



ULSTER COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Dave Haldeman, Chair
PO Box 1800
Kingston, NY 12402
Phone: 845-338-7287

October 30, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
State Capital Building
Albany, NY 12224

RE: Bill (A8349/5612A)

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing on behalf of the Ulster County Environmental Management Council (UCEMC), an organization comprised of members from municipalities throughout the county, appointed by the county executive and confirmed by the county legislature. "...Protecting and conserving the environment on behalf of all the people of the county..." is part of our mission. Therefore, I am urging you to sign into law, without delay, the bipartisan bill (A8349/S5612 A). The UCEMC is particularly interested in this bill because it affects streams in twenty-three municipalities in the county by adding New York's Class C streams into the Department of Environmental Conservation's Protection of Waters Program. Currently, there are 2,803 miles of Class C streams in the Lower Hudson Valley that are not in the Protection of Waters Program. There are 485.3 miles of streams in the county that lack important protections because they are not in the program. Some of these streams feed into the Hudson River, a source of drinking water for over 100,000 people. The bill is so important because it provides additional stream protection for the public, for fish and wildlife habitats. Given the efforts on the federal level to roll back clean water protections, it is essential that these streams receive the necessary protection afforded by state legislation.

In addition, visitors who are drawn to these water bodies for recreation contribute to the local economy. Concerns that were raised about the legislation are addressed in the Protection of Waters Program. The program contains provisions for emergency authorization regarding permitting during storm events, and it exempts actively working farms.

Because the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will be responsible to ensure the stream protections in the law are enforced, it is important that the department receives the resources it needs to fulfill its responsibility.

The council members look forward to your signing this essential bill into law.

Yours truly,



J. David Haldeman, Chair
Ulster County Environmental Management Council

c: *Via Email*
Patrick K. Ryan, Ulster County Executive
David Donaldson, Chairman of Ulster County Legislature
Senator Pete Harckham
Assembly Member Sean Ryan
Senator James Skoufis
Senator Jen Metzger
Senator George Amedore
Senator James Seward
Assembly Member Brian Miller
Assembly Member Chris Tague
Assembly Member Kevin Cahill
Assembly Member Jonathan Jacobson