



CCE BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR SFY 2024-25

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FUND (\$400 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. **CCE priorities related to the EPF:**

- **OPPOSE THE GOVERNOR’S PROPOSAL TO RAID \$25 MILLION FROM THE EPF TO PAY FOR AGENCY STAFFING:** While the Governor has presented her EPF proposal as a \$400 million investment, in reality, it is cut to \$375 million, as it includes a line that offloads \$25 million for agency staffing. While we support the goal of increasing agency staffing, it must not come at the expense of EPF programs and projects. The funding needs for EPF projects already outpace the available resources, and this raid would further inhibit our ability to fund worthy projects.
- **OCEAN AND GREAT LAKES PROGRAM (INCREASE TO \$25 MILLION):** This is the state’s primary source of funding for scientific research, management planning, and restoration projects to improve the health of our Great Lakes and Ocean resources. Funding is needed to advance the New York Ocean Action Plan and Great Lakes Action Agenda 2023, and to leverage funding from NY’s environmental bond act and federal funds being allocated from the bipartisan infrastructure law.
- **SOUTH SHORE ESTUARY RESERVE PROGRAM (INCREASE TO \$5 MILLION):** The SSER program updated its Comprehensive Management Plan in 2021 and additional funding is needed to accomplish new priorities and goals aimed at protecting and restoring this critical natural resource.

CLEAN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE ACT (\$600 MILLION): To date, this successful program has invested \$5 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. The Governor’s proposal to cut CWIA funding by 50% in her 2024-25 executive budget would be detrimental to protecting New York’s water resources—clean water needs are increasing, and so should funding. To meet the massive clean water infrastructure needs across the state, create jobs, and to leverage additional dollars from the federal bipartisan infrastructure law and NYS environmental bond act, we urge the legislature to work with the Governor to:

- Provide \$600 million for the CWIA in the final SFY 2024-25 budget.
- Line out funding category allocations in the CWIA to provide transparency and to help ensure all our clean water needs are being adequately met, including, but not limited to, lead service line replacement and septic system upgrades.

- Expand grant eligibilities to support engineering planning studies for drinking water infrastructure projects. This is already in place for wastewater projects, and is a resounding success, particularly for smaller, cash-strapped municipalities that lack the staff and capacity to conduct planning themselves.
- Invest in expanding capacity at certified labs to test for emerging contaminants in drinking water, which will help ensure timely results, more testing and greater protection of public health.

SUPPORT THE AFFORDABLE GAS TRANSITION ACT (INCLUDED IN THE GOVERNOR’S EXECUTIVE BUDGET, AND CLOSELY RESEMBLES THE NY HEAT ACT): Fossil fuels burned in New York's building stock for heating, hot water, and cooking account for nearly 1/3 of all greenhouse gas emissions in NYS. In order for New York to fight the climate crisis, meet mandated CLCPA targets, save utility customers money, and protect public health, we must reduce our reliance on gas, transition to more sustainable utilities, and update regulations. This policy would help to achieve this by eliminating the 100-foot rule and setting a up a process for PSC to update regulations and guidelines to move away from gas and meet the goals of the CLCPA.

SUPPORT THE RENEWABLE ACTION THROUGH PROJECT INTERCONNECTION AND DEPLOYMENT (RAPID) ACT (INCLUDED IN THE GOVERNOR’S EXECUTIVE BUDGET): CCE supports this policy, which is intended to accelerate the responsible siting of transmission infrastructure and renewable energy projects. In order to meet CLCPA targets and to meet the urgency needed to address the climate crisis, we must deploy energy transmission and renewable energy projects more quickly—this will only happen if we adopt a more efficient process. The RAPID Act will create a one stop-shop for the environmental review and permitting of major renewable energy and transmission facilities within the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) at the Department of Public Service (DPS).

Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE) is a 120,000 member non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization that works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment.

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