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Ken Kirk

March 22, 2011

The Honorable Robert E. Latta
U.S. House of Representatives
1323 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Latta:


The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) thanks you for your continued leadership in raising issues of affordability challenges faced by clean water utilities in meeting clean water goals. We are excited that you have re-introduced the "*Clean Water Affordability Act of 2011*". NACWA supports this proposal and encourages all Members of the House of Representatives to co-sponsor it. The legislation is important to ensure financially challenged communities have the flexibility they need to advance clean water projects in a way that will minimize financial impacts on already stressed ratepayers and municipal budgets while maximizing water quality benefits.

The legislation requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to broaden its financial capability determinations to more accurately reflect community financial challenges including age of population, unemployment rate, poverty rate, fiscal health and other considerations. Currently, Median Household Income (MHI) in many cases is used as the predominant indicator of financial capability for a community. Relying on such a narrow indicator does not take into account the significant fiscal constraints faced by communities with a broad and economically diverse constituency.

The legislation also seeks to extend repayment periods for Clean Water State Revolving Fund loans and implementation schedules for mandated clean water investments to thirty years. All of these actions would reduce a community's financial exposure while ensuring that water quality continues to improve and investments continue to be made in clean water infrastructure.

NACWA looks forward to working with you to advance this legislation and encourages Congress to act swiftly to ensure its passage.

Sincerely,



Ken Kirk
Executive Director