



**Memorandum of Support
A126/S1759 (Gottfried/Skoufis)**

Support - A126/S1729 - Support

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to establishing a list of emerging contaminants

Riverkeeper strongly supports A126/S1759, which establishes New York's first emerging contaminant testing list. This bill is an essential first step to ensure safe drinking water for all New Yorkers, by identifying potentially harmful chemicals for monitoring in all water utilities. Through understanding what chemicals are present in water systems, proactive actions can be taken to protect the health of New Yorkers. Repetition of the crises of Hoosick Falls and Newburgh is unacceptable, where communities drank PFAS-contaminated water for decades before the contamination was uncovered.

The need for an emerging contaminant list and testing in all water utilities was recognized by New York years ago, in the Emerging Contaminant Monitoring Act (ECMA) of 2017, which tasked the Department of Health with creating and regularly updating such a list. The ECMA further fills a gap in federal emerging contaminant legislation, which only requires testing in utilities serving over 10,000 and leaves smaller communities at risk. However, as of date, the Department of Health has not fulfilled its mandate.

The health of New Yorkers, especially those in small communities, should not be placed at risk any longer. Therefore, Riverkeeper strongly supports the passage of A126/S1759 to jumpstart the emerging contaminants list with the expectation that going forward the Department of Health will regularly update the list as mandated by the ECMA.