

February 10, 2020

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
New York State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Temporary President and Majority Leader
New York State Senate
Legislative Office Building, Room 907
Albany, NY 12247

Hon. Carl Heastie, Speaker
New York State Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 932
Albany, NY 12248

Re: Clean Water Infrastructure Act Funding in the SFY2020-21 Budget

Dear Governor Cuomo, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Speaker Heastie:

As local-elected officials representing communities across New York State, we write to urge that you include a new appropriation of at least \$1 billion for the Clean Water Infrastructure Act (CWIA) in the SFY2020-21 budget. This critical funding source, which supports the infrastructure responsible for bringing clean drinking water to the homes in our communities and keeping waterways clean, has been incredibly successful, but needs still dwarf available funding.

We thank you for your commitment to double the existing Clean Water Infrastructure Act funding by an additional \$2.5 billion over the next 5 years. In 2008, the New York State Departments of Environmental Conservation and Health released reports indicating a 20-year need of nearly \$80 billion for both drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. Since these reports were issued, needs have grown. To ensure our communities can fight emerging contaminants, repair and replace old water infrastructure, replace lead pipes, protect source water, and more, funding must continue to increase beyond this commitment.

Few issues are as important to our health, economy, and environment, as safe, reliable clean water. In the 21st century, ensuring safe drinking and recreational waters means having adequate infrastructure. But much of New York's water infrastructure has aged well beyond its useful lifespan, leading to billions of gallons of sewage overflows and thousands of water main breaks annually. This issue has only been compounded by climate change and unregulated chemicals contaminating drinking water supplies.

In recent years, New York has begun to reverse decades of inadequate investment. Resources first made available in the SFY2015-16 budget and the creation of the CWIA has made an enormous difference for our communities that may not have otherwise had the means to repair and replace degrading water infrastructure.

According to a recent analysis of the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA), every county that applied for funding has been awarded at least once, each year applications increased by 60%, and each year the number

of grants being awarded has increased. Four times the number of projects were awarded funding in 2017 as compared to 2015.¹

In addition to WIIA, when the other programs within the CWIA are taken into account, **this fund has benefited every county in New York State.**

The WIIA, which receives \$1 billion out of the Clean Water Infrastructure Act, has been oversubscribed since its initial creation. According to an analysis of the first three years of WIIA, only half of the eligible projects that applied for grant funding were awarded – 50/50 chances of funding are not the odds New Yorkers need for water infrastructure funding. Out of the 22,000 miles of sewer pipes statewide, nearly a third are beyond their projected 60-year lifespans, and a quarter of over 600 sewage treatment plants are beyond their projected useful life of 30 years.²

Additionally, investment in water infrastructure is a necessary component of climate resiliency. Based on modeling, temperatures in New York will be up 3 degrees and precipitation will increase by 8% compared to the 1970-2000 period by the 2020s. Current levels of precipitation and snow melt and extreme temperature fluctuations are causing water main and sewer line breaks and massive sewage overflows – this will only grow worse without proper investment.

These funds are also critical to maintain and improve the affordability of water and sewer service for rate payers across the state who would otherwise bear the full costs of these necessary upgrades—or would experience diminished access to or quality of service due to their inability to pay.

In the face of threats from the federal government, it is more important than ever that New York make bold investments in water infrastructure. With rollbacks to essential environmental protections, like the Clean Water Act, and New York suffering from harmful algal blooms, chemical contamination, frequent sewage overflows and watermain breaks, and stress from climate change, continued leadership on funding is urgent.

The Clean Water Infrastructure Act has been a historic program – we strongly support increased funding by at least the promised \$2.5 billion in SFY2019-20. Thank you for your consideration of our comments, and we look forward to partnering with you.

Sincerely,

Matthew Miller
County Legislator
Albany

Teddy Cuddy
Council Member
Auburn

Daniel Coffey
Town Councilman
Bethlehem

David VanLuven
Town Supervisor
Bethlehem

Robert E. Hall
Minority Legislator
Clinton

Andy Simmons
Village Trustee
Croton on Hudson

¹ Hayes, Robert, “Untapped Potential: Water Infrastructure Spending in New York,” Environmental Advocates of New York, February 2019,

http://eany.org/sites/default/files/documents/untapped_potential_water_infrastructure_spending_in_new_york_eany_2-7-19.pdf

² Nearing, Brian, “Needs outweigh cash in State’s infrastructure fund,” Times Union, February 7, 2019,

<https://www.timesunion.com/7day-state/article/Needs-outweigh-cash-in-state-s-infrastructure-fund-13597476.php>.

Ann Gallelli
Village Trustee
Croton on Hudson

Brian Pugh
Mayor
Croton on Hudson

Franco Carucci
Councilman
Gardiner

Marybeth Majestic
Town Supervisor
Gardiner

Ron Belmont
Mayor
Harrison

Chad A. Lupinacci
Mayor
Huntington

Cynthia Brock
City Council Member
Ithaca

Svante L. Myrick
Mayor
Ithaca

Steven T. Noble
Mayor
Kingston

Joe Whetmore
Town Board Member
Lansing

Frederick Pizzuto
Supervisor
Lloyd

Lisa A. Copeland
City Council President
Mount Vernon

Alex Baer
Council Member
New Paltz

Alexandria Wojcik
Trustee
New Paltz

Bill Murray
Trustee
New Paltz

Daniel Torres
Deputy Supervisor
New Paltz

David Brownstein
Council Member
New Paltz

Julie Seyfert-Lewis
Council Member
New Paltz

Kathleen Tobin
Deputy Mayor
New Paltz

Michelle Zipp
Trustee
New Paltz

Neil Bettez
Supervisor
New Paltz

Tim Rogers
Mayor
New Paltz

Elizabeth Fried
City Council Member
New Rochelle

Noam Bramson
Mayor
New Rochelle

Sara Kaye
Council Member
New Rochelle

Gary Herzig
Mayor
Oneonta

Colin Read
Mayor
Plattsburg

Robert G. Rolison
Mayor
Poughkeepsie

Diane Briggs
Town Board Member
Pound Ridge

Michael Stammel
Mayor
Rensselaer

James Smith
Deputy Mayor
Rochester

Lovely Warren
Mayor
Rochester

Fred Costello
Supervisor
Saugerties

John Schoonmaker IV
Town Board Member
Saugerties

Leeanne Thornton
Deputy Supervisor
Saugerties

Michael Ivino
Town Board Member
Saugerties

Paul Andreassen
Town Board Member
Saugerties

Rick Morrissey
Supervisor
Somers

Drew Fixell
Mayor
Tarrytown

Deborah Dawson
County Legislator
Tompkins

Michael Lane
County Legislator
Tompkins

Shawna Black
County Legislator
Tompkins

Rick Davis
Mayor
Tonawanda

Robert A. Stanley
Supervisor
Town of Shandaken

James E. Quigley
Supervisor
Town of Ulster

Patrick Madden
Mayor
Troy

Albert Bruno
Legislator
Ulster County

David Donaldson
Chairman
Ulster County

Dean Fabiano
Legislator
Ulster County

Eve Walter
Legislator
Ulster County

James Delaune
Legislator
Ulster County

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Manna Jo Greene
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Ulster County

Nancy Barr
County Legislator
Westchester

Peter Criswell
Legislator
Ulster County

Ruth Walter
County Legislator
Westchester

Catherine Parker
County Legislator
Westchester

Thomas Roach
Mayor
White Plains

Colin Smith
County Legislator
Westchester

Bill McKenna
Supervisor
Woodstock

cc: Honorable John Flanagan, Minority Leader
Honorable William Barclay, Minority Leader
Honorable Todd Kaminsky, Chair, Senate Environmental Conservation Committee
Honorable Steven Englebright, Chair, Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee

Re: Clean Water Infrastructure Act Funding in the SFY2020-21 Budget; additional signatures

March 18, 2020

Andre Rainey
Mayor
Peekskill

Daniel P. Schaefer
Supervisor
Babylon

Aney Paul
County Legislator
Rockland County

Willard Streiff
Supervisor
Floyd

Philip Soskin
County Legislator
Rockland County

Mary Kuhn
County Legislator
Onondaga County

Itamar Yeger
County Legislator
Rockland County

Keith Batman
County Legislator
Cayuga County

Harriet Cornell
County Legislator
Rockland County

Jason Shaw
County Legislator
Broome County

Alden Wolfe
County Legislator
Rockland County

Anna Kelles
County Legislator
Tompkins County

Jay Hood
County Legislator
Rockland County

Robin DeLoria
Supervisor
Newcomb

Michael Grant
County Legislator
Rockland County

Richard F. Helmich
County Legislator
Cattaraugus County

Toney Earl
County Legislator
Rockland County

Clayton J Barber
Supervisor
Chesterfield

Aron Wieder
County Legislator
Rockland County

George McGonigal
City Council Member
Ithaca

Joseph Mutagh
City Council Member
Ithaca

Donna Fleming
City Council Member
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Graham Kerslick
City Council Member
Ithaca

Laura Lewis
City Council Member
Ithaca

Ducson Nguyen
City Council Member
Ithaca

Robert Gearhart
City Council Member
Ithaca

Stephen Smith
City Council Member
Ithaca

Deborah Mohlenhoff
City Council Member
Ithaca

Charlie E. Ripley
County Legislator
Cayuga County

Ken Hughes
Supervisor
Essex

John M. Becker
Supervisor
Sullivan

Angie Carpenter
Supervisor
Islip

Edward Wehrheim
Supervisor
Smithtown

Edward Romaine
Supervisor
Brookhaven

Yvette Augiar
Supervisor
Riverhead

Jay Schneiderman
Supervisor
South Hampton

Scott Russell
Supervisor
Southold

Peter Van Scoyoc
Supervisor
East Hampton

Gerry Siller
Supervisor
Shelter Island

Tom Scozzafava
Supervisor
Moriah

Bob Hollum
County Legislator
Herkimer County

Clayton Barber
Supervisor
Chesterfield

Keith Powers
City Council Member
New York City

Jennifer Borrello
County Executive
Chautauqua County

Nicola Armacost
Mayor
Hastings-on-Hudson

Lisa Crosby
Community Board
Staten Island