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NYPIRG STATEMENT ON STATE ENVIRONMENTAL BUDGET

SIGNIFICANT VICTORIES TO PROTECT WATER, FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE, AND REDUCE PLASTIC POLLUTION

(Albany, N.Y.) The Governor and the Legislature have come to an agreement on New York’s Article VII Transportation, Economic Development, and Environment (TED) budget bill and Capital Projects budget bill.

The following statement is attributable to Liz Moran, Environmental Policy Director for NYPIRG:

“In the face of the challenges posed by the novel coronavirus, New Yorkers can rest easier knowing state elected officials have made important strides to protect the environment and public health in the state budget.

- **WATER INFRASTRUCTURE:** As coronavirus continues to spread, the importance of access to clean water has never been clearer. The new \$500 million for the Clean Water Infrastructure Act, plus the potential funding from a new environmental bond act, comes at a particularly critical time, and funding must be built upon in upcoming budgets.
- **RESTORE MOTHER NATURE BOND ACT:** Much work needs to be done to fight climate change and protect New Yorkers from its consequences. The \$3 billion environmental bond act, which will go to voters in November, is a needed investment towards New York’s climate goals – but polluters should pay for it, rather than taxpayers.
- **POLYSTYRENE BAN:** The plastics industry utilized scare tactics to try to mislead elected officials and the public – but New Yorkers know better. By banning polystyrene, New York has taken another major stride forward to stop the tide of plastic pollution.
- **FRACKING BAN:** New York has taken the next step to solidify its role as a climate leader by banning fracking in statute. Since New York banned fracking through the regulatory process almost 5 years ago, the climate crisis has grown worse, and the science proving the dangers of fracking has only become more definitive. Now that New York has banned fracking, New York should close the dangerous hazardous waste loophole to ensure New Yorkers aren’t harmed by toxic fracking waste.

In these perilous times, New York’s leaders have acted rightly to prioritize environmental and public health protections. However, the work cannot end here. The Legislature needs to come back and do more. New Yorkers are counting on the Governor and the Legislature to take further action on climate, reduce plastic pollution, and protect water quality.”

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