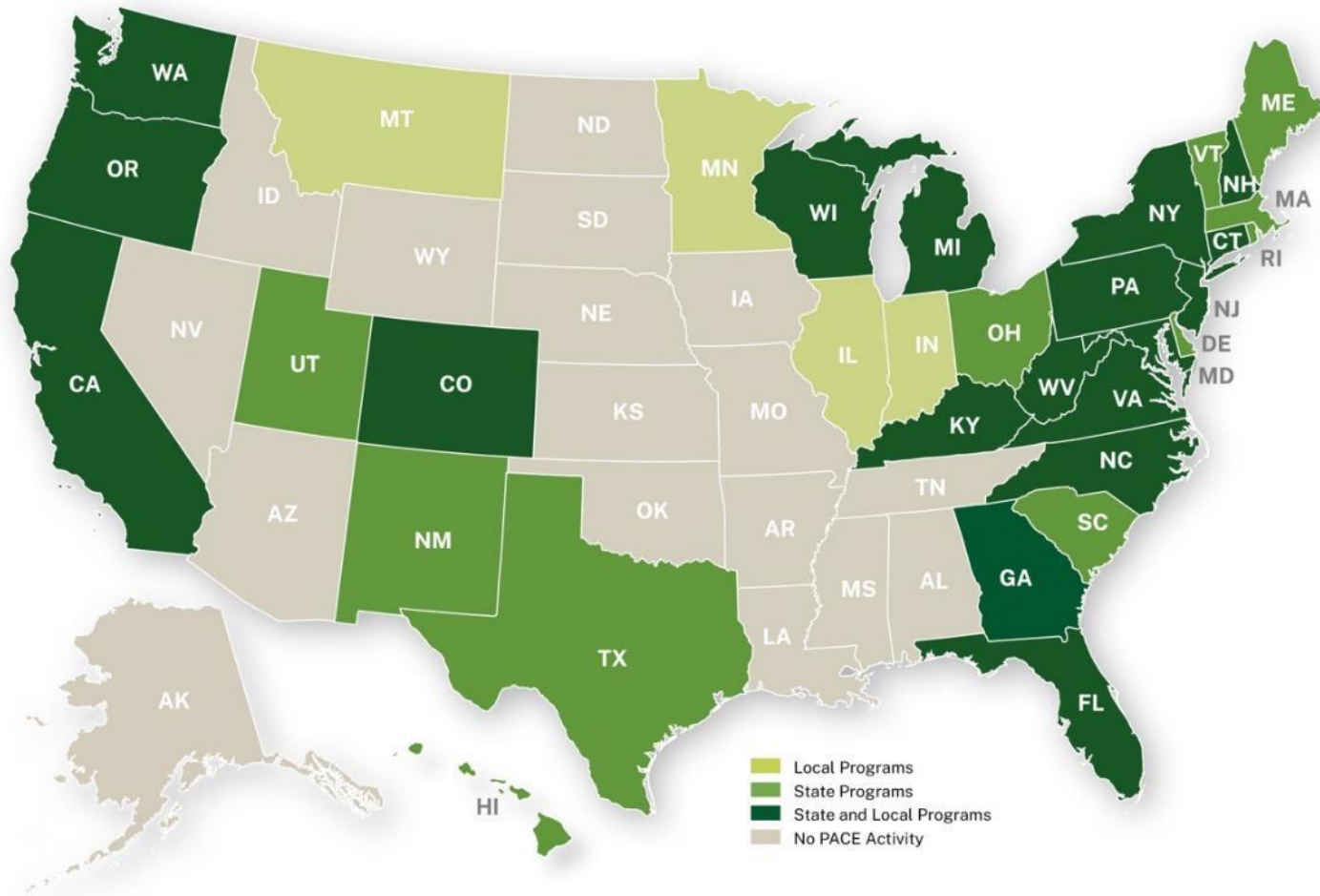
# Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Overview of PACE funding sources
3. Cost of Community Services studies
4. Public returns to investments in land conservation
5. Lessons from land preservation ballot campaigns
6. Questions and discussion



# PACE Activity Nationwide

## PACE Programs as of January 2024





# Sources of State Funding

Funding Source	States	Count
Appropriations	CA, DE, <b>GA</b> , HI, MD, <b>MI</b> , <b>NC</b> , NY, OH, <b>OR</b> , PA, RI, <b>SC</b> , <b>TX</b> , <b>UT</b> , <b>VA</b> , VT, <b>WA</b> , WV	19
Bonds	<b>CT</b> , <b>MA</b> , <b>OH</b> , <b>RI</b> , VT, WA	6
Real estate transfer tax	CT, <b>DE</b> , <b>HI</b> , <b>MD</b> , <b>NY</b> , <b>VT</b>	6
UVA withdrawal penalties	DE, MD, MI, PA	4

\*Blue state abbreviations indicate the funding source is the state's primary source of revenue.



# Other State Funding Sources

Funding Source	States	Count
Recording fees	CT, NH, WV	3
Gaming revenue	CO, FL	2
Cap and trade proceeds	CA	1
Income tax (corporate)	NJ	1
Excise tax (cigarettes)	PA	1

\*Blue state abbreviations indicate the funding source is the state's primary source of revenue.



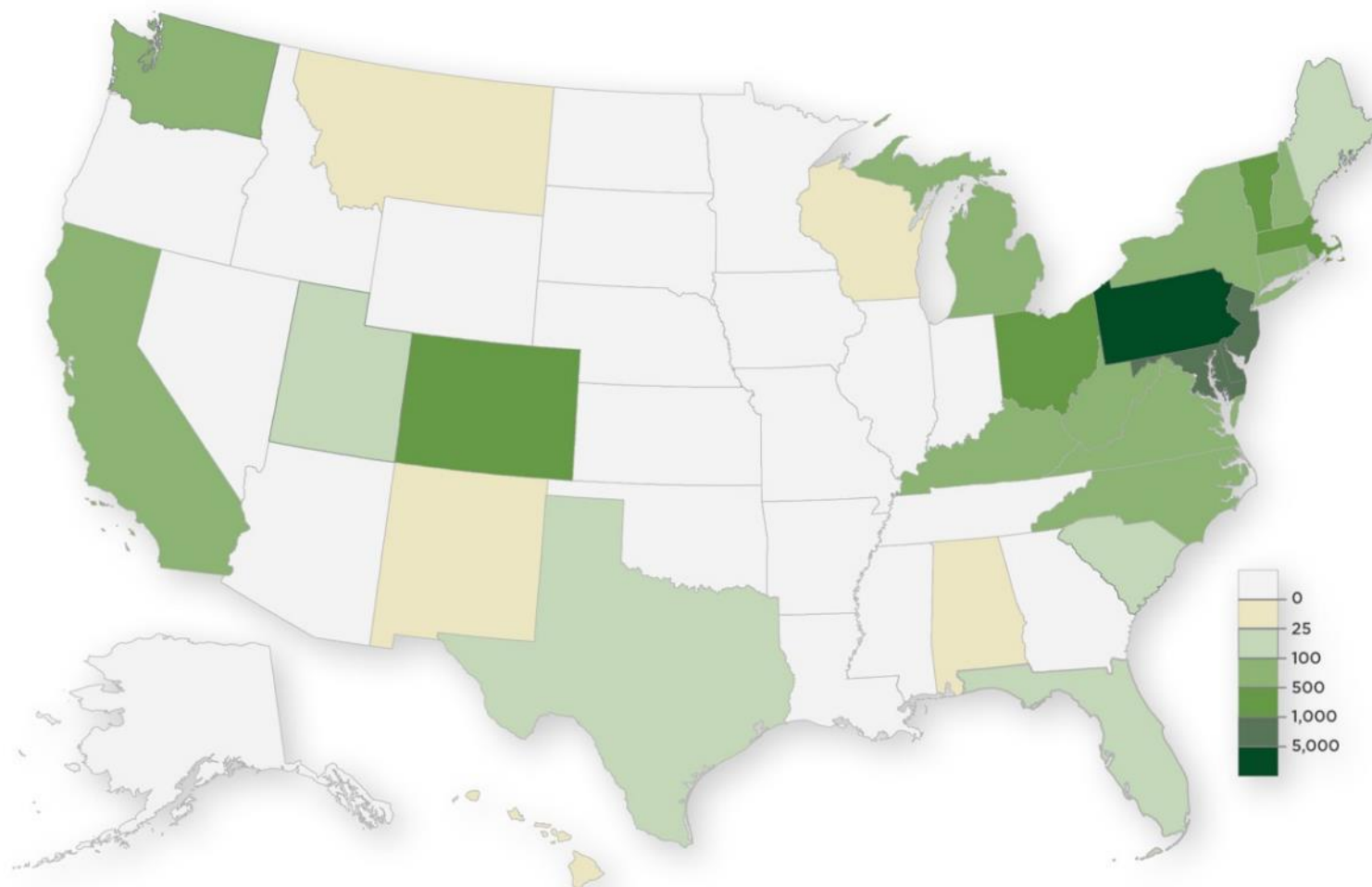
# Top State Investments To Date

State	Spending through 2023	Average Annual Spending	Average Investment Per Capita	Funding Sources
MD	\$1.1 billion	\$24.7 million	\$3.94	Real estate transfer tax Agricultural Transfer Tax
NJ	\$1.2 billion	\$30.9 million	\$3.25	Corporate Business Tax Bonds Sales tax
PA	\$1.2 billion	\$34 million	\$2.60	Excise tax (cigarettes) Drilling fees Tipping fees UVA withdrawal penalties



# State PACE Activity

**Easements Acquired by State PACE Programs as of January 2024**



# Sources of Local Funding

Funding Source	States with Local Programs	Count of Local Programs
Property tax	CO, CT, FL, MD, MI, MT, NJ, VA, WA, WI	29
Real estate transfer tax	MD, NY, PA, VA, WV	29
Bonds	FL, KY, MD, MI, NC, NJ, NY, PA, WI	17
Appropriations	CA, CT, MD, NC, PA, VA, WI	15
Mitigation fees	CA, CT, WA, WI	5
UVA withdrawal penalties	MD, PA , VA	5
Sales tax	CA, GA, WI	4
Recording fees	MD	2





# Key Sources of Federal Funding

## **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program- Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE)**

- Provides funds to eligible entities for easements
- \$2.2 billion obligated to protect 2 million acres since 1996

## **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)**

- NRCS and partners co-invest in “conservation activities”
- Farmland protection is an allowable conservation activity
- \$760 million awarded; most for practice implementation





An aerial photograph of a farm. In the upper left, a large, multi-story house with a brown roof is surrounded by trees. To its right is a large barn with a white truck parked in front. The farm is situated in a valley between rolling hills covered in green cornfields. A dirt road runs through the center of the image. In the lower right, there are several white silos and a smaller barn.

Visit the Farmland Information Center  
[www.farmlandinfo.org](http://www.farmlandinfo.org)

