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## **Sierra Club Endorses Mikie Sherrill for U.S. Congress**

The New Jersey Sierra Club will be announcing our endorsement of Mikie Sherrill for New Jersey's 11th Congressional District. Naval Academy graduate, Navy Pilot and former federal prosecutor – Mikie Sherrill is running for Congress to fight back against Donald Trump and to fight for our future.

“We are proud to announce our endorsement of Mikie Sherrill for New Jersey's 11th Congressional District. We need a congressperson who will stand up to the environment here and across the country and we believe Mikie will do just that. She will support legislation that will create green jobs and protect our air and water in New Jersey. She will oppose new oil and offshore drilling. She will also support climate smart strategies rather than high carbon or dirty fuels systems to tackle climate change,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “We believe she will be an environmental leader and champion for the people of her district. Mikie will fight for New Jersey's environment, public health, and economy and we fully endorse her for U.S Congress in the 2018 election.”

The 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District currently contains portions of Essex, Morris, Passaic, and Sussex county and inclusive of 54 municipalities.

"As a mother of four young children, I am deeply concerned about the direction of our country and the world they inherit. I want to build the brightest possible future for them and for the people of the 11th Congressional District. We can't do this unless we face climate change head on and take immediate action to protect our planet," **said Mikie Sherrill.** "This administration and Republican leaders in Congress are putting our future at risk by feeding us a false choice between creating jobs, fighting climate change, and keeping our air and water clean. Here in New Jersey, we know that investing in clean energy technology will make our state stronger. I am proud to have the endorsement of the Sierra Club and look forward to bringing new leadership to Washington to protect our planet and grow the clean energy economy here in New Jersey."

“The Sierra Club endorsed Mikie Sherrill because she understands that many politicians beholden to powerful corporate polluters are creating a false choice between creating jobs, fighting climate change, and keeping our air and water clean. They have rolled-back dozens of environmental protections that safeguard our drinking water, preserve our air quality, and keep our kids healthy. The Club has confidence that Sherrill's experience as a former federal prosecutor will help in our

efforts to enforce environmental regulations and protect both the public and environment,” **said Rich Isaac, Chapter Chair of the New Jersey Sierra Club.**

President Trump has been attacking the environment daily, rolling back one thing after another. His budget proposal for fiscal 2019 contains a 30 percent cut to funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). There will be \$5 billion cut from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grants, which will end projects that protect us from storm surges and sea level rise. At the same time, the budget would eliminate \$250 million in additional funding for coastal research, which helps identify areas at risk to flooding and storm surges. \$1.59 billion will be also be eliminated from Climate Fund and Global Climate Change Initiative. By slashing funding and jobs, it will directly impact New Jersey by removing oversight and inspections on regulations. Trump has pulled the U.S. out of the Paris Accords, making us the only country to do so. His rollbacks eliminate programs to do climate change, clean energy and conservation work and 2017 set a record of \$306 billion worth of damage from extreme weather events. Trump’s Interior Department Secretary Zinke supports opening our public lands to fracking and coasts to offshore drilling as well as privatizing national parks. They’ve eliminated protections for national monuments, including 90% of Bears Ears in Utah to allow for uranium and coal mining. While they’ve removed the plastic bottle ban in national parks, the administration has doubled entrance fees. They’ve gotten rid of the Clean Power Plan, Waters of the United States Rule, and the Methane Rule. They cut funding for the Superfund Program by 30 percent, the Office of Science by 50 percent and eliminated the Office of Environmental Justice. They’ve removed rules that protect against sewer discharge, air pollution, coal ash dumping, and more. Part of their Drill Baby, Drill plan includes opening up areas from ANWAR to New Jersey for offshore drilling. There isn’t a single subject that hasn’t been negatively impacted by the Trump Administration.

“Under President Trump’s orders, scientists are gagged and governmental agencies can’t even say words ‘climate change,’ while they rollback programs for resiliency. We believe Mikie will fight against Trump’s rollbacks on environmental protections. Trump’s proposal to more than double entry fees at 17 of the most popular parks during the summer months will make America’s public lands a gated community for just the elites. A daily pass at Sandy Hook National Park or the Delaware Water Gap would cost \$70 per vehicle. Mikie will stand up to the Department of Interior and make sure our national park fees will not double. The one area where the Trump Administration is succeeding is hurting the environment and making U.S. more vulnerable to climate impacts”, **said Tittel.** “We need someone to lead against Trump’s rollbacks and we believe Mikie is the person to do it. She will fight back on getting rid of important environmental programs like to the Superfund Program and the Chemical Safety board. We need to protect our parks like the Great Swamp from privatization or the Delaware Water Gap from fracking. We need our shores to be protected from offshore drilling. We believe Mikie will save our parks and our shore from drilling. We believe she will make Congress uphold the law and the Trump Administration to enforce protections for clean air, water, and climate change”

There is an open seat for the 11<sup>th</sup> District since Congressman Frelinghuysen will not be running for re-election. This is an opportunity for the district to vote for someone who will represent their constituents and protect the region’s natural resources. President Trump’s budget cuts to the EPA means less funding to states, which will disrupt water quality testing at toxic sites, while stopping efforts to clean up our water supply and retrofit lead pipes. The EPA’s Clean Water State Revolving Fund for water and sewer projects could be cut as well. This fund deals with water quality infrastructure projects to improve our clean drinking water. Cuts to the Superfund program

means that Superfund sites like Pompton Lakes will not be cleaned-up. These sites could be leaking contamination into our groundwater and communities. The 11<sup>th</sup> district is also located in the Highlands Region. This is the most environmentally sensitive area of the region. It is home to 880,000 acres of forest and is a major source of drinking water for up to 6 million people that includes pristine trout streams, and reservoirs. The drinking water is important for the environment and the economy of the area.

“Given his record, it makes sense that Congressman Frelinghuysen is not running for office again. He’s leaving because he can’t defend his record and won’t even meet with his constituents. Frelinghuysen has sold out the environment and the people of his district. The 11<sup>th</sup> district needs someone who will protect this region’s environmentally sensitive areas. We need someone who will help the 400 families that have been impacted by the toxic contamination at the former Dupont site in Pompton Lakes. We need a congressperson who will protect the Highlands that provides drinking water for millions of people and is home to the thousands of acres of forest. We need someone who will protect vital streams and water against unnecessary development that will only make flooding and water pollution worse in the region. We need a congressperson who will focus on environmental justice issues because many communities in New Jersey have a disproportionate burden from pollution,” **said Tittel.** “Frelinghuysen had a terrible environmental record but some of the people running for the republican nomination are even worse. Just like Frelinghuysen, they are cronies of Christie’s and in lock step with President Trump’s war on the environment. We believe Mikie Sherrill will step up and represent the people of New Jersey. We are confident that she is the best candidate who will clean up and protect her district.”

The Sierra Club is the nation’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization with over 1,000,000 members nationwide. The Sierra Club traces its roots to 1892, when noted conservationist John Muir founded the organization. Muir is widely credited with influencing President Theodore Roosevelt to create the nation’s first national parks. The Sierra Club boasts an estimated 20,000 members in New Jersey, the tenth largest of the organization’s 65 chapters in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

“Mikie Sherril has promised to tackle climate change by supporting bold action to reduce carbon pollution. She is dedicated to defending the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act by opposing new oil and gas drilling on public lands. She also agreed to support climate smart strategies rather than high carbon or dirty fuels systems. She will help strengthen the growing clean energy economy and support family sustaining union jobs,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “The Sierra Club supports Mikie Sherrill for Congress. We need to elect Mikie so she can represent and protect the environment and the people of New Jersey. We believe she will become an important congresswoman who will protect the people and the environment on a state and national level.”

*The Sierra Club is not only the nation's oldest and largest environmental group, but one of the most influential when it comes to making political endorsements. As Tittel describes it, "The Sierra Club endorsement is the green version of the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval."*