



March 22, 2012

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Inouye, Chairman Reed, Senator Cochran, and Senator Murkowski:

As Congress considers the Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 budget request, we urge you to reject the offered reductions to two key clean water programs, and instead maintain the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) at the FY12 levels of \$1,468,806,000 and \$919,363,000, respectively. It is critical that States receive sufficient funding to carry out core clean and safe water functions in partnership with the federal government, including administration of the SRFs. Accordingly, we also ask that you provide \$330 million for the Clean Water Act §106 Operating Grant program and \$130 million for the Public Water Work System Supervision Program (PWSS).¹ The SRFs create jobs, repair crumbling water and wastewater infrastructure, and protect public health and environment. The 106 and PWSS programs fund solid and needed state jobs, including for example, engineers, permit writers, inspectors, biologists, and compliance assistance officials – who play critical roles in helping ensure clean and safe water for all Americans. It is thus imperative that these programs receive the requested funds, which are in fact far below the well-documented actual needs of these programs.

The SRFs invest in short- and long-term improvements in states and communities across the nation, providing significant environmental, economic and public health benefits. It is well documented that our nation's water and wastewater infrastructure is reaching a tipping point. The American Society of Civil Engineers' latest infrastructure report card gave the nation's water and wastewater infrastructure a D-, the lowest of any category. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates \$187.9 billion in

¹ Furthermore, we do not support EPA-directed use of these already insufficient funds for specific federal priorities. These funds must be free of strings so that states can direct them to the largest pollution problems and activities.

wastewater needs and \$334.8 billion in drinking water needs over the next 20 years. It must be noted, however, that the Agency's needs surveys only consider projects that would be eligible for SRF funding. A recent study by the American Water Works Association (AWWA) revealed that the nation's need to reinvest in drinking water infrastructure alone, actually totals about \$1 trillion over the next 25 years. Clean water needs roughly parallel that.

Investments in water and wastewater infrastructure provide substantial economic benefits to communities. The U.S. Conference of Mayors reports that each public dollar invested in water infrastructure increases private long-term GOP output by \$6.35. The National Association of Utility Contractors estimates that \$1 billion invested in water and wastewater infrastructure can create over 26,000 jobs. Further, the Department of Commerce estimates that each job created in the local water and 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. It is clear that federal investment in water and wastewater leverages enormous benefits nationally and for our local economies.

In addition to the critical economic, public health, and environmental impacts from water and wastewater infrastructure investment, we will not deliver to the American public the clean water they expect without source water pollution prevention strategies. The Clean Water Act §319 grant program has been heralded by EPA and USDA as a successful and dynamic program that focuses on local partnerships with agricultural entities to reduce water pollution such as excess nutrient runoff. This program is in need of additional funds, which when leveraged with USDA programs, yields \$4 in watershed investment for every federal dollar. We urge that funding for this program be increased to \$227 million.²

Considering the importance of water and wastewater infrastructure to the well-being of the American people and to our economy, it is critical that the federal government remains a reliable partner in meeting the nation's clean water and safe drinking water needs. Every federal dollar directed to these programs enhances safe and clean water for all.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and please contact Hannah Mellman at hmellman@nacwa.org if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Ken Kirk
Executive Director
National Association of Clean Water Agencies

Alexandra Dunn
Executive Director
Association of Clean Water Administrators

Diane VanDe Hei
Executive Director
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies

Jeff Eger
Executive Director
Water Environment Federation

Tom Curtis
Director of Government Affairs
American Water Works Association

Peter King
Executive Director
American Public Works Association

James Taft
Executive Director
Association of State Drinking Water Administrators

Cc: Members of the Senate

² This figure is consistent with the recommendations of leading conservation groups (See National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) FY2013 Issue Papers).