



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

## Jacobs, Ryan,Wallace Celebrate \$2.5 Billion in Clean Water Infrastructure Funding in New York State Budget

SENATOR JACOBS April 17, 2017

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**BUFFALO** – Today, April 17, 2017, Members of the Western New York State Legislative Delegation celebrated the passage of \$2.5 billion for clean water infrastructure projects, which was included in the 2017-2018 New York State Budget. This funding will help to ensure clean drinking water by repairing and replacing old pipes and water mains, as well as preventive measures such as source water land acquisition, to keep water from becoming

polluted.

Senator Chris Jacobs, Assemblyman Sean Ryan, and Assemblymember Monica Wallace were joined by Jill Jedlicka, Executive Director of Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, Nate Drag, Water Project Manager for the Alliance for the Great Lakes, and Carley J. Hill, Chairwoman of the FAIR Committee, to make the announcement at Canalside in Buffalo.

The funding for water infrastructure, which is a \$500 million increase over the executive proposal, includes:

- \$1 billion for the 2017 Water Infrastructure Improvement Act to help municipalities upgrade their drinking and wastewater infrastructure;
- \$350 million for clean water infrastructure projects after 2021;
- \$245 million for water quality improvement projects;
- \$200 million for drinking and wastewater infrastructure improvements in New York City's watershed;
- \$150 million for inter-municipal water infrastructure grants;
- \$130 million for drinking water remediation and mitigation of contaminated drinking water;
- \$110 million for land acquisition projects for source water protection;
- \$100 million for municipal water quality infrastructure programs;
- \$75 million for upgrades and replacements of septic systems and cesspools;
- \$50 million for green infrastructure projects;
- \$50 million for concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs);
- \$20 million for the replacement of lead drinking water service lines;
- \$10 million for a water infrastructure emergency loan fund; and

- \$10 million for IT system upgrades related to mapping technologies.

The budget also establishes a drinking water quality council within the Department of Health to make recommendations on issues surrounding water contamination and testing with input from stakeholders and the public. Further, it implements an Emerging Contaminant Monitoring program to identify emerging contaminants in public water systems, as well as establish testing and notification requirements. Mitigation and remediation of contaminated drinking water supplies would also be available.

From Hoosick Falls to Newburgh to Long Island, recent crises have shown that we need to do more to keep our drinking water clean before it's too late, the delegation members noted. The program would ensure drinking water is tested for known contaminants like perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), as well as emerging contaminants, on a regular basis and that the necessary steps are taken to keep residents safe.

**Senator Chris Jacobs** said “Buffalo and Western New York enjoy some of the best fresh water resources in the world, and we must maximize its economic development potential for industry while ensuring its safe delivery to all families in our community. Unfortunately, because of the age of our infrastructure the majority of sewage overflows that occur in New York State happen here in Erie County. That is why I am so pleased that the legislature came together on this historic \$2.5 billion clean water infrastructure investment. Government, business, labor and environmental community stakeholders all agree on the need to make this economic development and public health & safety investment.”

**Assemblyman Sean Ryan** said “Clean water is absolutely essential to our health and safety. New York is home to many communities that have outdated water infrastructure. We've seen far too many water main breaks and drinking water contaminations that threaten the health of our families. It's important that we make robust investments in replacing old pipes

and water mains. Clean water is an essential component of a healthy economy here in Western New York. This funding will help to create jobs and invest in the future of the blue economy.”

**Assemblymember Monica Wallace** said "At a time where water quality is being threatened across the country, this \$2.5 billion investment in the state budget affirms New York's commitment to improving water infrastructure. Here in Western New York, we know the value of fresh water resources, as well as the dangers associated with not protecting them from contamination. Addressing this issue is vital so we can ensure Western New York water is clean and safe for generations to come."

**Senator Patrick Gallivan** said "As we stand on the shores of Lake Erie, we may take access to fresh water for granted. But nothing is more important to the health and safety of our communities than clean water. I was proud to work with my colleagues in the Senate and the Assembly to approve New York's historic investment in ensuring that all residents have access to safe drinking water and that we are meeting the infrastructure needs of communities across the state."

**Jill Jedlicka, Executive Director of Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper** said “Western New York is a Great Lakes coastal region whose fresh water resources create the lifeblood of our community, our economy, and public health. New York State is demonstrating a deep and long-lasting commitment to clean water, quality of life and natural resources across the state. Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, specifically members of our local delegation, are together demonstrating national leadership by comprehensively and strategically investing in water infrastructure, pollution clean-up, source water protection, drinking water, and water-based economic development. Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper applauds these decisions and commitments by New York State for taking this monumental step towards providing an unprecedented level of water quality protections and

improvements for our waterways and communities.”

**Nate Drag, Water Project Manager, Alliance for the Great Lakes** said “New Yorkers are very fortunate to have a state government that is committed to protecting a vital component of our communities, economies, and environment – clean water. The commitment in this year’s budget includes the necessary investments in upgrading our outdated water infrastructure as well as the implementation of innovative solutions like green infrastructure and the direct protection of our drinking water sources. New York State can serve as a model for other states across the Great Lakes on how we can work together to protect our water for our communities and the environment.”

**Carley J. Hill, Chairwoman, The FAIR Committee,** said "If infrastructure is the engine of our economy, then infrastructure funding is the fuel that drives that engine forward. Not only will this funding create thousands of jobs, it will overhaul an essential yet outdated system that provides countless benefits when operating effectively. For decades we've allowed our culverts, pipes, drainage systems and treatment facilities to fall into disrepair, and this has resulted in unsafe conditions for drivers and residents everywhere. The downstate power seat continues to be provided with billions more in infrastructure funds than our rural and urban communities upstate, and that arrangement is simply not acceptable. We cannot afford to play second fiddle, while our children's safety, jobs and the environmental security of the Great Lakes region is put on the line. We deserve fair funding and we will fight to ensure that the funding distribution matches the needs. We deserve to be on equal footing in workforce opportunities with every region of New York State."