

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 15, 2017

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
William Jefferson Clinton Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt,

We are writing to strongly oppose any cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency's Long Island Sound geographic program in the President's FY2018 budget request to Congress. Any cuts to this program would have a detrimental impact on ongoing efforts to restore and protect Long Island Sound's water quality and harm the quality of life for the millions of our constituents who live, work and recreate on or near the Sound.

Federal funding to continue the Environmental Protection Agency's program for Long Island Sound is critical to our regional economies and the quality of our environment. The Long Island Sound is one of 28 estuaries included in the National Estuary Program, and with more than 23 million people living within 50 miles of the Sound, it is a major contributor of economic development and a source of recreation for residents and visitors alike. According to the Long Island Sound Study, the annual economic value of the sound is between \$17 billion and \$37 billion each year. The Sound is home to more than 120 species of fish, which contribute to our states' vibrant commercial and recreational fishing industries.

In 2000 and 2006, respectively, Congress enacted the Long Island Sound Restoration Act and the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act, which together authorized critical funding for projects that improve water quality, restore and protect habitats, and increase public awareness to the issues affecting the Long Island Sound and its watershed. This funding has allowed the federal government, working with state and local partners, as well as with the private sector, to make significant progress in improving the Sound.

For example, as of 2015, the amount of nitrogen entering the Sound from sewage treatment plants has decreased by 42 million lbs. per year as a result of EPA funding. Continuing to fund the Long Island Sound Restoration and Stewardship Acts will allow the EPA to continue to work collaboratively with local stakeholders to address water quality and invest in new strategies to reduce pollution and improve the environmental quality of the region.

Important Environmental Protection Agency funding for the Long Island Sound Study area has been very effective in leveraging additional resources from state, local and private partners. According to the Long Island Sound Study Office, since 2006, for every \$1 in EPA funding, \$87 was leveraged from other sources.

Thank you for your attention to this request, and we urge you to work with us to ensure that this critical funding is retained for Fiscal Year 2018.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



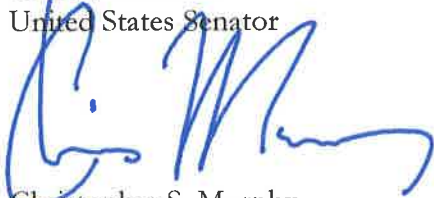
Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress



Charles Schumer
United States Senator



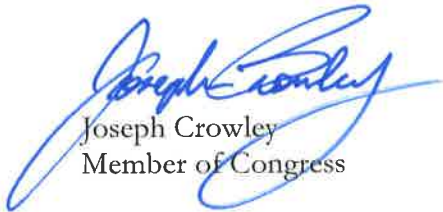
Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



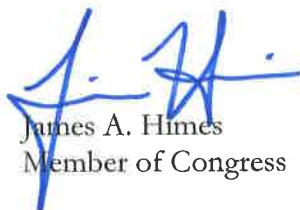
Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



Elizabeth H. Esty
Member of Congress



James A. Himes
Member of Congress



Hakeem S. Jeffries
Member of Congress



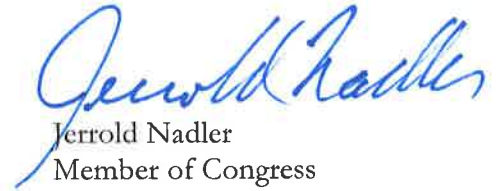
Peter T. King
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress