



October 19, 2015

The Honorable Carlos Curbelo
1429 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
1610 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Curbelo and Napolitano:

On behalf of the nation's drinking water and wastewater utilities, we thank you for introducing H.R. 3756, the "WIFIA Improvement Act." We strongly support this legislation, and urge you to work with your colleagues in Congress to advance this important bill in the coming weeks.

As you are aware, last year Congress approved the "Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act" (WIFIA), which authorizes a five-year low-interest loan pilot program for large-scale water infrastructure projects. WIFIA has enjoyed broad bipartisan support, but its potential has been limited by a provision that prohibits communities from funding water infrastructure projects with a combination of WIFIA loan funds and tax-exempt debt. Our water utility members have warned that the ban on supplementing WIFIA loans with municipal bonds and other tax-exempt debt would significantly discourage use of the new loan program.

The "WIFIA Improvement Act" would repeal this unworkable limitation and allow communities to fund water infrastructure projects through a combination of WIFIA loans and tax-exempt debt. The bill would not prevent any WIFIA recipient from continuing to explore additional sources of project funding, such as taxable debt or a partnership with a private sector organization, and would therefore position WIFIA as an attractive option to help communities across the country affordably finance major water infrastructure projects.

Earlier this year the U.S. Senate approved a similar modification to WIFIA as part of the bipartisan "DRIVE Act." With the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee preparing to consider its own transportation bill later this week, this legislation could serve as a logical vehicle to advance the "WIFIA Improvement Act" and ensure that WIFIA is positioned to effectively support local investments in water and wastewater infrastructure as soon as possible.

Again, we strongly support the "WIFIA Improvement Act," and we are prepared to work with you to move this critical bill through Congress. We thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

American Water Works Association
National Association of Clean Water Agencies
Water & Wastewater Equipment Manufacturers
Association

Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
Water Environment Federation

Cc: The Honorable Bill Shuster
The Honorable Peter DeFazio
The Honorable Bob Gibbs