



Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee

Senator Mary Jo White
Chairman

Patrick Henderson, Executive Director

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Honorable Dominic Pileggi
Senate Majority Leader

Honorable H. William DeWeese
House Majority Leader

Honorable Gibson Armstrong, Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee

Honorable Dwight Evans, Chairman
House Appropriations Committee

Dear Gentlemen:

Part of the budget agreement with Governor Rendell involves using a portion of existing Realty Transfer Tax revenues to fund the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund. The proposal would utilize some of the funding that is currently dedicated to the Keystone, Recreation and Conservation Fund ("Key '93"), as outlined in Senate Bill 913.

I believe this is a sound proposal, as evidenced by the following key points:

- We avoid imposing \$50 million in new taxes on residents and businesses of the Commonwealth;
- The impact on the Key '93 fund is substantially mitigated by the tremendous growth in Realty Transfer Tax revenues over the past several years – nearly doubling since 2000 and projected to exceed \$100 million in coming years;
- Many of the projects eligible for funding under Key '93 – including open space conservation, parks, trails, state park and forest infrastructure – are also eligible for funding under the \$217 million allocated to the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources under the 2005 Growing Greener Bond;
- This approach "frees up" approximately \$30 million in traditional Growing Greener revenue that was diverted last year for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund.

Claims that the approach contained in the budget agreement would constitute the largest cut in state support for parks, conservation and recreation are inaccurate. If anything, I would encourage our respective caucus leaders to consider not including a sunset provision in the funding plan for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund.

We have been repeatedly urged by Governor Rendell and Secretary McGinty to secure a dedicated, long-term funding solution for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund. I urge my colleagues to do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Jo White".

Mary Jo White, Chairman
Senate Environmental Resources
& Energy Committee