

January 10, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
US Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
US Senate
Washington, DC

RE: Water Infrastructure Investment Needs

Dear Congressional Leaders,

The undersigned organizations write to urge Congress to include funding and financing for drinking water, wastewater, water reuse and stormwater infrastructure in any infrastructure package considered during the 116th Congress. Given the well-documented needs of our nation's aging water infrastructure, an infrastructure package represents an excellent opportunity to provide necessary resources to meet long-term economic, public health and environmental goals.

The U.S. EPA estimates that America's water and wastewater infrastructure requires nearly \$750 billion worth of investment over the next 20 years just to maintain current levels of service, and independent estimates place this figure over \$1 trillion. Local ratepayers will shoulder much of this burden, but all levels of government must be part of the solution.

Aging infrastructure replacement needs account for much of the investment gap. In addition, federal regulatory requirements over the last three decades have steadily grown to account for a significant portion of the cost associated with investment needs. While federal contributions to transportation infrastructure have stayed constant at approximately half of total capital spending, federal investment in water infrastructure has declined from 63% to 9% since 1977.

America's future economic strength depends on investments made today in water infrastructure. These investments create jobs and support the economy. Every \$1 invested in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure increases long-term GDP by \$6.35, creates 1.6 new jobs, and provides \$23.00 in public health-related benefits. These new jobs in the water sector are also high-paying (~\$64,000/year), skilled, and largely recession proof since many are in municipal government. Studies also show that the US economy would stand to gain over \$200 billion in annual economic activity and 1.3 million jobs over a 10-year period by meeting its current water infrastructure needs. Without these investments, breakdowns in water supply, treatment and wastewater capacity are projected to cost manufacturers and other businesses over \$7.5 trillion in lost sales and \$4.1 trillion in lost GDP from 2011 to 2040.

In a recent survey of American's opinions on the value of investing in our water resources, 78% of respondents said it's "extremely or very important" that the President and Congress develop a plan to rebuild America's water infrastructure. The same survey found that 88% of respondents agreed that increased federal investment was needed to rebuild water infrastructure.

As Congress develops a comprehensive infrastructure proposal, we urge you to remember that water infrastructure is often co-located with transportation infrastructure, such as roadways and bridges. When roadways are dug up or bridges rebuilt, it would be less expensive to rehabilitate water lines at that point in time instead of digging them up again.

In addition, the cost of water service to low-income customers is an increasing concern and the U.S. federal contributions to water infrastructure finance help local utilities cushion the costs of water service to customers.

Our nation has faced many challenges over the last two centuries, but through collaboration and perseverance we have found solutions. Our organizations applaud Congress for its past efforts to take action to address the nation's infrastructure challenges. We strongly encourage you to include water infrastructure as a major component of the infrastructure package in 2019.

Sincerely,

Agribusiness & Water Council of Arizona
Alabama Water Environment Association
American Council of Engineering Companies
American Membrane Technology Association
American Public Works Association
American Rivers
American Society of Civil Engineers
American Sustainable Business Council
American Water Works Association
Arizona Water Association
Arkansas Water Environment Association
Association of California Water Agencies
Association of Clean Water Administrators
Associated General Contractors of America
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
Association of Regional Water Organizations
Association of State Drinking Water Administrators
California Association of Sanitation Agencies
California Water Environment Association
Central States Water Environment Association
Clean Water Action
Chesapeake Water Environment Association

Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania
Colorado Wastewater Utility Council
Connecticut Association of Water Pollution Control Associations
Connecticut Water Pollution Abatement Association
Council of Infrastructure Financing Authorities
Design-Build Institute of America
Endangered Habitats League
Florida Water Environment Association
Freshwater Future
Georgia Association of Water Professionals
Green Mountain Water Environment Association
Gulf Restoration Network
Hawaii Water Environment Association
Illinois Association of Wastewater Agencies
Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited
Illinois Water Environment Association
Indiana Water Environment Association
Iowa Water Environment Association
Kansas Water Environment Association
Kentucky-Tennessee Water Environment Association
Michigan Water Environment Association
Maine Water Environment Association
Mississippi Water Environment Association
Missouri Public Utility Alliance
Missouri Water Environment Association
Narragansett Water Pollution Control Association
National Association of Clean Water Agencies
National Association of Sewer Service Companies
National Association of Water Companies
National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of our low-income clients
National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
National Rural Water Association
National Water Resources Association
Nebraska Water Environment Association
New England Water Environment Association
New York Water Environment Association
North Carolina AWWA-WEA
North Dakota Water Environment Association
Ohio Environmental Council
Ohio Water Environment Association
Oklahoma Municipal Utility Providers
Oklahoma Water Environment Association
Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies
Pacific Northwest Clean Water Association
Passaic River Coalition

Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Pennsylvania Water Environment Association
Rural Coalition
Rural Community Assistance Partnership
Sierra Club
South Dakota Water Environment Association
Southeast Watershed Alliance of New Hampshire
Southern California Alliance of Publicly Owned Treatment Works
Southern Environmental Law Center
Texas Association of Clean Water Agencies
The Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia
Trout Unlimited
US Water Alliance
Vermont Rural Water Association
WE ACT for Environmental Justice
Water & Wastewater Equipment Manufacturers Association
Water Environment Association of South Carolina
Water Environment Association of Texas
Water Environment Federation
WateReuse Association
WESTCAS
West Coast Infrastructure Exchange
West Virginia Water Environment Association

CC: House Energy & Commerce Committee
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
House Ways & Means Committee
Senate Environment & Public Works Committee
Senate Finance Committee