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COLLEGE STUDENTS ACROSS THE STATE DEMAND INCREASED FUNDING FOR WATER IN STATE BUDGET

4,500 PETITIONS WERE DELIVERED FROM 16 COLLEGE CAMPUSES

(Albany, N.Y.) College students across New York State from 16 college campuses delivered 4,500 postcard petitions calling on state legislators to include at least \$2.5 billion for New York’s Clean Water Infrastructure Act in the SFY2019-2020 budget. This comes after dozens of environmental, labor, and industry organizations sent [a letter](#) also calling for an increase in water funding.

The Governor’s 2019 State of the State Address and 2019 Justice Agenda included a promise of an additional \$2.5 billion for New York’s Clean Water Infrastructure Act; however, only \$500 million was included in the Capital Appropriations budget proposal. The Clean Water Infrastructure Act was created in the SFY2017-18 budget with an initial \$2.5 billion to be allocated over the course of 5-years.

Reports from the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Health estimate that \$38 billion for drinking water infrastructure and \$36 billion for wastewater infrastructure will be needed for critical repairs, replacements, and upgrades over the next twenty years.

Liz Moran, Environmental Policy Director for NYPIRG, said, “There is nothing more fundamental to human health and modern society than water infrastructure, but due to decades of improper investment, New Yorkers suffer with billions of gallons of sewage overflows and thousands of water main breaks every year. Water infrastructure needs are estimated to be as high as \$80 billion over the next twenty years. This is not a legacy New York should leave behind for New York’s children and young adults. The Governor and the Legislature must provide enough funding to catch up with outstanding water needs in the SFY2019-2020 budget to create the future the next generation deserves.”

Jana Bergere, student at SUNY New Paltz and Public Policy Intern for NYPIRG, said, “Our state and country are not doing enough to ensure younger generations have a planet that is clean, safe, and healthy. New York is known for having abundant clean water, but old water infrastructure and dangerous chemicals in drinking water supplies are undermining that reputation. New Yorkers demand that Governor Cuomo and the Legislature show true leadership in protecting clean water by providing adequate funding.”

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