

AMWA Welcomes First-Ever Appropriation for Water System Resilience Program

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Today the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA) cheered the release of Congress' FY23 omnibus appropriations legislation, which includes a first-ever appropriation for a new EPA grant program intended to help drinking water systems prepare to withstand the effects of natural disasters and cyber threats. AMWA had been the water sector's leading advocate for this Midsize and Large Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Program.

"The nation's drinking water systems face staggering capital investment needs, and these challenges will only be exacerbated by emerging threats related to natural disasters, climate change, and cyber attacks," said AMWA CEO Tom Dobbins. "This is why AMWA has spent years working with members of the House and Senate to develop and build support for the Midsize and Large Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Program, which will

offer EPA grants to help community water systems serving populations of 10,000 or more people implement projects to build resilience to these threats.”

Authorized in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, EPA’s Midsize and Large Drinking Water System Resilience and Sustainability Program will offer grants to help eligible water systems increase their resilience to natural hazards or extreme weather or reduce their cybersecurity vulnerabilities. AMWA conceived the program more than a decade ago and has tirelessly worked to build its support on Capitol Hill.

Projects eligible for funding through the program will include:

- Water conservation or enhancement of water-use efficiency;
- Modification or relocation of existing drinking water infrastructure at risk of significant impairment by natural hazards or extreme weather events;
- Design or construction of new or modified desalination facilities that serve existing communities;
- Water supply enhancement through watershed management or source water protection;
- Enhancement of energy efficiency or the use or generation of renewable energy in the conveyance or treatment of drinking water;
- Development or implementation of other measures to increase the water system’s resilience to natural hazards and extreme weather events or reduce its cybersecurity vulnerabilities;
- Conservation of water or enhancement of water supply through reuse measures; or
- Formation of regional water partnerships to collaboratively address documented water shortages.

The program is authorized at \$50 million per year through FY26, and the FY23 omnibus spending bill provided it with \$5 million. It is one of just four new IIJA-authorized water infrastructure grant programs in line to receive FY23 funding and was awarded the largest single appropriation of any of these new programs.

“We appreciate Congress’ initial \$5 million investment, and we are confident that this appropriation will spur EPA to get the program up and running as soon as possible,” Dobbins continued. “Looking ahead, we will urge the House and Senate to fund the Midsize and Large Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience

and Sustainability Program at its fully-authorized level of \$50 million in the years ahead.”

For over 40 years, the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies has been the nation's unified and definitive voice for the nation's largest publicly owned drinking water systems on legislative, regulatory, security, sustainability, and utility management issues.

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