February 13, 2020

New York Water Environment Association Selects Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz to Receive Frank E. Van Lare Award

Syracuse – The New York Water Environment Association (NYWEA), a statewide organization of water quality management professionals, has awarded Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz its annual Frank E. Van Lare Award in recognition of his leadership of Erie County and investments in infrastructure to improve environmental quality. This award will be officially presented to him during the Greater Buffalo Environmental Conference, hosted by NYWEA’s Western Chapter on Tuesday, March 10.

Erie County Sewer Districts have invested tens of millions during the eight (8) years of Mr. Poloncarz’s leadership, including: the Rush Creek Interceptor Project, investing $16 million to eliminate several facilities and three (3) SSOs inherited from other municipalities; a multi-phase plan to mitigate overflows inherited from the Village of Hamburg; and Initiatives for a Smart Economy (I4SE) 2.0, a document setting forth County Executive Poloncarz’s vision for economic progress in Erie County. Additionally, under the County Executive’s leadership, the Western New York Stormwater Coalition has advanced key public education, technological (GIS mapping), and collaborative efforts to address USEPA Phase II stormwater regulations. County Executive Poloncarz also signed into law a local ban on products containing microbeads in 2015 – the first local law of its kind in the state and a harbinger to federal action on microplastics. County Executive Poloncarz has also been a leader on addressing the potential impacts of climate change, including on water quality and quantity. He issued Executive Orders regarding “Enforcement of the Paris Climate Agreement” for County operations and "Creation of a

MORE
Continued…NYWEA Van Lare Award

Community Climate Change Task Force. In 2018, Poloncarz was named the first chairman of NYSAC’s Climate Resiliency Committee.

The County Executive has also led efforts in Erie County to address proper disposal of household hazardous wastes, the Buffalo River “Area of Concern,” and in transforming what was once the fourth largest steel plant in the world from a vacant/blighted brownfield to a vibrant place for business.

The Frank E. Van Lare Award was created to recognize the outstanding contributions and commitment of an elected official for exceptional support of environmental projects, programs and initiatives, with the major focus on water resources, wastewater facilities and water quality preservation development. The award was named for a Monroe County resident and local elected official, Frank E. Van Lare, former Rochester City Councilman and New York State Senator, in recognition of his contribution to the development of the State Pure Waters Program.

About NYWEA: Founded in 1929 by professionals in the field of water quality as a nonprofit educational organization, NYWEA has 2,700 members statewide and hosts several technical conferences each year for environmental engineers, scientists, public officials and others who work in water and wastewater quality management. In addition, NYWEA sponsors a scholarship program, publishes Clear Waters, a quarterly educational magazine, and administers the wastewater operator certification program. NYWEA also supports humanitarian clean water projects. Headquartered in Syracuse, NYWEA has seven regional chapters, 14 college student chapters and is a Member Association of the international Water Environment Federation. For more information, visit www.nywea.org.

###