

Resolution in Support of Need for More Federal Funding for Clean and Safe Water
Infrastructure

Whereas, New York State's vast water resources are vital to 18 million New Yorkers for drinking, swimming, fishing, farming, recreation and industrial production, and are home to national treasures such as Long Island's beaches, New York City's massive water supply, the Hudson River, and the Great Lakes;

Whereas, these critical resources are now in peril because many treatment systems are old and exceed their designed life; need enhancements to meet federal standards; or need to be upgraded in order to control stormwater, combined sewer and/or sanitary overflows;

Whereas, earlier investment in wastewater and drinking water infrastructure resulted in marked improvements in water quality and public health protection and this improvement would be put at serious risk without further investment;

Whereas, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's March 2008 report estimates that at least \$36.2 billion is needed to fund New York State's wastewater infrastructure over the next 20 years and the New York State Department of Health estimates that at least \$38 billion is needed to fund New York State's drinking water infrastructure needs over the same period;

Whereas, since 2004 the federal government has reduced funding for New York State's vital wastewater infrastructure by 50%, while funding for drinking water infrastructure has been cut by 40%, shifting the burden of paying for this infrastructure onto local governments;

Whereas, New York State's water quality monitoring data indicates that 68% of the waters sampled do not meet or are at risk of not meeting the fishable and swimmable goals of the federal Clean Water Act, often due to sewage, combined sewer overflows and/or urban and stormwater runoff;

Whereas, New York State's urban communities are disproportionately impacted, as they are often adjacent to the most impaired waters and served by the oldest water infrastructure;

Whereas, it is estimated that between 30,000 and 47,500 jobs are created for each \$1 billion of federal investment in infrastructure projects, providing an unparalleled opportunity for economic recovery and long-term growth in New York State communities;

Whereas, New York State has 412 wastewater projects and 497 drinking water projects that serve over 11 million citizens that have been reviewed, ranked and are ready-to-go as soon as more state revolving loan funding is available;

Whereas, investments in New York State’s infrastructure should be prudent and sustainable and support green infrastructure; and

Whereas, the cost of emergency repairs to wastewater and drinking water infrastructure is three to five times more than properly planned capital improvements;

Now therefore, the Clean Water Collaborative finds that:

A significant increase in federal funding is needed to address New York State’s and other state’s wastewater and drinking water infrastructure crisis. Federal funding for state revolving loan programs must be increased commensurately with existing need and should include the availability of grants; and

New York State should adopt a new, more viable program to sustain wastewater and drinking water infrastructure that provides for proper maintenance and reinvestment; supports water conservation, energy efficiency and the use of green infrastructure techniques; and promotes updated and innovative technologies.

Passed by the Clean Water Collaborative on November 6th, 2008.

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