



April 12, 2017

The Honorable Chris Collins
1117 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Collins:

On behalf of the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association (CLWA), I am writing to request that you oppose budget cuts to programs that promote and protect clean water in the Finger Lakes and Great Lakes regions. CLWA represents over 1,000 members that support the goal of maintaining a healthy watershed and clean water for the 70,000 people who get their daily drinking water from Canandaigua Lake.

Your 27th Congressional District is blessed with several of the Finger Lakes, including a significant portion of Canandaigua Lake. We depend on your efforts in Washington, and from our State representatives to support protection of our lake through a number of important approaches including: wetland protection, nutrient management initiatives, implementation of best management practices, water quality research, education and outreach, and restoration of areas critical to water quality protection. Federal programs assist the Finger Lakes region with wetland projects and reduce the threats caused by sediment and nutrient runoff from development, logging and agriculture - all influenced by steep slopes that line our lakes. Excessive nutrient loading has been a contributing factor of the unprecedented blue green algae blooms the past two years in Canandaigua Lake and neighboring Finger Lakes. The algal bloom in 2015 closed public beaches and raised serious health concerns. These harmful algal blooms (HABS) also threaten economic vitality of the Finger Lakes region due to the negative impact on tourism and the potential to negatively influence property values. More importantly, harmful algal blooms can create real public health issues as witnessed on neighboring Owasco Lake last summer. Given the unprecedented nature of water quality threats observed in Canandaigua Lake and other Finger Lakes, support of water quality protection measures are needed now, more than ever.

The mission of Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association is to protect the water quality and overall environment of the Canandaigua Lake watershed for future generations by applying scientific research, advocating sound public policy, and offering educational programs to the community. We believe that clean water is not a partisan issue and that protection of water quality is important for economic vitality, recreation, and public health within your 27th Congressional District. We need your support and will gladly share your response with our membership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wade Sarkis". The signature is written over a horizontal line that extends to the right.

Wade Sarkis, President
Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association

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