



Association of California Water Agencies
Leadership Advocacy Information Since 1910



September 24, 2010

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James Inhofe
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Boxer and Ranking Member Inhofe:

It has come to our attention that you are preparing to introduce legislation that would address the presence of lead in drinking water fixtures. We supported a similar proposal that passed the House as Section 17 of H.R. 5320. The limited time remaining in this Congress makes immediate introduction of the Senate version of the bill urgent. We strongly encourage you to introduce this legislation to allow for Senate consideration and passage this Congress.

According to public health experts, lead is a source of numerous potential health risks ranging from organ failure to mental impairment. Reducing lead exposure in ways California has done, such as by requiring all drinking water fixtures sold in the state to meet a "lead free" standard more stringent than federal law, will reduce these health risks. Vermont and Maryland have passed legislation similar to California's, and Section 17 of H.R. 5320 would amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to apply this lower lead standard to all newly installed plumbing fixtures across the country. This will greatly reduce levels of lead in drinking water nationwide.

Public health officials, industry and drinking water agency representatives supported this objective in the House of Representatives, citing the fact that it will neither impose new costs on operations nor create new regulatory hurdles. It is therefore important that the Senate have an opportunity to consider the proposal this year, enabling consistent lead standards throughout the nation.

Chairman Boxer
Ranking Member Inhofe
September 24, 2010
Page 2

Again, as associations representing officials dedicated to the provision of safe public drinking water supplies, we look forward to the introduction and passage of legislation to reduce the presence of lead in drinking water fixtures.

Sincerely yours,

Dianne VanDe Hei
Executive Director
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies

Tom Curtis
Deputy Executive Director for Government Affairs
American Water Works Association

G. Wade Miller
Executive Director
WateReuse Association

David Reynolds
Director of Federal Affairs
Association of California Water Agencies