



Saving America's Most Crowded Watershed

H.R. 4677, 117th Congress

Sponsor: Rep. Paul Tonko (NY-20)

"Our waterways are our greatest natural gift, so long as we protect them."

❖ Paul Tonko

New York & New Jersey Waterways are Under Threat

- The watersheds that flow through the Hudson Valley, across New Jersey, and into NY-NJ Harbor, as well as the Harbor itself, face serious threats.
- **Hazardous waste, legacy chemicals, and partially treated or untreated wastewater** continue to diminish water quality in both major and minor rivers within the watershed.
 - PCB concentrations remain unacceptably high in many regional waterways.
- New York and New Jersey share nearly **500 miles of coastline** that is vulnerable to increasingly frequent storm surges and rising seas.
 - Hurricane Sandy caused nearly \$100 billion in damage to NY and NJ coastal areas.

Our Waterways are Precious and Valuable

- The NY-NJ Harbor Watersheds generate more than **\$60 billion in annual revenue** from tourism, fishing, and recreational activities.
- With proper management, the millions of Americans living in the watershed can benefit substantially through **increased health, happiness, and property values** from access to waterways via trails, beaches, and parks.
- Wetlands in the region provide substantial **water quality and storm surge benefits**. The Hudson River Estuary alone contains more than 7,000 acres of brackish wetlands that filter contaminants, mitigate sea level rise, and provide habitat for critically endangered species.

Congress Must Act to Restore this Vital System!

The New York-New Jersey Watershed Protection Act

- The New York-New Jersey Watershed Protection Act would establish a program to coordinate restoration efforts and award grants to help fund restoration projects in local communities.
- The program would **ensure that restoration efforts utilize science-based principles** to protect fish and wildlife habitats, improve water quality, increase public access to the estuary, mitigate flood risks, and develop public outreach and educational activities.
- It would emphasize the need for restoration and conservation funds to be delivered to **frontline communities suffering from environmental injustice**.
- The bill authorizes \$50,000,000 annually through fiscal year 2027.

Our legislation would protect and restore our watersheds and estuaries, improving accessibility and economic opportunity for millions of Americans!

Connect with Congressman Paul Tonko on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram: @RepPaulTonko