

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING PROPOSAL

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THE NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Our nation's water infrastructure needs have grown while federal funding for clean water has declined. While the needs are estimated to be over \$9.3 billion a year, appropriations for clean water infrastructure have averaged just over \$1.25 billion a year since 2000. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) has given our nation's wastewater infrastructure a grade of "D" in their most recent report card. Last year alone, American communities suffered more than 310,000 water main breaks and saw overflowing combined sewer systems, causing contamination, property damage, disruptions in the water supply, and massive traffic jams. According to ASCE, if current trends persist, by 2020, unreliable infrastructure will cost businesses \$147 billion and households \$59 billion. It is time to establish a dedicated trust fund for water infrastructure similar to the Highway Trust Fund.

CREATES A TRUST FUND

A Water Protection and Reinvestment Trust Fund will provide a small, deficit-neutral, protected source of revenue to help states replace, repair, and rehabilitate critical wastewater treatment facilities.

Most of the funding created by the Water Protection and Reinvestment Act will be distributed as grants and loans through the existing Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF). These funds are grants used to capitalize state funds, which then provide loans to publicly owned treatment works for wastewater treatment construction.

Twenty percent of the funds in the Water Protection and Reinvestment Trust Fund will be used to finance an innovative financing program based on the successful Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act. This funding would be used to provide low-cost capital to clean water infrastructure projects.

ADDS NEEDED REVENUE

The Water Protection and Reinvestment Act would create a voluntary labeling and contributory system to which businesses that rely on a clean water source could opt-in to. Businesses could choose to place a small label on their products indicating their commitment to protecting America's clean water. For each unit that displayed such a label, companies would contribute \$0.03 to the Water Trust Fund. Businesses and products that could take advantage of the labeling system include: water based beverages, including soda and juice, and other products disposed of in wastewater, such as toilet paper and toothpaste.

THE WATER PROTECTION AND REINVESTMENT ACT WILL:

- Protect public health by providing the funding communities need to provide sewer service.
- Restore the environment by providing incentives for green infrastructure that reduces energy and water use.
- Create jobs and improve the economy by investing in projects to repair and replace aging systems. The National Association of Utility Contractors estimates that \$1 billion invested in wastewater infrastructure can create over 26,000 jobs. The Department of Commerce estimates that each job created in the local 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.
- Reduce pollution by decreasing the number and severity of sewer overflows.

For more information on Congressman Blumenauer's water infrastructure agenda, please visit his website at www.blumenauer.house.gov or contact Tyler Frisbee at (202) 225-4811.