

Hudson River Drinking Water Intermunicipal Council

Town of Esopus, Town of Hyde Park, Town of Lloyd, City of Poughkeepsie, Town of Poughkeepsie, Town of Rhinebeck, Village of Rhinebeck

February 24, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Majority Leader and Temporary President of the Senate
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Carl Heastie
Speaker of the Assembly
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

RE: NYS Fiscal Year 2023 Budget

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

The Hudson River Drinking Water Intermunicipal Council is writing to express our support for several important priorities in the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget now under consideration. We hope to have your support in advancing these important initiatives.

Known as the Hudson 7, the Hudson River Drinking Water Intermunicipal Council formed by intermunicipal agreement in 2018 to focus attention on the protection of the Hudson River as the source of drinking water for the communities we represent: The City and Town of Poughkeepsie, the Village and Town of Rhinebeck and the Towns of Esopus, Hyde Park and Lloyd. Over 106,000 people are served by the public water systems that draw from the Hudson River, as are our region's hospitals, several colleges, business districts and major employers. Via the Central Dutchess Water Transmission Line, Hudson River water treated at Poughkeepsie also flows to the Town of East Fishkill, where it supplies major regional employers.

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Since our formation in 2018, the Hudson 7 has focused attention on the Hudson River as a critical public health resource for our region. Our efforts have included instigating ongoing coordination with federal and state agencies on spill prevention and response, supporting municipal efforts to upgrade water and wastewater infrastructure, and working with various stakeholders to address water quality concerns associated with New York City's management of its Ashokan Reservoir, the proposed Champlain Hudson Power Express transmission cable, the risk from CSX railroad bridges that are in disrepair, and the cleanup of legacy hazardous wastes including PCBs and manufactured gas-derived coal tar. We are currently working as part of the new Drinking Water Source Protection Program to develop a first-of-its-kind plan to protect our water source.

To support these efforts, we ask that you include these priorities in the FY2023 budget:

\$400,000 to model the Hudson River salt front under changing climate conditions and to identify resilient engineering solutions for Hudson 7 drinking water intakes.

The salt front already has impacted water quality at Poughkeepsie on several occasions, and this salinity from the Atlantic Ocean is anticipated to affect more of our intakes in the future. To adequately prepare, we need to predict future conditions with a robust scientific model (Phase 1), and a pro-active, engineering, action plan (Phase 2) with recommendations to maintain high quality drinking water even if the salt front reaches our intakes, to be developed over a 3.5-year period. The first phase is a two-year study with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) estimated to cost \$250,000.

\$8.5 million for the Hudson River Estuary Program.

This \$2 million increase will help the Program implement important Action Agenda priorities relevant to our efforts, including a first-of-its-kind water quality assessment of the Hudson River Estuary, and continued support of climate adaptation and resilience planning in our communities. We support increasing this important program as part of the proposed increase of the million Environmental Protection Fund to \$400 million.

\$4 billion for the Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Act

The environmental bond act would fund several clean water initiatives that are likely to benefit the Hudson River and support our efforts to protect our drinking water quality.

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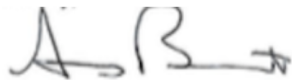
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\$1 billion for the Clean Water Infrastructure Act

The Hudson 7 communities have benefited from state support to make significant local investments in water and wastewater infrastructure, including raising water infrastructure to be resilient from sea-level rise and storm surge, reducing combined sewage overflows, and replacing aging pipes. According to an analysis by Riverkeeper of the Environmental Facilities Corporation's Intended Use Plan, communities in the Hudson River Watershed have identified a need for over \$900 million in wastewater investments alone. Some of these investments will directly benefit our communities, while many more will benefit us by improving our source water quality by reducing pollution upstream of our drinking water intakes.

Thank you sincerely for consideration of these priorities, as you negotiate our next state budget.

Sincerely,



Gary Bassett
Chair, Hudson River Drinking Water Intermunicipal Council
Mayor, Village of Rhinebeck

cc:

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