



March 20, 2018

Chairman Lisa Murkowski
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20510

Ranking Member Tom Udall
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chairman Ken Calvert
House Appropriations Subcommittee
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Betty McCollum
House Appropriations Subcommittee
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Udall, Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

As Congress begins work on the Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) appropriations bills, the water sector and the communities across the nation we serve strongly urge your support of continued federal investment in water infrastructure, geographic watershed and state grant programs, water systems security, and water research. These programs are vital for protecting public health and the environment, promoting economic growth, and ensuring states and local communities can meet their increasing demands for clean and safe water.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that our nation's drinking water and clean water infrastructure will require more than \$650 billion in investment over the next 20 years just to maintain current levels of service, with some estimating the need at over \$1 trillion. With the increase in FY19 non-defense discretionary spending as agreed to in the recently passed bipartisan budget agreement, we strongly believe this presents an opportunity to utilize the increased spending caps to provide funding that reflects the true water infrastructure needs across the country.

Core programs such as the Clean Water (CW) and Drinking Water (DW) State Revolving Funds (SRFs) and the Water Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act (WIFIA) program provide funding for critical drinking water and clean water projects, many of which are in communities that need access to low-interest loans in order to not overburden lower income ratepayers and remain in compliance with federal and state regulations. These programs are also important for communities pursuing water reuse projects to address pressing water resource challenges. We request that Congress double the FY19 funding provided for the SRFs over currently enacted (FY17) levels, or a total of \$2.8 billion for the Clean Water SRF and \$1.8 billion for the Drinking Water SRF. Additionally, we request that WIFIA be fully funded at the authorized FY19 level of \$50 million, which EPA indicates has the potential to be leveraged into \$5 billion in funding for water infrastructure projects.

Our organizations also remain steadfast in our support for maintaining funding for geographic and categorical grant programs which help address watershed and nonpoint source pollution issues and help utilities and communities implement stormwater management and address nutrients and other impairments through conservation and strategic partnership efforts. EPA's geographic watershed programs such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, Long Island Sound and Chesapeake Bay play a vital role in helping states and local communities protect water quality through strategic watershed-based investments.

Similarly, EPA's Section 319 grants are critical to helping States, territories and tribes provide technical and financial assistance to implement and assess nonpoint source management. These funds play an important role in source water protection and in aiding communities and utilities as they face increasingly face stormwater management responsibilities.

We urge that funding for the geographic and categorical grant programs be maintained at FY17 levels or higher to ensure further gains continue to be made to protect and restore our nation's watersheds.

Additionally, the EPA Office of Water's Water Security Division (WSD) provides valuable resources and support for water agencies to help them prepare for a host of natural and man-made threats that potentially could disrupt or destroy critical drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. Nearly all of the 53,000 drinking water utilities and 16,000 wastewater utilities in the U.S. rely upon the tools, training, workshops, and educational guides provided by WSD. We urge that funding be maintained at current levels.

We also urge Congress to continue to fund extramural research programs and support technology development and data collection and monitoring programs within a variety of federal agencies, including EPA, DOE, and the U.S. Geological Survey. The information developed through these programs helps local water, wastewater, and stormwater agencies address some of the nation's most pressing water quality and supply challenges. Continued research funding is critical to improving environmental health, maintaining quality of life for communities across the U.S., facilitating cost-effective infrastructure investments, and maintaining the economic advantages that clean and safe water provides our nation in the global marketplace.

We greatly appreciate the Subcommittee's attention to these important programs. Please reach out to any of our organizations to discuss these issues and funding requests further.

Sincerely,

American Public Works Association

American Society of Civil Engineers

American Water Works Association

Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies

National Association of Clean Water Agencies

The Water Research Foundation

Water Environment Federation

WaterReuse Association

