

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 26, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

Should the Senate pursue a package of investments designed to spur job creation and growth in the economy at large, we request that you include a significant investment for water and wastewater infrastructure at least on par with overall funding levels included in the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)* - \$3 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program (CWSRF) and \$3 billion for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program (DWSRF). We are certainly mindful, however, that any jobs program must be fiscally responsible regarding the deficit and we are prepared to work with you to reach that goal.

Investment in water and wastewater infrastructure is a wise use of federal funds. Studies have shown that investment in water infrastructure creates solid jobs and contributes greatly to economic growth. In fact, it is estimated that every \$1 billion provided for water and wastewater infrastructure projects creates between 20,000 to 27,000 jobs and an economic ripple effect that adds \$2.87 to \$3.46 billion to the economy as a result of that investment. A second round of investment in the CWSRF and DWSRF could be quickly distributed now that the States have developed expedited procedures under the *ARRA* program.

We know that American families are suffering from unacceptable levels of unemployment, imperiling our economic recovery, at a time when too many of our nation's water and wastewater systems are badly in need of repair. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that there is an "infrastructure deficit" for water and wastewater of \$662 billion that is causing many communities to raise rates at the same time that households are struggling to make ends meet. Though the *ARRA* helped reduce this "infrastructure deficit" somewhat, according to a recent survey by the Environment Council of the States (ECOS), thirty three States have over \$56 billion in ready-to-go water and wastewater infrastructure projects awaiting financing through the State Revolving Fund programs for wastewater and drinking water.

Ensuring that America's water resources are available for public use, and to protect public health, is becoming a greater challenge for all of our communities. Each of our States faces broken water mains, sewage overflows, and scarcity of supply throughout any given year, yet over the past decade, we have seen federal investments in clean and safe water drastically

cut. At the same time, it is well documented that communities that can afford to invest in their water resources do well economically – attracting business investment, commercial fishing operations, and recreational opportunities for their residents. This economic activity, in turn, creates jobs.

Unemployment in the construction industry is over 19%. States need over \$56 billion for immediate water and wastewater infrastructure needs. Spending on water and wastewater infrastructure creates good paying jobs and improves overall economic activity. If the Senate moves forward with a jobs package, no investment makes more sense than one in water infrastructure. We urge you to include \$3 billion for the CWSRF and \$3 billion for the DWSRF.

Sincerely,

Barbara

John Reed

W. F. B. A

Arlen Smith

Chuck Sch

Jim Johnson

Rebbie Starnow

Jeffrey A. Markley

John Thomas

Barbara Nickolls

Shirley Brown

Mark Udall

Mary Ganshin

Ann Klobuchar

Vom Udall

Paul Begala

Kristen E. Gilliland

Doc Carey, Jr.

Id Kanfer

B. J. Sanders

Al Franken

Dianne Feinstein

Robert Menendez

Carl Levin

Richard W. Burr

John F. Kerry

Kay R. Hagan

R. W. Byrd

Frank R. Lautenberg

Mark Royce

Cc: The Honorable Barbara Boxer, Chairman, Environment and Public Works Committee
The Honorable James M. Inhofe, Ranking Member, Environment and Public Works Committee
The Honorable Daniel Inouye, Chairman, Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee