



The Honorable Jack Reed
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
131 Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
125 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

April 3, 2014

Dear Chairman Reed and Senator Murkowski:

As the Senate Appropriations Committee develops spending priorities for FY 2015, we urge you to reject the cuts proposed in the Administration's FY 2015 budget request and continue the FY 2014 funding levels of at least \$1.449 billion and \$907 million for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs respectively. As cities, counties, and mayors, state drinking and clean water administrators, and drinking and waste water utilities whose communities rely on these programs daily, we urge you to continue this commitment.

Modernizing and replacing the country's aging water infrastructure is one of the largest public works needs that our nation faces. Meeting this need will require a serious investment. EPA estimates \$187.9

billion in wastewater infrastructure investment needs and \$384.2 billion in drinking water infrastructure investment needs over the next 20 years. It must be noted, however, that EPA's needs surveys only consider projects that would be eligible for SRF funding. A recent study by the American Water Works Association found that the amount the nation needs to invest in drinking water infrastructure regardless of SRF eligibility actually totals about \$1 trillion over the next 25 years. Clean water infrastructure investment needs roughly parallel this amount.

As the federal government continues to address its fiscal challenges, it is critical to preserve federal investments in programs like the SRFs that will yield substantial economic benefits. The U.S. Conference of Mayors reports that each public dollar invested in water infrastructure increases private long-term Gross Domestic Product output by \$6.35. The National Association of Utility Contractors estimates that \$1 billion invested in water and wastewater infrastructure can create over 26,000 jobs. Further, the U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that each job created in the local water and wastewater industry creates 3.68 jobs in the national economy and each public dollar spent yields \$2.62 dollars in economic output in other industries.

In addition to the significant economic, public health, and environmental benefits that our communities will reap from water and wastewater infrastructure investments, investment in source water pollution prevention strategies are equally important to our ability to deliver to our residents the clean water they deserve. The EPA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have heralded the Clean Water Act Section 319 grant program as a successful and dynamic program that focuses on local partnerships with agricultural entities as a strategy to reduce water pollution such as excess nutrient runoff. When combined with USDA programs, the Section 319 program yields \$4 in watershed investment for every federal dollar invested. We urge you to fund this program at the FY 2014 level of \$159 million.

It is clear that federal investment in water and wastewater infrastructure leverages enormous benefits nationally and for our local economies. Considering the importance of water and wastewater infrastructure to the well-being of the American people, our communities, and to our economy, it is essential that the federal government remains a strong and reliable partner in meeting the nation's clean water and safe drinking water needs. Every federal dollar directed to these programs enhances safe and clean water for all.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact any of our organizations if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
U.S. Conference of Mayors

Matthew Chase
Executive Director
National Association of Counties

Clarence Anthony
Executive Director
National League of Cities

Alexandra Dunn
Executive Director
Association of Clean Water Administrators

James Taft
Executive Director
Association of State Drinking Water Administrators

Rick Farrell
Executive Director
Council of Infrastructure Financing Authorities

Diane VanDe Hei
Executive Director
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies

Peter King
Executive Director
American Public Works Association

Tom Curtis
Director of Government Affairs
American Water Works Association

Ken Kirk
Executive Director
National Association of Clean Water Agencies

Michael Dean
Executive Director
National Association of Water Companies

Eileen J. O'Neill
Executive Director
Water Environment Federation

Cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations