

For Immediate Release

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## **Republican, Democratic Lawmakers Join NJ Enviro Groups to Demand Protection for EPA Funding**

*Water, Air, Toxic Cleanup Programs Threatened by Proposed Fed Budget Cuts*

**MANTOLOKING, NJ** – Federal, state and local elected officials joined New Jersey environmental leaders and concerned citizens today at the base of a bridge destroyed by Superstorm Sandy to oppose proposed cuts to the budgets of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Interior Department that would cause deep and lasting harm to our water, air, and land. Speaking with one voice, lawmakers from both parties called on the Republican-controlled House of Representatives to reject the FY18 budget unless it contains full and fair funding for the agencies that protect our health and environment.

The press conference was attended by Rep. Frank Pallone (D-6), Point Pleasant Beach Mayor Stephen Reid, other local officials representing Ocean County, and a dozen state and regional environmental groups, all of whom said that if the proposed budget cuts are allowed to stand, there will be no funding to monitor our beaches for bacteria, or to protect our coast from increasingly frequent and violent storms. The cuts also would limit the EPA's ability to clean up properly after an oil or chemical spill.

New Jersey would be among the hardest hit states by President Trump's budget cuts. Programs curbing diesel emissions, enforcing national drinking water standards, preventing underground storage tank leaks, and limiting air pollution would be eliminated or severely curtailed.

The event was held at Mantoloking Bridge Park, the base of the bridge wiped out in a breach caused by Superstorm Sandy five years ago.

Elected officials and representatives of the environmental community released the following statements:

"Now more than ever we must stand united to protect our environment and say NO to rollbacks in clean air, clean water, and climate change protections. Turning back the clock on environmental progress by rolling back these protections and cutting the EPA budget is not a

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solution. Instead, we must work together to create a 21<sup>st</sup> century energy economy focused on the clean, limitless, energy sources of the future. I am proud to stand with my friends in the New Jersey environmental community and look forward to continuing our fight to protect our environment.” **Sen. Robert Menendez**

"If the EPA loses funding, New Jersey loses too. Clean water is fundamental to the economic success and health of New Jerseyans, and the proposed cuts to the EPA would undermine the agency's ability to protect our state's water quality." **Alison Mitchell, Policy Director of New Jersey Conservation Foundation**

“New Jersey knows how bad pollution can be. We also know how important the EPA and its programs have been to the progress we have made toward better environmental quality. These are programs we need, and we demand that they be protected.” **Tim Dillingham, Executive Director, American Littoral Society**

"The threat of EPA funding cuts puts public health at risk by promising an uptick in illegal pollution. Protecting clean water, clean air, and our coasts from sea level rise should not be partisan issue. We've come too far and have too much to lose to dismiss scientific data when we urgently need it. The environmental community stands together, urging our elected leaders to ensure that the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) receives full funding to protect and improve our families and livelihood." **Sandra Meola, Communications and Outreach Director, NY/NJ Baykeeper**

“The postcard of the Jersey Shore is clean, safe waters and beaches. The proposed cuts put at risk the health of Barnegat Bay and decades of public investment. We must push back together and fight for the Jersey Shore with restored funding to the EPA, BEACH Act, NOAA and other critical environmental programs.” **Britta Wenzel, Executive Director, Save Barnegat Bay**

“Trump has declared war on the environment with his budget cuts and it will have a disastrous effect on New Jersey. These cuts will eliminate pollution testing for coastal waters, get rid of the National Estuaries Program, cut Superfund, climate and clean water programs, and more. We will see them attempt to dismantle of almost 50 years of environmental progress. Without proper testing, we won’t know if our children will be swimming in sewage or oil from offshore drilling or whether the water is pure or the air is clean enough. Congressman MacArthur is in lock-step with the fossil fool in the White House and supports these drastic cuts to the environment. We’re here to tell him to stand up against budget cuts, offshore drilling, and Trump, and to stand up FOR New Jersey!” **Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club**

“Congress members from both parties must draw a line in the sand and oppose any cuts to the EPA’s budget. Donald Trump’s assault on the EPA would hit New Jersey communities hard, decimating programs to combat climate change, clean up hazardous waste, and protect our health and safety. As a state on the frontlines of climate chaos, lawmakers like Rep. Frelinghuysen must lead the charge against any cuts to the EPA budget. We are sending a clear message to our House members: New Jerseyans reject this budget and will settle for no less

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than a fully funded EPA & other environmental agencies. Environmental activists from all political backgrounds will remember their Congressman's vote come Fall 2018." **Junior Romero, Regional Organizer, Food & Water Watch.**

"With more than 40 percent of New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection dependent on the federal budget, it's more important than ever for Congress to push back against the draconian Trump budget proposal and ensure full funding for the agencies we count on to protect our health and environment." **Ed Potosnak, Executive Director, New Jersey League of Conservation Voters**

"Make no mistake about it, the EPA's mission and funding is under attack by the Trump Administration. There is no summer vacation for the threat our environment faces from the proposed EPA budget cuts. There are six weeks left for New Jersey's representatives -- from both parties -- to fight to ensure that EPA doesn't face a massive funding cut which will hamper enforcement of our environmental laws, the clean-up of our toxic Superfund sites, and protection of our Shore beaches. As we approach the 5th anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, it is ludicrous for the federal budget to include revenue from potential off-shore drilling off the Atlantic seaboard. There is a lot of work to do by Congress to fully reject this anti-environmental Trump Administration budget." **Doug O'Malley, Director, Environment New Jersey.**

"The Jersey Shore is ground zero for the devastation Trump's budget would wreck. His budget promotes oil and gas drilling off our coast and eliminates programs designed to ensure you don't get sick from swimming, to restore Barnegat Bay, and to avoid the worst aspects of the climate crisis from more frequent, more severe weather to sea level rise (Sandy). We need all of NJ's congressional delegation, Democrat and Republican, to lead the charge to fully fund, not just cut less, these programs to take us to a clean energy future with more jobs not the dirty fossil fuel past with fewer jobs." **David Pringle, NJ Campaign Director, Clean Water Action**

"As parents, we are outraged at President Trump's proposed budget. Under this budget, EPA would be unable to detect and measure pollution, unable to enforce laws, and unable to make sure companies clean up after themselves. EPA promulgates and enforces lifesaving pollution protection measures that protect our families from the asthma, heart attacks, preterm birth, neurological damage, cancer, strokes, and other health issues linked directly to air pollution. No one voted to make America Dirty Again. We need our leaders in Congress to oppose this dirty budget." **Trisha Sheehan, National Field Manager, Moms Clean Air Force**

"If President Trump is looking to cut taxes, why doesn't he start by cutting some of the massive subsidies to Big Oil and other large profit making corporations rather than cutting programs that protect little kids from swimming in sewage, ensure we all have clean fish to eat, and help protect families from harms caused by climate change." **Cindy Zipf, Executive Director, Clean Ocean Action**

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