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Ken Kirk

February 3, 2009

Dear Senator,

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), whose members serve the majority of Americans and collectively treat and reclaim over eighteen billion gallons of wastewater every day, urges you to support two key amendments during Senate consideration of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*: the Murray/Feinstein and the McCaskill amendments.

The Murray/Feinstein amendment will increase the amount of money allocated to critical water and wastewater infrastructure projects to \$13 billion from the bill's current level of \$6 billion. This amount of funding is entirely consistent with reports from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Water Infrastructure Network (WIN), estimating the Nation's water and wastewater infrastructure at \$300-500 billion over the next 20 years. Currently, NACWA members alone have identified nearly \$17 billion in ready-to-go wastewater infrastructure projects nationwide.

Providing a significant investment in water and wastewater infrastructure would help address the growing investment gap and create good jobs in communities across America. NACWA estimates that an investment of \$13 billion will create or support about 450,000 good jobs improving and upgrading our Nation's vast system of pipes, treatment facilities, and other water infrastructure. These jobs cannot be exported, and will employ workers with a broad range of skills, including engineers, construction workers, architects, and maintenance workers.

The McCaskill amendment would allow states to distribute funding from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) in the form of grants. Grants will provide the most stimulus to the economy in the shortest amount of time by making funding more available to communities hit hard by the economic downturn. Many communities have said that without grant financing, stimulus funding will not help them as they struggle to finance large and expensive wastewater and water infrastructure projects because they are hesitant to incur additional debt obligations the cost of which cannot be passed on to ratepayers.

December 18, 2008
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Additionally, some states require voter approval for loans. This would reduce the overall effectiveness of the recovery package because it would be more difficult to use that money in a timely manner. Like the transportation sector, we believe that the greatest stimulative value for recovery package investments in clean water infrastructure is grant financing.

NACWA and its members stand ready to participate in the economic recovery spawned by the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*. Public utilities across the country have expressed their personal commitment to putting this funding to use quickly. Please support the Murray/Feinstein and the McCaskill amendments. Please contact Pat Sinicropi at 202/533-1823 or psinicropi@nacwa.org or Byron DeLuke at 202/833-4655 or bdeluke@nacwa.org to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Kirk". The "K" is large and stylized, with the first name "Kirk" written in a cursive script to its right.

Ken Kirk
Executive Director
National Association of Clean Water Agencies