



SUPPORT S. 2848, WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2016 (WRDA)

S. 2848, the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 (WRDA) reported out of the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee on April 28th on a 19-1 vote. The bi-partisan bill authorizes critical projects for flood control, navigation, and ecosystem restoration – and addresses critical issues confronting local governmental entities as they comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act and Clean Water Act. **As the leading advocate for responsible national policies that advance clean water, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) urges support for S.2848 and its expeditious debate in the full Senate. The legislation has strong bi-partisan support and the Congressional Budget Office scores the bill with a net surplus of \$6 million over 10 years to the U.S. Treasury.**

Clean Water Act Reforms to Address Ratepayer Affordability

S. 2848 includes Clean Water Act (CWA)-related provisions to address ratepayer affordability challenges:

- Sec. 7205 requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to revise the 1997 *Combined Sewer Overflows—Guidance for Financial Capability Assessment and Schedule Development* and consider local economic conditions, essential community investments, and impact on low-income populations in affordability determinations;
- Sec. 7203 codifies EPA's 2012 *Integrated Planning Framework*, including authority to permit compliance schedules for meeting water quality-based effluent limits beyond a single 5-year permit cycle;
- Sec. 7203 establishes an *Office of Municipal Ombudsman* within the EPA Administrator's Office to provide a voice for municipalities struggling to comply with CWA mandates and technical assistance for meeting compliance obligations with all environmental statutes;
- Sec. 7204 directs EPA to ensure that *innovative stormwater management infrastructure approaches are fully integrated* within CWA compliance programs;
- Sec. 7202 authorizes \$75 million in *technical assistance program for small systems*

Safe Drinking Water and Lead Removal

S. 2848 addresses critical drinking water infrastructure challenges through policy reforms aimed at preventing future drinking water crises:

- Sec. 7109-10 requires electronic lead test reporting, *improves notification* when action levels are exceeded and explicitly authorizes EPA to notify the public of drinking water test results when necessary;
- Sec. 7016 authorizes \$1.4 billion to *aid small/disadvantaged communities in meeting SDWA requirements*, prioritizing communities lacking basic drinking water or wastewater services;
- Sec. 7107 authorizes \$300 million for *lead reduction*;
- Sec. 7111 authorizes \$100 million for *voluntary school and child care drinking water testing*;

- Sec. 7112 *codifies WaterSense*, EPA's voluntary appliance labeling program targeting water conservation.

Investments in Clean and Safe Water Infrastructure and Innovation

S. 2848 authorizes investment in water infrastructure by leveraging capital and technology in the private marketplace:

- Sec. 7303 establishes a *Water Infrastructure Trust Fund* fueled by a voluntary consumer goods label to augment federal investment in the Clean Water & Drinking Water SRFs.
- Sec. 7302 permanently authorizes the Water Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act (WIFIA);
- Sec. 7304, 7308 and 7309 authorize funding to spur advances in water technology and accelerate its use under the Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs.
- Sec. 7201 reauthorizes the *Wet Weather Grant Program* at \$1.8 billion over 5 years to reduce sewer overflows and municipal stormwater;

Ecosystem Restoration

S. 2848 authorizes \$2.24 billion for restoration in large watersheds across 11 states – money used by local governments and other public and private entities to advance water quality in key watersheds

- Authorizes \$1.5B over five years for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative – a top bipartisan priority for Senators from several states (*IL, IN, MI, WI, OH, PA, NY, MN*)
- Authorizes \$415M over ten years for the Lake Tahoe Restoration Initiative (*NV, CA*)
- Authorizes \$325M over five years for the Long Island Sound Restoration Initiative (*NY, CT*)

**WE URGE SENATORS TO ADVANCE THE BIPARTISAN S. 2848
AND SUPPORT FINAL PASSAGE**

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