



March 20, 2017

The Honorable Mike Enzi
Chairman
Committee on the Budget
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Diane Black
Chairman
Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Yarmuth
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Enzi, Senator Sanders, Chairman Black, and Representative Yarmuth:

As Congress undertakes budget negotiations to finalize Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 spending bills and proposes spending levels for FY 2018, the water sector organizations above have come together to support continued federal investment in water infrastructure, geographic watershed programs, and water research programs – all of which provide essential support to States and local communities to ensure the availability of safe and clean water.

Since enactment of the Clean Water Act in 1972, Congress has supported a strong federal funding partnership with States and local ratepayers to pay for critical investments to ensure the goals of the Act are fulfilled. Infrastructure investment programs such as the Clean Water (CW) and Drinking Water (DW) State Revolving Funds (SRFs), the Water Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act (WIFIA), geographic watershed protection programs such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and the Chesapeake Bay Initiative, and Title XVI funding supporting western water challenges, provide key funding to help States and communities meet today's critical and costly water challenges. EPA also provides important funding for water research initiatives that benefit local communities and local ratepayers.

Our organizations were heartened to see a proposed FY 2018 Budget Request that includes an increase to the SRFs and robust funding for the WIFIA program. However, the proposed elimination of funding for geographic watershed programs like the GLRI and the Chesapeake Bay, along with proposed reductions to important water-related research programs and state grant programs, jeopardize progress that has been made in achieving our national water quality goals. We urge Congress to maintain funding for these programs in EPA's budget that support real

investments in safe and clean water that protect our public health and ensure our quality of life. We also urge Congress to ensure that funding for the SRFs and WIFIA programs is not reduced.

Our national water challenges are growing more complex: the majority of drinking water, wastewater treatment, and stormwater management systems operate using pipes that are well beyond their useful life; pollution from diffuse sources such as urban stormwater and agricultural runoff continue to stymie efforts to meet water quality goals; and increasingly unpredictable weather events challenge our ability to provide consistent levels of service. Operating these systems is also growing more complex as utilities confront cybersecurity and other threats unforeseen even a decade ago. Now is not the time to pull back federal funding.

We appreciate your leadership on these important issues, and look forward to continued engagement with Congress during the budget development process.

Sincerely,

Adam Krantz, Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Clean Water Agencies

Eileen O'Neill, Executive Director
Water Environment Federation

Melissa Meeker, Executive Director
WateReuse Association

Rob Renner, Chief Executive Officer
Water Research Foundation