

November 21, 2023

Dear PA-DEP,

As part of the current public comment period for the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) 2023 proposal for the Delaware River's Triennial Review, we respectfully request that the Department remove its current policy that sets lower water quality standards for a section of the Delaware River that flows past many of our districts, and is enjoyed by so many of our constituents: through Philadelphia and the City of Chester.

Instead, we respectfully request that DEP designate this 27-mile stretch of the Delaware River for "primary contact water quality standards" within the agency's finalized 2023 Triennial Review.

Yet for years, DEP has kept a rule on the books that allows more pollution into the 27 miles of the Delaware that flow through Philadelphia and down to Chester, than is allowed anywhere else along the other 300 miles of the Delaware River.

On behalf of our constituents, we would prefer that the quality of the water be suitable for wading, boating, swimming and other recreational activities. Instead, under the current conditions, up to 15 billion gallons of untreated wastewater is discharged into this section of the Delaware every year. This sewage and runoff pollution can contain toxic substances, bacteria, and viruses and result in intestinal infections, vomiting, fever, headache and other illnesses.

[We join the US EPA](#) in strongly urging the Commonwealth to end this exemption that allows more pollution in the Delaware River in and around Philadelphia. Ensuring that DEP sets a good water quality standard from this portion of the River is key to ensuring that it is a cleaner and healthier segment of the river.

Ensuring that this water is safe and healthy is a matter of health, safety, and of environmental justice for the predominantly black and brown communities living in Philadelphia and the City of Chester. Our constituents deserve the same clean water protections as more affluent communities up and down the Delaware River.

Thank you for taking this into consideration. We hope you will amend the 2023 proposed Triennial Review for the Delaware River to include primary contact water quality standards for the 27-mile stretch of the river that runs through Philadelphia and the City of Chester.

Sincerely,

State Representative Elizabeth Fiedler
State Representative Lisa Borowski

Speaker of the House Matthew Bradford
State Representative Tim Brennan

State Representative Tim Briggs
State Representative Morgan Cephas
State Representative Mary Jo Daley
State Representative Dave Dellosa
State Representative Danielle
Friel-Otten
State Representative Pat Gallagher
State Representative Roni Green
State Representative Joe Hohenstein
State Representative Mary Isaacson
State Representative Carol Kazeem
State Representative Malcolm Kenyatta
State Representative Tarik Khan
State Representative Rick Krajewski

State Representative Jennifer O'Mara
State Representative Darisha Parker
State Representative Chris Pielli
State Representative Tarah Probst
State Representative Chris Rabb
State Representative Ben Sanchez
State Representative Chris Sappey
State Representative Greg Scott
State Representative Melissa
Shusterman
Chairman of the House Environmental
and Energy Resources Committee Greg
Vitali
State Representative Ben Waxman
State Representative Joe Webster

State Senator Amanda Cappelletti
State Senator Carolyn Comitta

State Senator Jimmy Dillon
State Senator Steve Santarsiero
State Senator Nikil Saval

Michele Becci, Councilwoman, New Hope Boro
Joseph F. Boylan, Morton Borough Council, Finance Chair
Larry Browne, Doylestown Borough Council
Phil Dague, Mayor Borough of Downingtown
Louise Feder, New Hope Borough Councilwoman
Joseph Frederick, Doylestown Borough Council
Connie Gering, President New Hope Borough
Jim Lee, Ward 3 Commissioner, Springfield Township
Christopher Manero, Chair, Plymouth Township Council
Wendy Margolis, Vice President of Doylestown Borough Council
Josh Maxwell, Chester County Commissioner
Martin Miller, Commissioner, West Norriton Township
Gary Neights, Lower Providence Township Supervisor
Robert Kinney, Council-member Elect, Doylestown Borough
Tina Sokolowski, Vice President Conshohocken Borough Council
John Spiegelman, Ward 11 Commissioner & Board President Emeritus, Abington Twp
Mark Squilla, Philadelphia City Councilman
Sharon Yates, Township Supervisor, Valley Township