

March 16, 2018

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Subcommittee Appropriations on Energy and
Water Development
U.S. Senate
184 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Subcommittee Appropriations on Energy and
Water Development
U.S. Senate
188 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chairman
Subcommittee Appropriations on Energy and
Water Development, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member
Subcommittee Appropriations on Energy and
Water Development, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: FY19 appropriations for the Bureau of Reclamation Title XVI water recycling program

Dear Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Feinstein, Chairman Simpson, and Ranking Member Kaptur:

As stakeholders representing utilities, public works, and other entities that rely on and provide clean and safe water daily to American households, businesses, farmers and other institutions, we urge you to reject any proposed spending cut to the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) Title XVI water recycling program in the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 budget request for the U.S. Department of the Interior. Water recycling is a reliable and critical tool that communities throughout the arid West are using to meet their water supply needs. It is critical that Congress ensures the agency remains a partner in these vital projects by funding the only federal program specifically designed to support municipal water reuse and recycling projects at \$60 million for FY19.

The Reclamation's Title XVI water recycling program is a highly successful federal cost-share program that since 1992 has invested \$692 million in direct spending while leveraging at least an additional \$2.07 billion of local investment to provide a sustainable long-term reliable supply of water for residents and businesses. Currently, seventeen communities in Arizona, California, Kansas, Nevada, Oklahoma, and Texas facing serious water supply challenges have been approved by Congress to receive nearly \$270 million in Title XVI funding to help them complete critical water recycling projects. In addition to these authorized projects, 41 newly approved water reuse projects are also eligible for Title XVI funding due to program revisions Congress enacted in the 2016 Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act. If Congress does not reject the Administration's drastic cuts to the program, ratepayers in these communities could face significant increases in project costs along with an increased risk of inadequate water supply.

Recycled water is a drought-proof, secure source of water that provides potable and non-potable water for residential, commercial, agriculture and industrial customers. For regions experiencing both water quality and quantity challenges, beneficially reusing water rather than discharging it helps communities improve surface and groundwater quality, optimize freshwater sources for drinking water supply, protect agricultural water supplies, and provide for environmental resiliency while ensuring continued economic growth. For example, the State of Idaho, which has been permitting water recycling facilities since 1989, recycles more than 6 billion gallons of water annually, 75% of which is used by agricultural operations for irrigation and food processing. Idaho's agricultural industry contributes an average of \$27 billion annually to the State's economy. Further, Idaho's adoption of water recycling practices has prevented over 2,000 tons of nitrogen and 500 tons of phosphorus from being discharged into the State's pristine waters.

According to a 2015 municipal wastewater recycling survey, California, which recently emerged from a 10-year drought and potentially faces another extended period of drought, recycles over 230 billion gallons of water annually to meet potable and non-potable water supply needs – and Title XVI has been critical to this effort. For example, the Title XVI Program provided \$20 million in initial support for the Orange County Water District's Groundwater Replenishment System (GRWS), the world's largest potable water reuse facility. Since it began operation a decade ago, GRWS has supplied more than 245 billion gallons of ultra-pure water and by 2023 it will supply enough potable water for 1 million people daily. Moreover, California has significant additional potential to increase the use of recycled water as a reliable source of water supply that also reduces reliance on imported water, particularly in the southern region of the state. Many other states in the West are also engaging in significant water recycling efforts through support from Title XVI. For example, in Reclamation's Oklahoma-Kansas-Texas region, 19 water recycling construction projects, feasibility and research studies totaling \$5.8 million were cost shared by Title XVI during the previous seven years.

Water recycling is critical for communities throughout the West to ensure a safe and sustainable supply of water and Title XVI is key to their efforts. We understand the importance of an "all of the above" strategy for developing safe and secure water supplies for the future of the West, which should include a mix of demand management and supply enhancement actions. Part of that mix is a properly funded Title XVI Program.

We urge you to reject the Administration's underfunded Budget Request for the Title XVI Program and to provide \$60 million in FY19 for this important and valuable program.

Sincerely,

Associations and Organizations

American Public Works Association

American Water Works Association

Association of California Water Agencies
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
California Association of Sanitation Agencies
California Municipal Utilities Association
Family Farm Alliance
National Association of Clean Water Agencies
National Rural Water Association
National Water Resources Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc.
US Water Alliance
Water and Wastewater Equipment Manufacturers Association
Water Environment Federation
WaterReuse Association
Western Coalition of Arid States
Western Urban Water Coalition
Woodard & Curran

Utilities

Town of Marana Water Department (AZ)
City of Pismo Beach (CA)
City of Pleasanton (CA)
Dublin San Ramon Services District (CA)
Eastern Municipal Water District (CA)
Irvine Ranch Water District (CA)
Las Virgenes - Triunfo Joint Powers Authority (CA)

Mesa Water District (CA)

Orange County Sanitation District (CA)

Orange County Water District (CA)

Otay Water District (CA)

Palmdale Water District (CA)

Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (CA)

San Diego County Water Authority (CA)

Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (CA)

Santa Fe Irrigation District (CA)

Sonoma County Water Agency (CA)

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (CA)

City of Henderson (NV)

Clark County Water Reclamation District (NV)

Southern Nevada Water Authority (NV)

Clean Water Services (OR)