

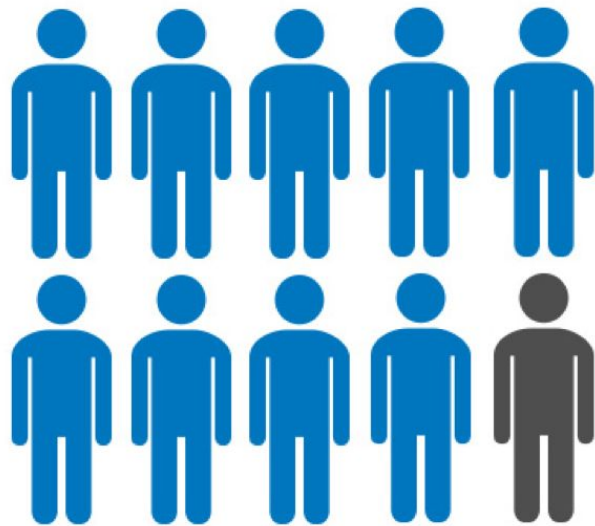


# Keeping Our Water Systems Public

Mary Grant  
Public Water for All Campaign Director  
March 27, 2025



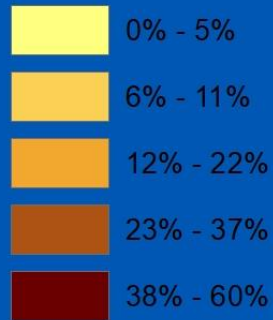
# **Water Privatization Overview**



Nearly  
**9 out of 10 people**  
in the U.S. receive their water service from  
**a publicly owned utility.**

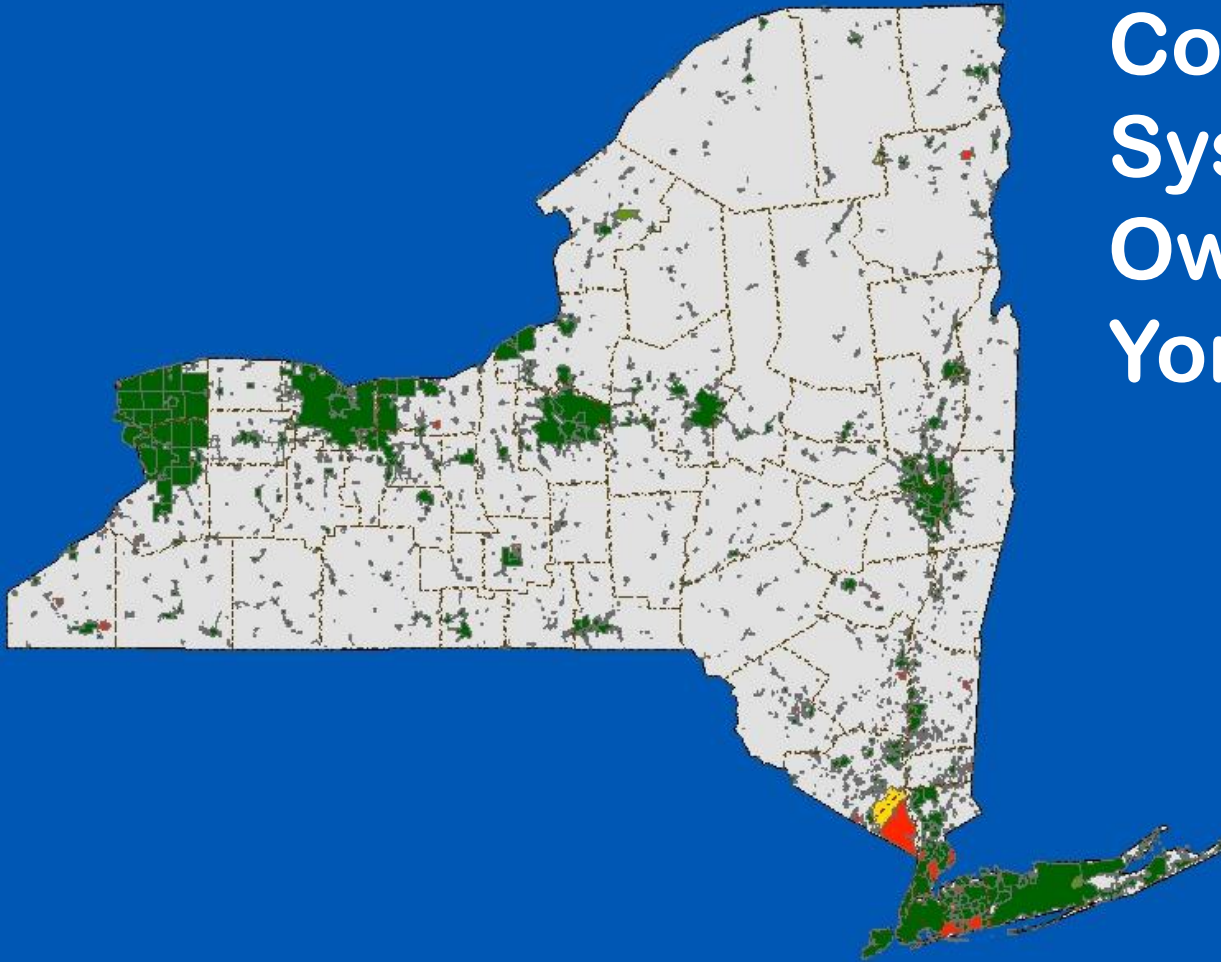
PUBLIC  
WATER  
**PREVAILS**  
IN THE  
UNITED  
STATES

## Population with Private Ownership



**FOOD & WATER WATCH**

# Community Water System Ownership in New York State



## Legend

- Local government
- Federal government
- Native American
- State government
- Public/Private
- Private

Source: EPA, Safe Drinking Water Federal Information System, March 25, 2025

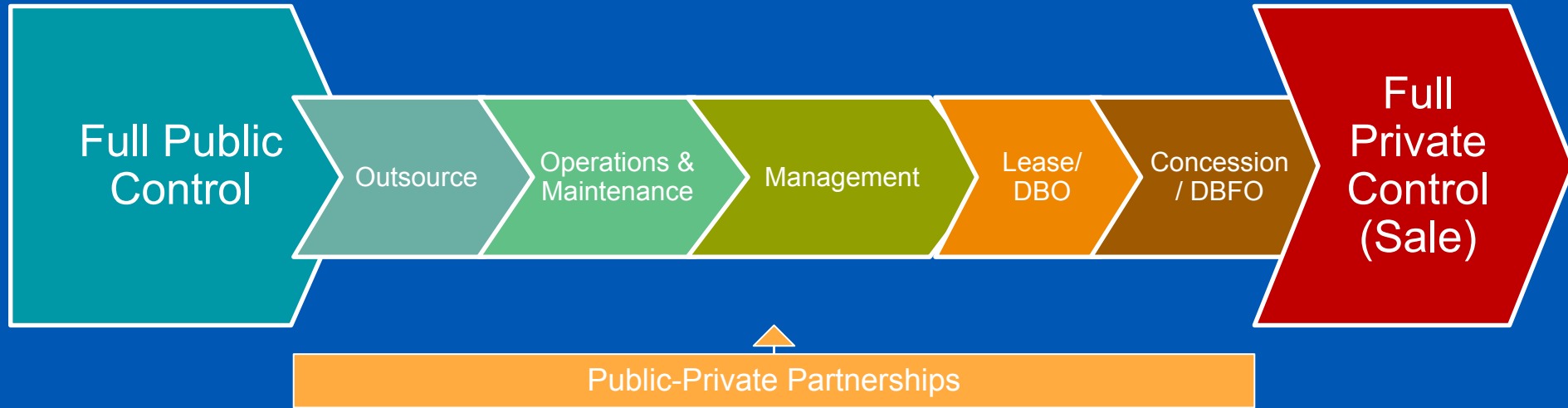




# Benefits of Public Control

- ❑ Control of water investments and programs
- ❑ Smart growth & regional stormwater planning
- ❑ Watershed protection and conservation
- ❑ Long-term water resource management
- ❑ Transparency
- ❑ Ballot-box accountability

# Types of Privatization



# Key Risks

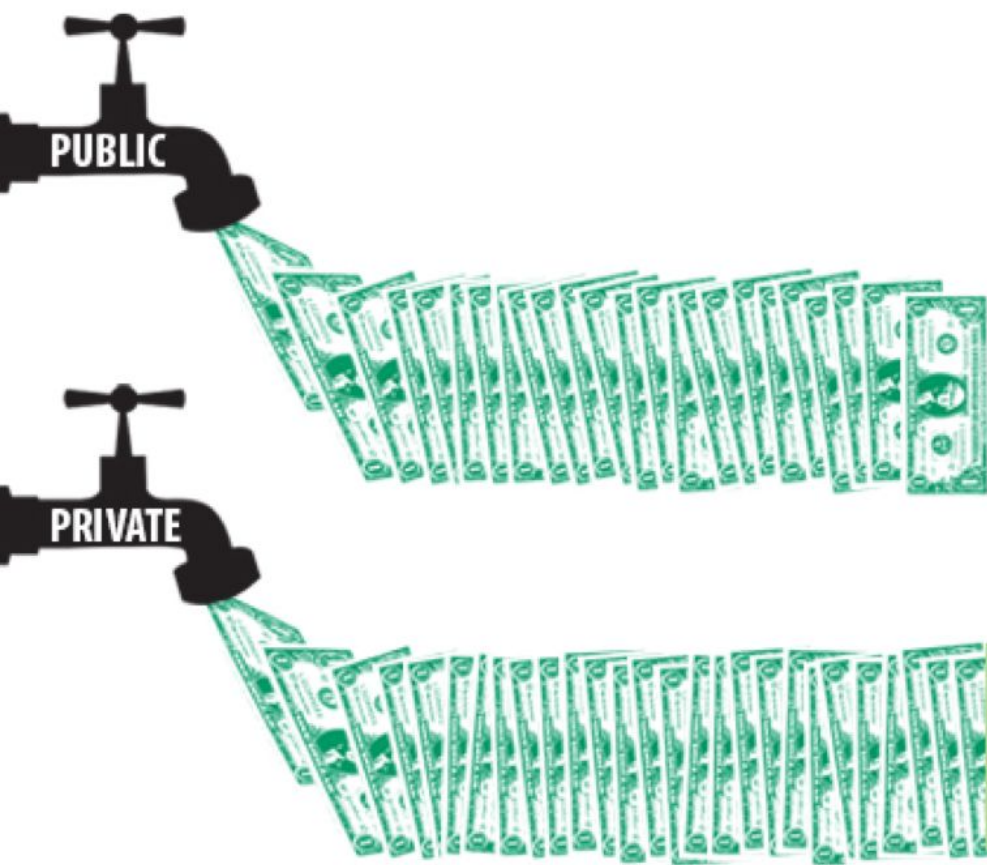




Residents defeated water privatization in Atlantic City, 2017

# Loss of Local Control

- ❑ Lost public accountability
- ❑ Lost access to information



For the typical household,  
privately owned  
water utility service  
**costs 59% more**  
than public water service —  
**about \$185**  
**each year.**

# Rate Impact of Private Ownership

**What factors lead to higher water prices in US cities?**

Private Water  
Ownership

State Regulation  
favorable to  
Private Providers

Severe Drought

Aging  
infrastructure

**What factors lead to less water affordability for low-income families?**

Poverty

Private Water  
Ownership

Aging  
Infra.

# Profit Motive



**\$5 Billion Rate  
Base (55%  
Equity + 45%  
Debt)**

**Equity  
(\$2.8B)**



**9.6%**



**Profit**

# Threats & Corporate Strategies



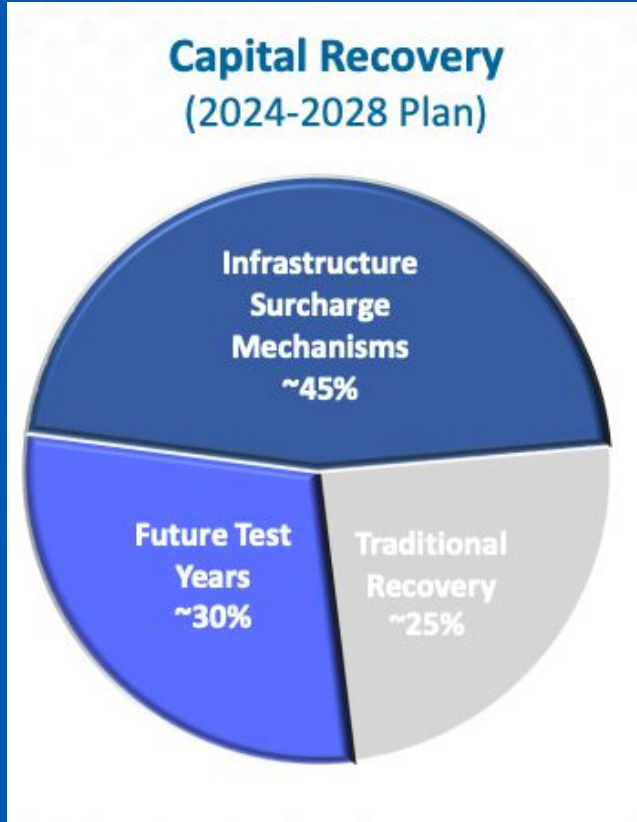


# Key Corporate Targets

- ❑ Cash-strapped Communities
- ❑ Sewer systems
- ❑ Tuck-ins
- ❑ Corporate-friendly state rules



# Corporate Legislation



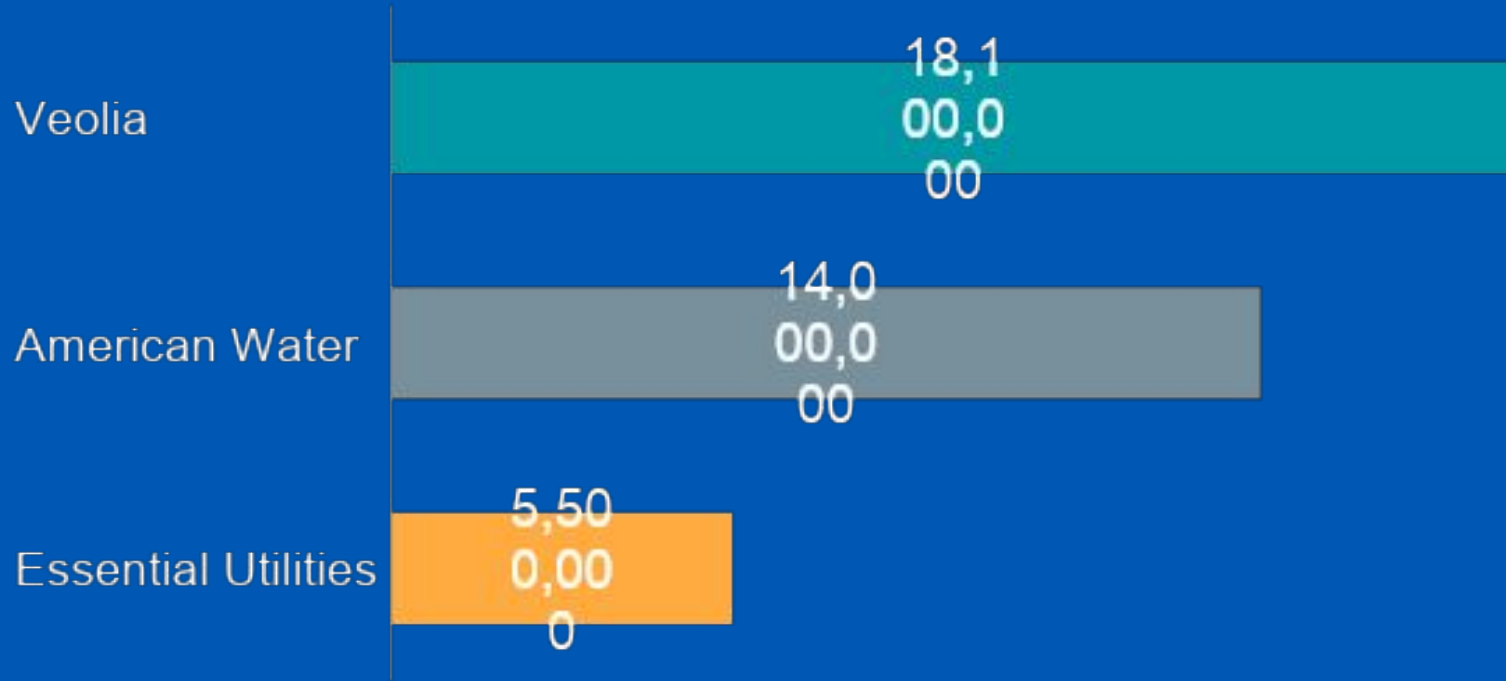
- Fair market value legislation (WIPA)
- Removing referendum requirements (WIPA)
- Water Quality Accountability Act
- Surcharges (e.g., DSIC, RESIC)
- Consolidated water, wastewater rate bases

# Warning Signs

- ❑ Infrastructure Issues
  - ❑ Consent decrees
  - ❑ PFAS
- ❑ Budget Deficits
  - ❑ Anti-tax sentiment
- ❑ Mayor's politics, activities
  - ❑ Privatization champions



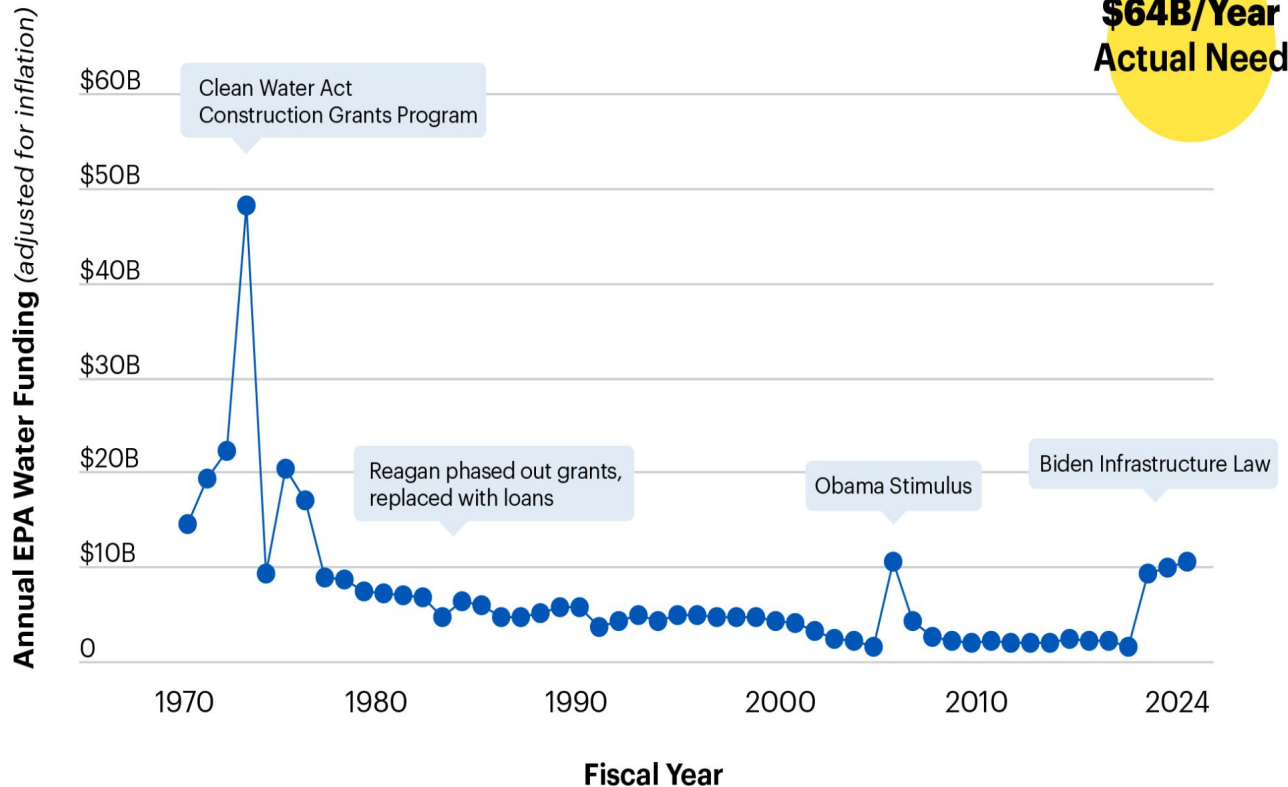
# Top Three Corporate Players



# Current Federal **Water** Outlook



## EPA Water Funding Has Plummeted Over the Last 50 Years, Far Below What We Need



Federal support for clean water has fallen **77 percent** since its peak in the late 1970s.

# Musk-Trump Threats

- ❑ Illegally freezing and cutting water funds
- ❑ Eliminating core functions of the EPA
- ❑ Eliminating low-cost government borrowing



Stephen Moore ✓  
@StephenMoore · Follow



## An Easy Way to Save \$250 Billion

Instead of adding new taxes or extending costly deductions, Congress should consider closing the state and local bond loophole.

The Senate Finance Committee estimates this could generate \$250 billion over 10 years.

Currently, the [Show more](#)

**Eliminate Exclusion of Interest on State a**  
**\$250 billion in 10-year savings**

**VIABILITY: HIGH / MEDIUM / LOW**

- Interest earned on municipal bonds is This option would end the exclusion, r taxable.





# Solutions



# Community Organizing to Protect Public Water!

# The **WATER** Act

- ❑ Creates a **Trust Fund** for safe and clean water
- ❑ Provides **full funding**
- ❑ Supports **public** systems, **household** wells and septics, and **schools**



**Water is a human right.**



---

[foodandwaterwatch.org](https://foodandwaterwatch.org)