CCE BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR SFY 2018-19

Fully Fund the NYS Environmental Protection Fund at $300 Million
Since 1993, the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) has invested in projects to protect and restore our land, air, and water resources in every region of the state. **CCE supports continuing to fully fund the EPF at $300 million in order to support a healthy environment and a strong, sustainable economy.**

Maintain Investments in Water Infrastructure and Protect the Public from Sewage Pollution
Aging and failing sewage infrastructure discharges raw sewage into local waterways, harming human health, closing beaches, harming fish and wildlife, and damaging local economies. Drinking water infrastructure is in a state of constant disrepair, with communities facing ever-increasing water main breaks every year and numerous “boil water advisories” due to contaminated drinking water. The DEC estimates over $36 billion is needed to repair and upgrade sewage infrastructure. The DOH estimates drinking water infrastructure needs in excess of $38 billion. To address NY’s significant water infrastructure needs and to protect the public from sewage pollution, CCE supports:

- **Full Implementation of the Clean Water Infrastructure Act:** In 2017, the Governor and legislature committed to a historic $2.5 billion investment over five years to upgrade clean water infrastructure and protect water quality. Now, the Governor and legislature must maintain this commitment and continue to fully fund the program in the SFY 2018-19 budget.

- **Full implementation of the NYS Sewage Pollution Right to Know (SPRTK) Law:** Provide funding ($500,000 through DEC) for technical assistance to ensure all communities—particularly communities with Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs)—have monitoring and modeling technology to provide the public with timely information about dangerous sewage overflows. The SPRTK law has played critical role in raising awareness among the public and policymakers about the extent of NY’s sewage overflow problems. However, there are still dozens of communities that still need technical assistance to ensure all New Yorkers have the right to know about sewage pollution in their communities.

Enact the “Food Recovery and Recycling Act” in the SFY2018-19 Budget
Wasted food is a serious economic, environmental, and food security problem. Food makes up 18% of NY’s municipal solid waste stream. The vast majority of this food is disposed of in landfills, where it breaks down and releases methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Currently, nearly one in seven New Yorkers lacks consistent access to sufficient food. The Food Recovery and Recycling Act, as proposed in the Governor’s executive budget, would redistribute excess food to those in need and send food scraps to compost and anaerobic digesters. **CCE supports the inclusion of the Food Recovery and Recycling Act in the final SFY 2018-19 budget to help feed those in need, fight climate change and produce renewable energy, and create jobs throughout the state.**

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February 14, 2018
**Expand Zero Emission Vehicle Sales and Service**

CCE urges the legislature to enact legislation in the budget that would give more New Yorkers the option to purchase and service zero emission vehicles all across the state (based on standalone legislation introduced by Assemblyman Morelle and Senator Amedore in 2017). This would allow an additional 15 licensed locations, in addition to the 5 already in existence, for a total of 20. Five upstate regions would each have at least one licensed location, ensuring better access for all New Yorkers. Upstate residents deserve access to EV vehicles just as much as downstate!

Expanding the sale of zero emission vehicles across the state will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change, protect air quality, create jobs in the clean energy sector, and keep up with consumer demand in every region of the state. It is estimated that this legislation would result in the creation of 400 jobs and generate approximately $50 million in annual tax revenue for the state. **CCE urges the legislature to include the expansion of zero emission vehicle sales and service in their respective budget proposals.**

**Provide Safe Pharmaceutical Disposal**

A lack of options to safely dispose of the growing amount of unused prescription drugs is contributing to the drug abuse epidemic that is now the leading cause of injury and death in the U.S., ahead of car accidents. The lack of disposal options is also perpetuating the antiquated practice of flushing unused or expired drugs, resulting in pollution of waters with pharmaceutical drugs. Providing access to safe pharmaceutical disposal options for the public and health care institutions reduces flushing of unwanted or expired pharmaceutical drugs and helps to keep drugs out of the hands of abusers. CCE supports:

- **DEC Statewide Safe Pharmaceutical Disposal Program ($1 Million in the EPF).** Maintain funding for the DEC to operate a statewide pharmaceutical safe disposal program, which is providing pharmacies across the state with free drop-boxes and drug disposal for two years. Existing funding will provide over 330 pharmacies with safe pharmaceutical disposal, and funding in the 2018-19 budget would bring the total up to at least 500 participating pharmacies across the state.
- **DOH Pharmaceutical Take-Back Program ($350,000).** Continue NYS DOH’s successful program that is providing take-back events, safe disposal drop-boxes at police precincts and retail pharmacies, and drug pickup at healthcare facilities across the state. This program has supported the safe disposal of over 60,000lbs of unwanted drugs over two years.

**Reduce Pollution from Single-Use Bags and Incentivize Reusable Bags**

Single-use plastic and paper bags waste natural resources, pollute our environment, and are costly to consumers and local governments. In 2017, the Governor appointed a Plastic Bag Task Force to provide a statewide solution to the problems associated with single-use bags. The Task Force recently provided a menu of options to address this problem, which included a recommendation for a ban on plastic bags and a fee on paper. After working to pass local laws in over a dozen municipalities in New York, as well as analyzing disposable bag reduction policies from around the country, CCE has found that banning single-use plastic bags and placing fee on all other bags, including paper and thicker plastic bags, has had overwhelming success. From California to New Castle, NY, this type of ban/fee policy has resulted in large-scale decreases in plastic and paper bag use and litter, as well as significant increases in the use of reusable bags. **CCE urges the Governor and legislature to include a ban on single-use plastic bags and a fee on paper bags in the SFY 2018-19 budget.**

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