Dear Senator:

The undersigned organizations urge your support of several proposed environmental amendments to the Senate Ways and Means FY2015 budget. We thank the Senate Ways and Means Committee for its work on the budget, but overall the environmental agencies are still receiving well below the funding allocated to them prior to the recession.

In FY2009, at approximately $230M, the entire environmental operating budget made up 0.84% of the Commonwealth’s overall operating budget. Today, although the Commonwealth’s economy is bouncing back, the Senate Ways and Means FY2015 budget provides just $209.8M for environmental programs, which equates to a mere 0.59% of the Commonwealth’s overall operating budget. The current funding level does not provide adequate resources to critical programs that protect the environment and public health. As noted in this year’s Green Budget, relatively small investments in state environmental programs promote savings for small businesses, leverage millions of dollars in federal and other non-state funds, and support our green economy.

Please sign on as a co-sponsor to the following amendments:

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**
Department of Environmental Protection Administration (line-item 2200-0100): Sen. Eldridge
Restores DEP's main line-item to 93% of its FY2009 level by providing an increase of $5.2M. This partial restoration would help DEP protect public health, permit new development in a timely manner, and ensure that our air and water are clean. Although the Senate Ways and Means budget provides a small increase over FY2014 for this line-item, its budget still provides approximately 20% less funding than in FY2009.

➤ To co-sponsor, please contact: Minney.Varghese@masenate.gov

Restores $400,000 for recycling programs. Since FY2009, funding for recycling has been cut by more than 80%. Recycling has proven to be a job creator, and we are missing opportunities by not providing sufficient funding for these programs. Increasing funding for this line-item will help DEP fully implement the recently revised Solid Waste Master Plan.

➤ To co-sponsor, please contact: Catherine.Anderson@masenate.gov

Hazardous Waste Cleanup Program (line-item 2260-8870): Sen. Downing
Restores $2.7M to the program to bring funding to the FY2009 funding level. Program staff oversee clean-up of many heavily polluted sites and promote economic development through the Brownfields Support Team that provides focused technical assistance for sites with important redevelopment potential. While the Senate Ways and Means budget provides an increase over FY2014, the agency is still 17% below its FY2009 funding level.

➤ To co-sponsor, please contact: Christopher.Gilrein@masenate.gov
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION
State Parks & Recreation (line-item 2810-0100): Sen. Rush
Restores $3.97M to our state and urban park system to bring the line-item to $45.6M. Since FY2009, funding for our state parks, forest, and beaches has been cut 27%, resulting in unmaintained and closed facilities, shorter seasons, and a lack of staff for programs and enforcement. The Senate Ways and Means budget provides $929,600 less funding for our state parks than in FY2014. While not fully restoring funding to FY2009 levels of $56M, this increase would help provide for open, staffed, well-maintained facilities, which support the Commonwealth's $10B outdoor recreation economy.
➢ To co-sponsor, please contact: John.Regan@masenate.gov

DCR Seasonals (line-item 2800-0501): Sen. Timilty
Restores approximately $570,800 to DCR Seasonal Staffing which would bring this line item closer to FY2009 levels. This funding will allow DCR to add staff and lengthen the season at various facilities around the Commonwealth such as beaches and pools. While the Senate Ways and Means budget did increase funding for seasonal staff, this line-item is still $1.77M less than in FY2009.
➢ To co-sponsor, please contact: Elizabeth.Broda@masenate.gov

Watershed Management (line-item 2800-0101): Sen. Brownsberger
Restores approximately $435,000 to the Watershed Management program to bring it back to about 70% of its FY2009 level of $2.1M. The Office of Watershed Management is crucial to managing and protecting the drinking water supply in the Commonwealth.
➢ To co-sponsor, please contact: Andrew.Bettinelli@masenate.gov

Stormwater Management (line-item 2800-0401): Sen. Eldridge
Restores funding by approximately $487,000, returning Stormwater Management funding to 82% of its FY2009 level of $1.1M. Since FY2009, this program has been cut by 63%. Stormwater runoff poses a serious pollution threat to all water bodies in the Commonwealth.
➢ To co-sponsor, please contact: Minney.Varghese@masenate.gov

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
Division of Ecological Restoration (line-item 2300-0101): Sen. Wolf
Increases funding for river protection by $156,000. DER restores and protects the Commonwealth’s rivers, wetlands, and watersheds for the benefit of people and the environment. At any given time, DER staff typically support over 70 restoration projects that improve stream flow, protect drinking water, reduce flooding, restore habitat, and provide fish passage. DER’s ability to leverage non-state funds through federal grants is to be commended, and a small investment in this program will pay dividends.
➢ To co-sponsor, please contact: Katie.Barry@malegislature.gov

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
DAR Administration (line-item 2511-0100): Sen. Pacheco
Restores approximately $500,000 to this line-item, which would bring funding up to the FY2009 level. DAR performs crucial work with the agricultural community to protect farmland and keep farms viable. With additional funds, DAR could expand programs to promote energy efficiency and environmental best management practices.
➢ To co-sponsor, please contact: Kyle.Murray@masenate.gov
ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE
GIS to Support Communities (new line-item: 1599-xxxx): Sen. Michael Moore
Provides $350,000 in funding for a new line-item for MassGIS to expand operations, better plan for climate change, provide increased technical assistance, and identify sustainable development opportunities in the Commonwealth.
➢ To co-sponsor, please contact: Julia.DelSobral@masenate.gov

We urge the Senate to adequately fund protection of natural resources and public health. Please call Erica Mattison at the Environmental League of Massachusetts at 617-742-2553 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Environmental League of Massachusetts
Appalachian Mountain Club
Arborway Coalition
Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC)
Berkshire Natural Resources Council
Boston Cyclists Union
Boston Harbor Island Alliance
Boston Park Advocates
Buzzards Bay Coalition
Charles River Conservancy
Charles River Watershed Association
Clean Water Action MA
Conservation Law Foundation
Emerald Necklace Conservancy
Environment Mass
Environmental Business Council
Esplanade Association
Essex County Greenbelt Association
Franklin Land Trust
Franklin Park Coalition
Friends of Alewife Reservation
Friends of the Blue Hills
Green Decade Newton
Hilltown Anti-Herbicide Coalition
Jones River Watershed Association
Lakes & Ponds Association of Western Massachusetts
Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust
Mass Audubon
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions
Massachusetts Climate Action Network
Massachusetts Congress of Lake and Pond Associations
Massachusetts Energy Consumers Alliance
Massachusetts Horticultural Society
Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition
Massachusetts Organization of State Engineers and Scientists (MOSES)
Massachusetts Rivers Alliance
Massachusetts Sierra Club
Mystic River Watershed Association
Nashua River Watershed Association
Neponset River Watershed Association
New England Wild Flower Society
North and South Rivers Watershed Association
OARS: For the Assabet, Sudbury and Concord Rivers
Save the Harbor/Save the Bay
Sudbury Valley Trustees
Tatnuck Brook Watershed Association
The Nature Conservancy - Massachusetts
The Trustees of Reservations