



TESTIMONY

S1557/A2641
Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee

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**Stormwater Utilities Enable New Jersey Cities to Attract Sustainable Development
by Reducing Flooding, Sewer Backups and Water Pollution**

New Jersey Future urges your support for S1557/A2641, which would authorize the establishment of stormwater utilities in the 21 cities in New Jersey that have combined sewer systems.

Stormwater utilities provide local governments with an important tool to manage stormwater, which today undermines the quality of life for residents and businesses by causing flooding, leading to raw sewage overflows directly into rivers and bays and sometimes even resulting in sewage backups in people's basements and in neighborhood parks.

Cities across the country, including Philadelphia and Lancaster, Penn., and New York City and Syracuse, N.Y., use stormwater utilities to help them manage stormwater. These utilities are building, often in concert with private developers, "green infrastructure"-like parks, sidewalk plantings and green roofs that capture stormwater where it falls – before it leads to flooding, overflows and backups. The green infrastructure projects have additional benefits, including making surrounding areas more attractive and healthier and enhancing urban revitalization efforts. Stormwater utilities can have a neutral financial impact on residents and existing businesses that already pay sewer fees, depending on how they are structured.

New Jersey Future supports S1557/A2641 because it will help New Jersey cities attract new private investment at the same time that they improve conditions for existing residents and business. We also encourage you to authorize stormwater utilities statewide.