



**Delaware River Basin Commission**

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Web Site: <http://www.drbc.gov>

**Steven J. Tambini, P.E.**  
Executive Director

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February 1, 2022

Via email: [financechair@nysenate.gov](mailto:financechair@nysenate.gov); [wamchair@nyassembly.gov](mailto:wamchair@nyassembly.gov)

The Honorable Liz Krueger  
Senate Finance Committee  
172 State Street, Capitol Building  
Room 416 CAP  
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Helene E. Weinstein  
Assembly Ways and Means Committee  
LOB 711-A  
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Chairs Krueger and Weinstein,

Please accept the enclosed written testimony regarding the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Executive Budget Proposal.

On behalf of the Delaware River Basin Commission, I appreciate the opportunity to submit these remarks for the Joint Legislative Hearings of the Senate Finance Committee and Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

Please contact me with any questions you or your staff may have. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Stambini', is written over a large, light-colored oval shape.

Steven J. Tambini  
Executive Director

Enclosure: Budget Testimony

c: Delaware River Basin Legislative Delegation  
NYC Drinking Water Legislative Delegation



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### **Testimony of Steve Tambini, Executive Director, Delaware River Basin Commission for the Joint Legislative Hearing February 1, 2022, on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 Executive Budget Proposal Environmental Conservation**

**Presented to Chair Liz Krueger, Senate Finance Committee, Chair Helene E. Weinstein, Assembly Ways and Means Committee and respective committee members**

**February 1, 2022**

On behalf of the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC), thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and the outline the benefits the DRBC provides to the residents of New York.

In 1961 President John F. Kennedy and the governors of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware created a regional body with the force of law to oversee a unified approach to managing a river system without regard to political boundaries. The resulting Delaware River Basin Commission is a federal-interstate agency charged with managing, protecting, and improving the water resources of the Delaware River Basin.

Our Basin provides drinking water to over 4.5 million New Yorkers (24% of the state's population) living in New York City and within the Basin. In fact, New York City's drinking water system is the largest unfiltered water supply in the United States. An estimated 525 million gallons per day are exported from the Delaware River Basin to supply New York City with tap water, which has been heralded as the "champagne of drinking water."

The Basin's pristine headwaters and New York City public water supply reservoirs also support an exceptional outdoor economy with world-class fishing, boating and other water-based recreational opportunities.

As expressed in the state and federal law that formed the Commission 60 years ago, Commission members are responsible, in part, to financially support the DRBC's operations. New York's share of this signatory member funding is \$626,000, representing 17.5% of the total member request. This percentage is based upon an equitable agreement between the Commission members, and the funding request of all members has not changed since 2008. For the past eight fiscal years, the New York Governor's Executive Budget and the legislatively approved budget have included only \$359,500 for the DRBC.

For Fiscal Year 2023, we respectfully request that your joint Capital Projects Budget appropriations bill include full funding of \$626,000 in support of the DRBC's critical work on behalf of New Yorkers.

DRBC consistently ensures water security in the Delaware River Basin by managing water availability, water quality, water resiliency, and water equity. In addition to this vital role, DRBC currently faces unique challenges that make restoring sustainable funding for New York's shared water resources ever more urgent. Funds are needed to support:

- Collaborative technical support for the adaptive management of water resources under the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court Decree that governs diversion of water outside the Basin, including diversions by the City of New York and releases from the City of New York's Delaware Basin Reservoirs to maintain river flows.
- Technical studies of the impact of climate change on the water cycle in the Delaware River Basin, including changes in rainfall, runoff, reservoir inflow, and snowpack, and the effects of sea level rise and salinity changes.
- DRBC's recent and pending rulemakings and the legal challenges it faces related to high volume hydraulic fracking in the Basin.

Member funding to support the DRBC is leveraged by like support from the other Commission members, from reasonable water withdrawal and discharge fees and charges, and from a growing grant portfolio.

We appreciate the opportunity to continue to work collaboratively with water professionals from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and other state agency representatives to meet our shared goals for high quality, sustainable water supply and equitable water management across the Delaware River Basin.

If you or your staff have any questions about this request or about DRBC's mission-driven activities, we would be pleased to meet to discuss the important role DRBC plays in managing, protecting, and improving our shared water resources. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stambini", with a large, sweeping flourish on the left side.

Steven J. Tambini