



June 6, 2017

Re: Opposition to House Resolution 284

Dear Members of the House State Government Committee:

On behalf of PennFuture and our members, including the tens of thousands of anglers, sportsmen, and conservationists our organization represents, we urge you to oppose House Resolution 284, which is under consideration in the House State Government Committee. The Resolution seeks to undermine a federally established program to address the significant impacts of municipal stormwater by mischaracterizing the program's requirements, costs, and benefits.

Stormwater is the rain, snowmelt, and other precipitation that runs off solid (impervious) surfaces, collecting pollutants (such as oil, pesticides, sediments, bacteria, and fertilizer) that are on those surfaces, and carrying them into our sewer systems, rivers, and streams. These impacts can threaten public health and safety due to increased risk of flooding, higher levels of pollutants in our streams, decreased opportunities for recreation, swimming, and wildlife uses, as well as economic losses and damaged property.

As a result, urbanized areas, including certain boroughs, cities, towns, and townships, manage their stormwater through under a program through the Clean Water Act, known as the Municipal Storm Sewer System, or MS4, program.

Regrettably, House Resolution 284 calls on the U.S. Congress to repeal this portion of the Clean Water Act. If the U.S. Congress follows the resolution, it would result in the rollback of over twenty years of efforts to reduce pollution from municipal stormwater around the country and leave Pennsylvania with little protection from this significant source of pollution.

In particular, House Resolution 284 mischaracterizes the MS4 program in a number of ways:

- **Pennsylvania's existing Act 167 and Erosion and Sediment Controls programs are not sufficient.** Even though these programs have been in effect for almost 40 years, the number of Pennsylvania's streams and rivers impaired due to municipal stormwater increases with each assessment. Without additional protections, this trend will only continue and the MS4 program is critical toward reversing this trend.

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- **Failing to consider the benefits of reducing flooding and stormwater pollution.** For example, Lancaster City’s stormwater plan is estimated to provide approximately \$4.2 million in energy, air quality, and water benefits across the city annually. Stormwater investments certainly have upfront costs, but significant local benefits that must also be accounted for during policy debates.
- **Failing to explore options for funding stormwater management.** Many municipalities have implemented stormwater management fees that assess a fee on water users based on the amount of impervious surface, and thus the amount of runoff generated from, their property. Through a targeted fee system, municipalities can create sufficient funds to address pollution and flooding issues from stormwater without increasing taxes. In addition, state and federal grants for issues like reducing pollution in the Susquehanna River Watershed as well as past Growing Greener grants have supported stormwater efforts.
- **Ignoring the need to modernize municipal water and sewage infrastructure.** Pennsylvania municipalities have ignored vital infrastructure related to stormwater for years and these systems are failing, resulting in serious flooding, health, and safety concerns for residents throughout the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania’s rivers and streams are important natural legacies that are central to our state economy. Protecting these resources is paramount, and the MS4 program provides municipalities standards for addressing one of the chief sources of damage to our waters.

We urge you to protect the streams and rivers of Pennsylvania by opposing House Resolution 284.

Sincerely,

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