



CCE BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR SFY 2021-22

SUPPORT CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE COMMUNITIES, AND JOBS (MAINTAIN FUNDING FOR EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS): New York State must recognize that programs to protect clean air, clean water, and healthy communities are necessities, not luxury items that can be disproportionately cut during fiscal downturns. NY's environmental programs create good-paying jobs, strengthen local economies, provide clean drinking water, protect vulnerable coastline communities, and advance environmental justice. CCE urges the following state programs to be at least maintained at currently appropriated levels, deployed effectively throughout the state, and that no further cuts to or sweeps from environmental programs and staff be contemplated.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FUND (\$300 MILLION):** Since 1993, the EPF has invested in projects to protect and restore our land, air, and water resources in every region of the state. The EPF supports 350,000 jobs across the state, and EPF-supported industries generate approximately \$40 billion in economic activity every year.
- **WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT ACT (\$500 MILLION):** To date, this successful program has invested \$3.9 billion to upgrade clean water infrastructure—creating 17 local jobs for every \$1 million invested. However, we have a long way to go to meet New York's \$80 billion clean water infrastructure needs. NY should provide \$500 million for the CWIA in SFY 2021-22, as part of Governor Cuomo's commitment to provide an additional \$1.5 billion over the next three years.
- **REGIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS INITIATIVE (NO SWEEPS):** To date, \$228 million has been swept from RGGI into the general fund. To save ratepayers' energy and money, create jobs, and implement the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), NY must not divert any additional funds from this important program.
- **AGENCY STAFF AT DEC (MAINTAIN STAFF LEVELS):** Although there has been a slight uptick in the last few years, overall, total FTEs at DEC have been reduced by more than 740, or 19% since 2000—despite the expansion of DEC responsibilities, including implementation of the CLCPA.

HOLD CORPORATE MANUFACTURERS—NOT TAXPAYERS—RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR WASTE (ENACT EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PACKAGING AND PAPER): NYS is embroiled in a solid waste crisis—municipal recycling costs have skyrocketed, recycling has declined, and our environment is suffering from pollution. An estimated 40% of NY's municipal solid waste is composed of product packaging and paper products (e.g. plastic containers, steel cans, plastic film, glass bottles, newspaper, cardboard). Unfortunately, less than half of this waste is being recycled properly. Furthermore, large brands have externalized the cost of disposing of packaging onto our municipal recycling programs and local taxpayers. In the 2021-22 SFY budget, NYS should require producers to bear the cost of proper recycling and responsible disposal for packaging and printed paper. Not only would an EPR policy provide relief to taxpayers, but it also serves as an incentive for producers to minimize packaging materials, improve recyclability, and reduce the toxicity of their products.

ADOPT AN ENVIRONMENTAL BOND ACT (\$3 BILLION) Last year's \$3 billion Restore Mother Nature Bond Act was intended to provide much-needed funding to make communities more resilient to climate change, protect and restore water resources, and support job creation and sustainable economic development. While the bond act was pulled from the 2020 ballot due to economic downturn caused by the pandemic, the need for this important initiative is as strong as ever.