



New Jersey Society for Environmental,
Economic Development

308 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08618
609.394.7726
609.394.2795 Fax
info@njseed.org
www.njseed.org

ENVIRONMENTAL – TOP POLICY ISSUES

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Water Infrastructure Modernization

NJ SEED recognizes New Jersey has aging infrastructure and that in addition there is more to be done to ensure safe drinking water, free of contaminants such as lead. **11 New Jersey** cities have more lead-affected kids than Flint, Michigan. **NJ SEED calls for federal funding for water infrastructure modernization, remediation, and treatment.**



It is estimated NJ requires \$7 billion to upgrade water infrastructure. **NJ SEED commends Senator Menendez and Rep. Pascrell for previously sponsoring S. 2606/H.R.499: Sustainable Water Infrastructure Investment Act of 2016** Pascrell/Menendez has bill – sustainable water infrastructure act – **NJ SEED supports the legislation.** NJSEED looks forward to the introduction of similar legislation in 2017 as federal investment is critical to New Jersey’s ability to upgrade this critical resource.

Federal Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Cuts

In FY 2017, the agency’s budget includes \$2 billion for the SRFs, a decrease of \$257 million in funding from FY 2016 Enacted levels. The budget provides \$1,020.5 million for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) and \$979.5 million for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF). NJ SEED recommends:

- Reauthorization of the Federal Wastewater and Drinking Water Program
- Upgrade combined sewer systems which currently dump billions of gallons of sewage into N.J waterways yearly

NJ SEED supports legislation that will increase funding for SRF programs and will provide safe, clean water to New Jersey and its residents.

Additionally, NJ SEED seeks legislation that will provide the funds necessary to upgrade the state’s dated sewer systems, ensuring New Jersey can keep up with federal standards. NJ SEED encourages the New Jersey Delegation to reintroduce bill S.2606/H.R. 499 this year.



Regulation Accountability and Cost-Benefit Analysis

NJ SEED supports Bill H.R. 5 Regulation Accountability Act of 2017. This bill revises federal rulemaking procedures under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) to require a federal agency to make all preliminary and final factual determinations based on evidence and to consider: (1) the legal authority under which a rule may be proposed; (2) the specific nature and significance of the problem the agency may address with a rule; (3) whether existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency may address with a rule and whether such rules may be amended or rescinded; (4) any reasonable alternatives for a new rule; and (5) the potential costs and benefits associated with potential alternative rules, including impacts on low-income populations.

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Appointment to the Scientific Advisory Board

NJ SEED supports Bill H.R. 1431 amending federal law relating to the Scientific Advisory Board to establish qualifications for members, reinforce independence of the Board, and facilitate public participation in the Board’s advisory activities. The bill requires the Board to be comprised of individuals whose education, training, and experience qualify them to evaluate scientific and technical information. The bill requires that the scientific and technical points of view be fairly balanced among Board members, and that at least ten percent of the members be drawn from state, local, or tribal governments.

What type of research the EPA can use to issue regulations

NJ SEED supports Bill H.R. 1430 prohibiting the EPA from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not publicly available. Specifically, the bill amends Section 6(b) of the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating a “covered action” unless all scientific and technical information relied on to support the action is: 1) the best available science; 2) specifically identified; and 3) publicly available in a manner sufficient for independent analysis and substantial reproduction of research results.

Superfund Cleanup Funding

New Jersey has over 100 Superfund sites which is more than any other state. On May 22, 2017 EPA Administrator Pruitt issued a memo prioritizing the Superfund program and designated EPA Region 3 as the lead region for the Superfund program even though New Jersey, which is within EPA Region 2, has the most Superfund sites in the country. The EPA, through a task force, is evaluating ways to overhaul and streamline the process of the Superfund program.

A large portion of the funds allocated each year, rather than being applied to actual remediation and cleanup of sites, have gone toward oversight, “administrative” and legal costs, which have substantially raised the average cost and length of the cleanup of individual sites. In President Trump’s proposed FY 2018 budget however the Administration is seeking a reduction in available funds for Superfund which is troublesome.

NJ SEED urges Congress to pursue comprehensive Superfund reform legislation that provides accountability and transparency addresses the core root problems of the program to provide the fastest and most cost-effective cleanup. Reducing the cleanup time and cost at these sites allow for beneficial reuse as well as increased health benefits. Yet adequate funding must be made available to ensure that these sites are cleaned up in a timely fashion. NJ SEED opposes the reinstatement of the Superfund tax as originally established.

N.J. Superfund sites



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