

March 2, 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
361-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Funding Levels for Safe and Clean Water Programs in the FY11 Continuing Budget Resolution

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

As organizations concerned with the improvement of the nation's water quality, we are writing to urge you to reject the drastic spending cuts to drinking water, wastewater and water quality programs included in H.R. 1, the House passed spending bill to fund the federal government for the remainder of this fiscal year. Instead we ask for your support of continuing these programs at the annualized levels included in the Administration's Fiscal Year 2011 budget proposal. Specifically, we urge you to fund the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) at a \$2.0 billion annualized level, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund at a \$1.287 billion annualized level, the Clean Water Act Section 106 program at a \$274 million annualized level, and the Clean Water Act Section 319 program at a \$200 million annualized level. If H.R. 1 were to pass in its current form states would see drastic reductions in funding for needed water programs including the CWSRF and DWSRF. To provide the scope of these reductions, and their potential impacts to your state, we have attached two documents for your review.

It is well documented that our nation's water quality is reaching a tipping point. The American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE) latest infrastructure report card gave the nation's water infrastructure a grade of D-, the lowest of any category. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates a \$633 billion shortfall in water infrastructure funding over the next 20 years. Each day the nation suffers significant losses and damages from broken water and sewer mains, sewage overflows, and other symptoms of water infrastructure that is reaching the end of its useful life.

At the same time, investments in water infrastructure provide significant economic benefits. The U.S. Conference of Mayors notes that each public dollar invested in water infrastructure increases private long-term GDP output by \$6.35. A dollar invested in water infrastructure creates more jobs than in any other type of infrastructure. In addition, the Department of Commerce estimates that each job created in the local water and sewer industry creates 3.68 jobs in the national economy and each public dollar spent yields \$2.62 dollars in economic output in other industries.

For these reasons, it is critical the federal government remains a reliable partner in meeting the nation's clean water needs. This funding represents a fraction of what state and local governments invest annually and is highly productive in the American economy with substantial returns in the form of jobs, economic growth and competitiveness while safeguarding the environment, public health, and quality of life for countless Americans. Thank you for your consideration of our request and if you have any questions or would like more information about any of these programs, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Ken Kirk
Executive Director
National Association of Clean Water Agencies



Diane VanDeHei
Executive Director
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies



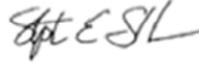
Alexandra Dunn
Executive Director
ASIWPCA



Jeffrey A. Eger
Executive Director
Water Environment Foundation

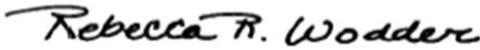


Peter King
Executive Director
American Public Works Association



C:\My Documents\PKING.BMP

E. Sandherr
Chief Executive Officer
Associated General Contractors of America



Rebecca Wodder
President
American Rivers



Bruce D'Agostino
President and CEO
CMAA



Patrick J. Natale, P.E., F.ASCE, CAE
Executive Director
American Society of Civil Engineers



Allen Blakey
Vice President, Industry and Government Affairs
The Vinyl Institute



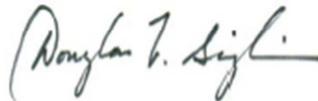
Gordon Robertson
American Sportfishing Association
Vice President, Government Affairs



Catherine Smith
Executive Director
California Association of Sanitation Agencies



Timothy H. Quinn
Executive Director
Association of California Water Agencies



Doug Siglin
Federal Affairs Director
Chesapeake Bay Foundation

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James D. Taft". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "J".

James D. Taft
Executive Director
Association of State Drinking Water Administrators

Enclosures

CC: All Members of the United States Senate