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Food & Water Watch · NRDC · NYPIRG · Riverkeeper · Save the Sound ·

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For more information:

Liz Moran, NYPIRG, Albany (518) 436-0876 x258
Peter Hart, Food & Water Watch, NYC (732) 839-0871
Adrienne Esposito, CCE, Long Island (516) 390-7150
Brian Smith, CCE, Buffalo (716) 831-3206
Laura McMillan, Save the Sound, (203) 787-0626 x137

**ORGANIZATIONS REACT TO PROPOSED ONE-HOUSE BUDGETS ON WATER
INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING**

**APPLAUD SENATE PROPOSAL AND CALL FOR FINAL SFY2019-2020 BUDGET TO
INCLUDE \$2.5 BILLION FOR THE CLEAN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE ACT**

(Albany, N.Y.) The Senate and the Assembly introduced their respective one-house budget proposals today, with both including new funding for New York’s Clean Water Infrastructure Act. Environmental, labor, trade, and local government organizations are calling for the final SFY 2019-2020 budget to include at least \$2.5 billion in new funding for the successful Clean Water Infrastructure Act. These 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 Assembly one-house budget also includes \$500 million, and the Senate one-house includes the entire \$2.5 billion.

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.

QUOTES

Liz Moran, Environmental Policy Director for **NYPIRG** said, “New York’s final budget must combat the federal government’s ongoing efforts to roll back water protections by including at least \$2.5 billion in new funding for water infrastructure. Decades of improper investment in New York’s water infrastructure, harmful algal blooms, and unregulated chemicals in drinking water are public health crises that call for true leadership. The Senate budget proposal includes \$2.5 billion – now the Assembly and the Governor must follow the same lead and include this critical funding in the final budget.”

Nisha Swinton, Senior Organizer for **Food & Water Watch** said, “The 2017 Clean Water Infrastructure Act provided \$2.5 billion to improve our invaluable drinking water infrastructure over the next 5 years. While that was a strong first step, many lawmakers understand that this is not enough on its own to address our full water infrastructure funding needs. The Senate decided

wisely yesterday to include another \$2.5 billion, and the Assembly should do the same. We look forward to leaders in Albany providing \$5 billion over 5 years, which will save New Yorkers money, create good-paying jobs rebuilding infrastructure, and provide clean drinking water for all”

“The Clean Water Infrastructure Act has funded critical projects in every region of the state, helping to address emerging contaminants in drinking water, fight harmful algal blooms, reduce sewage overflows that foul our waters, and more,” said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director for **Citizens Campaign for the Environment**. “Despite the program’s success, water infrastructure needs continue to vastly exceed available resources. We applaud the legislature and Governor for recognizing the need for increased investments, and urge them to all support the Senate’s proposal for a full \$2.5billion investment in the final state budget.”

Joan Leary Matthews, Director of Urban Water for the **Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)** said, “In the face of the Trump administration’s escalating assault on water protections, New York must step up and fight back. From Buffalo to Long Island, our communities cannot be left to fend for themselves. The Senate’s \$2.5 billion budget proposal will help protect our children’s drinking water and create a healthier, safer New York for all. The needs are great, and the Assembly and Governor, who have been environmental champions on water infrastructure, must follow suit.”

Jeremy Cherson, Legislative Advocacy Manager for **Riverkeeper** said, “Communities along the Hudson River and its tributaries rely on the grants provided through the Clean Water Infrastructure Act. The Governor promised to double clean water spending but his budget fell short of that promise by only including the first \$500 million. Thankfully, the Senate included the full \$2.5 billion for clean water projects in their budget. We encourage the Assembly and the Governor to join the Senate in funding clean water projects in full.”

Maureen Cunningham, senior director for clean water at **Environmental Advocates of New York**, said, “It is truly a new day in the New York State Senate. We applaud the Senate for stating loud and clear that clean water funding is a priority in this year’s budget. Their multi-year, \$2.5 billion commitment will protect public health and the drinking water of millions of New Yorkers. The Senate proposal best reflects the enormity of New York’s \$80 billion water infrastructure need, and best prepares local communities to tackle the current clean water crisis. We hope the Assembly, Senate, and the Governor will now work together to put, at least, the full \$2.5 billion on the books.”

Tracy Brown, Director of **Save the Sound**, said “Clean water is no longer free or guaranteed. Long Island Sound provides a great example of how investment in sewage treatment results in cleaner water, as shown in the regional report card where grades have improved as treatment investments have been completed over the past several years. Save the Sound urges Governor Cuomo and the Assembly to support the Senate’s proposal for a \$2.5 billion investment in clean water in the final state budget. We must keep the momentum of investment and projects going until all New Yorkers are secure in their access to clean water and healthy waterways.”