



January 11, 2018

The Honorable Brian Mast
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Mast:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we wish to express our strong support for H.R. 4492, the “Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Reauthorization Act of 2017,” legislation you introduced to reauthorize and expand the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program.

Created in 2014 as part of that year’s Water Resources Development Act legislation, WIFIA is designed to help communities nationwide access low-cost financing for major drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects – generally those expected to cost in excess of \$20 million and which are not well-served by existing water infrastructure funding programs. Congress appropriated the first funding to support WIFIA loans as part of EPA’s fiscal year 2017 spending bill, and last year the agency solicited letters of interest from communities that wish to seek aid through the program. The response was tremendous, with the agency receiving letters of interest seeking far more in funding than was available. EPA subsequently selected twelve projects to formally apply for WIFIA loans, and the program is currently authorized through the 2019 fiscal year.

H.R. 4492 would take several important steps to solidify the future of this innovative program. First, it would double WIFIA’s FY19 authorization to \$90 million before extending the program for five years, through 2024. In total the bill would authorize spending up to \$690 million on WIFIA over six years – a sum that, based on EPA’s current leveraging ratio of 92:1, could support more than \$63 billion worth of new low-cost water infrastructure investments.

The bill would also take steps to jumpstart the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dormant version of WIFIA, which was also authorized in 2014 but has never been implemented by the Corps. The bill would allow EPA to use its established structure to process applications for funding water resource projects that fall under the jurisdiction of the Corps, while having the Corps retain final decision-making authority on offering loans to those projects. This streamlining of WIFIA’s administrative operations, combined with the increased authorization levels, would greatly expand the number and type of projects able to receive funding assistance through WIFIA.

Our organizations were the earliest advocates for WIFIA on Capitol Hill. We are encouraged by the support the program has received, and the promise it has shown, thus far. H.R. 4492 would position WIFIA for continued future success, so we are proud to offer our support for the legislation.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

American Water Works Association
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
National Association of Clean Water Agencies
Water Environment Federation