

For Immediate Release  
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### **FERRER: NYC NEEDS LAW TO KEEP WATER CLEAN**

Borough President Fernando Ferrer today announced legislation to protect the City's supply of drinking water. Ferrer proposed a "New York City Clean Water Law" after a recent report by Robert Kennedy, Jr.'s Riverkeeper, "Finger in the Dyke, Head in the Sand: DEP's Crumbling Water Supply Infrastructure," detailed incompetence and mismanagement by the city agency charged with protecting our drinking water.

Ferrer said, "The Riverkeeper report documents gross neglect of the City's water supply infrastructure. This malfeasance threatens our water supply, as well as our water quality."

Ferrer said, "My proposal keeps our drinking water safe and saves ratepayers money. In contrast, the Giuliani administration winks and nods at development that threatens our supply of drinking water. Absent intelligent change, we could possibly be forced to finance an \$8 billion filtration plant for the Catskill/Delaware water system."

Ferrer's proposed Law requires:

1. A Comprehensive Watershed and Delivery System Management Plan: covering the Catskill, Delaware, Croton and Brooklyn/Queens aquifer watersheds.
2. An Annual Watershed Survey and Review of Rules and Regulations and Agreements on Watershed Protection:
3. Reform of Personnel to Protect the Watershed and Water Supply
4. A Water Conservation Plan:

Ferrer said, "New York needs aggressive enforcement to protect our water sources west of the Hudson and at the same time invest in the science, conservation and alternative technologies for the Croton system. That system offers better means to protect the health and quality of our drinking water than do multi-billion dollar filtration facilities.

"Armed with a serious Clean Water Law and its stringent mandates, New York City should successfully lobby EPA to avoid filtration in the Croton system as well," Ferrer said. "A filtration plant for the Croton system, an unnecessary expense, only allows further development in the watershed on the backs of New York City ratepayers. Conservation and protective measures offer the real solution. As I consistently advocate, the City and State must work together to purchase land in the watershed and to investigate alternative, non-filtration technologies to meet federal requirements."

The Elements of the Proposed Local Law follows:

1. *A Strategic Watershed Management and Protection Plan*: covering the Catskill, Delaware, Croton and Brooklyn/Queens aquifer watersheds, to be released for public comment, and including:

- Short term and long term strategies for controlling point-source pollution
- Short term and long term strategies for controlling non-point-source pollution
- Implementation plans for “smart growth” strategies to curtail development in the watersheds
- Plans for implementing the 1997 Watershed Memorandum
- Strategies for collaboration and cooperation with the upstate communities that share our water supply
- Review and evaluation of alternative (i.e., non-filtration) water quality improvement technologies or approaches (e.g., natural systems, ultraviolet systems, etc.)
- Identification of immediately necessary maintenance and repairs in the water supply system and a plan for executing repairs
- Plans for system repairs once the third water tunnel is complete

2. Annual Watershed Survey and Review of Rules and Regulations and Agreements on Watershed Protection:

- Require annual survey of the watershed and water supply infrastructure
- Annual updates to the watershed rules
- Annual reports on compliance with watershed rules

3. Reform of Personnel to Protect the Watershed and Water Supply:

- Require analysis and report on professional staffing patterns/needs within DEP
- Provide other officials with the opportunity to independently analyze and/or comment on those needs

4. Water Conservation Plan:

- A leak detection and repair strategy
- Programs to increase the use of water conserving fixtures in the public sector and incentives for the private sector
- A cooperative strategy to foster water conservation in the City as well as in the upstate counties that share our water supply