



MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

S.3292 (Tedisco) / A.3907 (Steck)

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to establishing the safe water infrastructure action program for the purpose of making payments toward the replacement and rehabilitation of existing local municipally-owned and funded drinking water, storm water and sanitary sewer systems

The Capital Region Chamber, representing 2,600 businesses and organizations from throughout the Capital Region that employ more than 150,000 area residents, strongly supports S.3292 /A.3907, which would establish the Safe Water Infrastructure Action Program (SWAP).

Specifically, this bill would amend the Environmental Conservation Law so as to implement a companion program to the existing Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPs), called the Safe Water Infrastructure Action Program (SWAP), which would offer assistance to local governments for drinking water, sanitary sewer and storm water infrastructure.

Failures of our aging water and sewer infrastructure seem to be a near daily occurrence. It is all too common for one of our cities, towns or villages to be dealing with a broken water main or a storm water sewer that has been stretched well beyond its capacity. Many of our region's water and sewer infrastructure are over 100 years old. As these systems age, we will experience an ever increasing number of these failures.

As noted in the bill sponsors' memorandum, an aging infrastructure is not only costly to our localities and a threat to public safety, it is also an impediment to their fiscal health. Communities facing severe fiscal constraints cannot absorb the financial burden of the frequent and disruptive breaks associated with an aged and deteriorating water and sewer infrastructure.

Our region's water and sewer infrastructure is an important asset for all businesses and residents. Without the proper investment, our economic stability, potential for job growth and competitiveness are threatened. As a state, we must provide our local governments with a reliable and consistent funding source to maintain these vital systems.

The Capital Region Chamber strongly supports investment in our aging water and sewer infrastructure and therefore recommends the passage of this legislation.

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