

**Testimony before the Environmental Conservation Committees
of the New York State Senate and Assembly
Regarding the Governor's Proposed Budget for 2019-20**

By Kathleen Curtis, LPN, Executive Director
Clean and Healthy New York, Inc.
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Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Governor's 2019-20 draft budget. My name is Kathleen Curtis. I am the executive director of Clean and Healthy New York, which promotes safer chemicals, a sustainable economy, and a healthier world. Our primary focus is to turn off the tap on toxic chemicals, especially in everyday products and everyday life.

Today, I would like to focus my comments on three areas:

- 1) Support for including the Article 7 bill requiring disclosure of hazardous chemicals in consumer products in the budget negotiation process to ensure enactment and adequate funding to begin implementation;
- 2) Support for the \$300 million Environmental Protection Fund and certain line items in Governor Cuomo's expanded agenda; and
- 3) Support for expanded funding for staff at the Department of Environmental Conservation to ensure laws to protect New Yorkers from degradation of their health and the environment are implemented swiftly and effectively.

Support for Part K of the Transportation Economic Development and Environmental Conservation Article VII Legislation in the FY 2020 Executive Budget

Clean and Healthy New York and its allies within the JustGreen Partnership have advocated for over a decade for measures that require disclosure of chemical ingredients in consumer products and the accompanying information about what hazards these chemicals pose to public health and the environment. We applaud the Governor for addressing the public's right to know about the presence of hazardous chemicals, and consider it appropriate to address this urgent environmental health priority within the budget. Specifically, we support:

- Expanding New York's existing household cleaning product ingredient disclosure policy to include industrial cleaners, in order to provide for improved occupational safety, as well as worker and community right to know;
- Adding a new Title 9, the Consumer Chemical Awareness Act, which grants broad authority to the state to require disclosure of hazardous chemicals in any consumer product intended for use, or may reasonably be expected to be used, by children.

Children are not just little adults. They eat, breathe, and drink more per pound. They undergo critical developmental phases, during which exposure to even small amounts of hazardous chemicals can have a lasting health impact. They are unable to protect themselves, and rely on us as adults to protect them. It is high time New York joined the growing list of other states who have recognized that responsibility and taken action, including CA, ME, OR, VT and WA.

- Amending Public Health Law to require disclosure of ingredient health hazards in personal care products, including contaminants, fragrance ingredients, and flavorings. We agree that disclosure required under federal law does not adequately protect people and communities, and consumers must be empowered with the information necessary to make informed decisions to protect their families.
- Support for green chemistry initiatives that encourage development of innovative methods to replace toxic ingredients with environmentally-preferable alternatives.

Support for the Environmental Protection Fund

Clean and Healthy New York unreservedly supports maintaining the Environmental Protection Fund at \$300 million. This fund provides much needed resources to many projects that benefit our state and make it a better place to live. Within that funding:

- We believe that the portions of the program that support Environmental Health and Justice should be consolidated into a separate category, just as the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation category was added to reflect the priorities within the overall fund. This category would include:
 - Pollution Prevention Institute, funded at a full \$4 million dollars. We strongly support the expanded scope of work required by the State in the most recent round of awards for the program to include Emerging Chemicals and Green Chemistry. To truly prevent pollution, we will need solutions at the start of the supply chain, which requires green chemistry and engineering innovations.
 - The Interstate Chemicals Clearinghouse: a short-term increase to \$600,000 for this year and next to create a database to collect full ingredient disclosure for personal care products and other product sectors. New York State should provide anchor funding for programs that require full transparency.
 - The Pesticide Program.
 - Environmental Justice programs.
 - Environmental Health programs, including \$2 million for the Children's Environmental Health Centers of Excellence.

Support for expanded funding for staff at the Department of Environmental Conservation. There has never been more of a need for New York's leadership than there is right now, given the federal political climate. Many programs have been created in law and regulation that could, if appropriately resourced, result in New York leading the nation on environmental health and justice.