

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
CITIES  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, TOURISM,  
PARKS & RECREATION  
FINANCE  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENTS  
INSURANCE  
LABOR  
VETERANS, HOMELAND  
SECURITY & MILITARY AFFAIRS  
E-MAIL ADDRESS:  
GRISANTI@NYSENATE.GOV  
WEBSITE:  
GRISANTI.NYSENATE.GOV

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



**MARK GRISANTI**  
SENATOR, 60TH DISTRICT

ALBANY OFFICE:  
ROOM 902  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247  
PH: (518) 455-3240  
FAX: (518) 426-6738

BUFFALO OFFICE:  
WALTER J. MAHONEY BUILDING  
65 COURT STREET, ROOM 213  
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14202  
PH: (716) 854-8705  
FAX: (716) 854-3051

February 24, 2014

Honorable Dean G. Skelos  
Senate Republican Conference Leader  
330 State Capitol Building  
Albany, New York 12247

Dear Senator Skelos and Senator Klein:

We write to express support for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and urge that it be increased to \$200 million in the budget. The Executive Budget proposal increases the EPF appropriation by a modest \$4 million, from \$153 million to \$157 million, which was achieved through the budget agreement last year that included projected increases in revenue from amendments to the enforcement provisions of the state's existing Bottle Bill.

While implementing the agreement from last year is a good start, funding for the EPF must be restored at a faster rate if we are to address critical needs that exist for programs that provide every district in the state benefits including clean air and water, healthy communities, job creation and municipal services. A greater level of investment in the environment is appropriate and needed in this year's budget, as our economy continues to recover and revenue grows.

During the recent recession, the annual EPF appropriation was drastically reduced from \$255 million to \$134 million. This reduction negatively impacted programs that conserve our precious clean water; support our community parks and farm, forestry, recycling and tourism sectors; and empower our municipalities to become more resilient to storm impacts.

A 2012 study by the Trust for Public Land showed that for every \$1 invested in land and water conservation through the EPF, the state received \$7 in economic return. The EPF supports thousands of jobs in our state through its various programs across a broad spectrum of industries, from outdoor tourism and agriculture to drinking water protection for millions of New Yorkers. EPF supported industries generate approximately \$40 billion in revenue every year. With a 7 to 1 payoff for every dollar invested, a surplus in the state budget, and significant needs in communities from Brookhaven to Buffalo, *now is the time to make additional progress and further enhance the EPF. We accordingly urge that the EPF appropriation grow to \$200 million in this state budget.*

The primary dedicated source of revenue for the EPF is the state's existing Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT). During the recent economic crisis, RETT revenue dropped from more than \$1 billion annually to less than \$400 million. As the economy recovers, however, projections indicate that so too will the RETT which is now generating more than \$800 million annually. Over the span of the FY 14-15 financial plan outlook, annual RETT revenue is projected to grow incrementally each year to more than \$1 billion a year. As the RETT recovers, so should investments in the EPF.

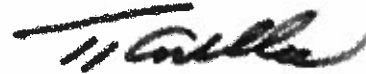
In the grand scheme of state spending, the EPF stands as an extraordinarily modest, yet extraordinarily important and effective, mechanism for providing direct benefits that cut to the core of community health and prosperity. With so many important EPF programs benefitting both upstate and downstate communities, we should use this moment to resume an appropriate level of environmental spending consistent with the state's financial recovery, and absolutely necessary to the state's environmental health.

We appreciate your consideration of this request.

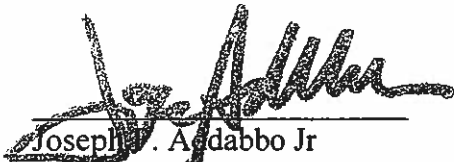
Very truly yours,



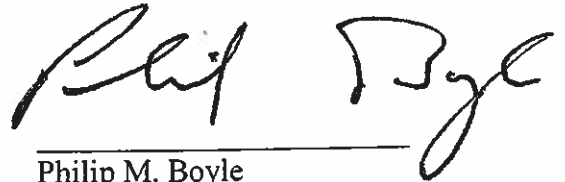
Mark J. Grisanti  
Senator, 60<sup>th</sup> District



Tony Avella  
Senator, 11<sup>th</sup> District



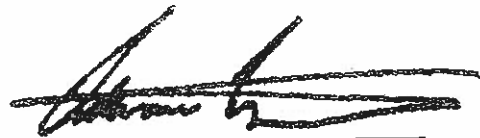
Joseph J. Addabbo Jr  
Senator, 15<sup>th</sup> District



Philip M. Boyle  
Senator, 4<sup>th</sup> District



David Carlucci  
Senator, 38<sup>th</sup> District



Adriano Espaillat  
Senator, 31<sup>st</sup> District

*Hugh T. Farley*

Hugh T. Farley  
Senator, 49<sup>th</sup> District

*Patrick M. Gallivan*

Patrick M. Gallivan  
Senator, 59<sup>th</sup> District

*Terry W. Gipson*

Terry W. Gipson  
Senator 41<sup>st</sup> District

*Martin J. Golden*

Martin J. Golden  
Senator, 22<sup>nd</sup> District

*Brad Hoylman*

Brad Hoylman  
Senator, 27<sup>th</sup> District

*Timothy M. Kennedy*

Timothy Kennedy  
Senator, 63<sup>rd</sup> District

*William J. Larkin, Jr*

William J. Larkin, Jr  
Senator, 39<sup>th</sup> District

*George Latimer*

George Latimer  
Senator, 37<sup>th</sup> District

*Elizabeth O'C. Little*

Elizabeth O'C. Little  
Senator, 45<sup>th</sup> District

*Carl L. Marcellino*

Carl L. Marcellino  
Senator, 5<sup>th</sup> District



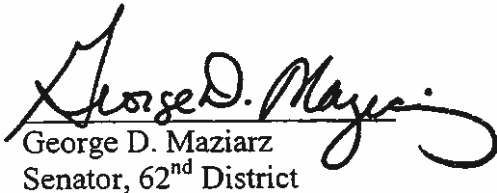
---

Kathleen Marchione  
Senator, 43<sup>rd</sup> District



---

Jack M. Martins  
Senator, 7<sup>th</sup> District



---

George D. Maziarz  
Senator, 62<sup>nd</sup> District



---

Michael F. Nozzolio  
Senator, 54<sup>th</sup> District



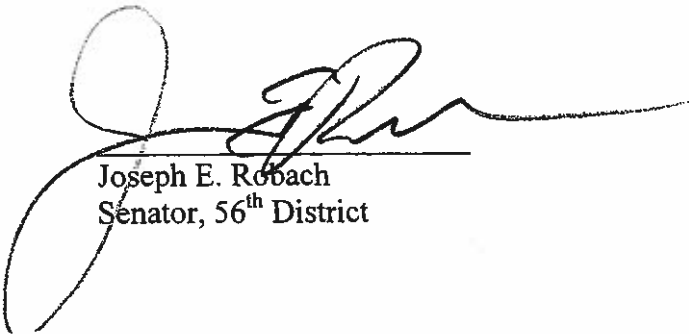
---

Thomas F. O'Mara  
Senator, 58<sup>th</sup> District



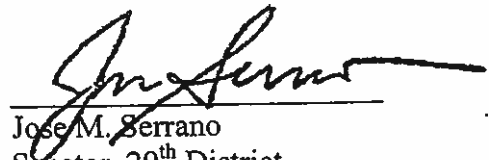
---

Patricia A. Ritchie  
Senator, 48<sup>th</sup> District



---

Joseph E. Robach  
Senator, 56<sup>th</sup> District



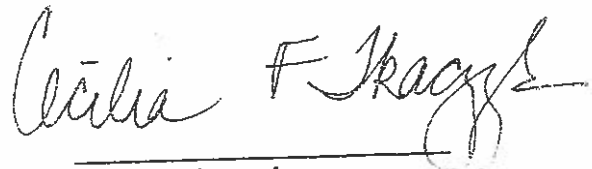
---

Jose M. Serrano  
Senator, 29<sup>th</sup> District



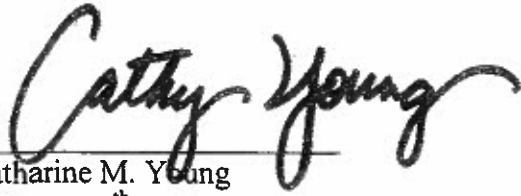
---

James L. Seward  
Senator, 51<sup>st</sup> District

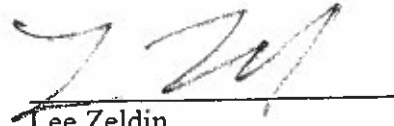


---

Cecilia Tkaczyk  
Senator, 46<sup>th</sup> District



Catharine M. Young  
Senator, 57<sup>th</sup> District



Lee Zeldin  
Senator, 3<sup>rd</sup> District

Cc: Senator John A. DeFrancisco  
Senator Joseph E. Robach  
Robert Mujica  
Steve Taylor  
Paul Midey