

August 29, 2017

Honorable
United States House of Representatives / U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

Dear

On behalf of the undersigned organizations from across New York State, we respectfully urge you to support robust funding for clean water infrastructure in the FY18 federal budget. Specifically, we urge you to support at least doubling the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) from FY17 levels. Additionally, New York State and all funding recipients should receive proportionately more funding through the existing CWSRF allotment formula.

As you know, New York's tremendous need for water infrastructure funding is well-documented. The EPA has reported that over the next 20 years, New York faces the largest need in the country for wastewater infrastructure investment, and the third largest in the country for drinking water infrastructure investment. New York State has estimated that the combined wastewater and drinking water needs in the state exceed \$80 billion over the next 20 years. Numbers like these have translated to a reality that has meant thousands of water main breaks that wreak havoc on local economies, contaminated drinking water supplies that threaten public health, and billions of gallons of raw and combined sewage that foul our precious waterways.

Despite the dire need to increase funding for water infrastructure, the FY18 funding bill for the Department of the Interior, EPA, and other agencies passed out of committee in the U.S. House would cut the CWSRF by 18% to about \$1.14 billion, and keep funding for the DWSRF flat at \$863 million. American citizens have the basic right and expectation from government that safe and clean water will flow from our taps, and that it won't make us sick. By failing to provide adequate funding, government is failing to address aging water infrastructure and threatening those basic rights.

Our organizations strongly support an effort led by Representative John Katko, and a bipartisan group of over 70 members in the U.S. House, to double both the CWSRF and DWSRF in the FY18 budget. This more accurately reflects the water infrastructure needs across the nation, and will help ensure communities have access to affordable financing. We urge your support.

The SRF programs play an essential role in funding wastewater and drinking water infrastructure in New York. Not only does this protect our precious water resources and help deliver clean drinking water to New Yorkers, it is an investment that spurs economic development and job creation. Every billion dollars invested in water infrastructure supports 28,000 jobs. Every dollar invested in clean water infrastructure increases long-term GDP by \$6.35, and each job created through clean water infrastructure supports 3.68 jobs throughout the economy.

In addition to providing increased funding for the SRF programs overall, it is critical that the CWSRF program continues to be structured in a way that provides New York State with its fair share of funding. Currently, the formula used to allocate CWSRF funding to the states provides New York State with the largest share (11%). New York State has the nation's largest need for wastewater infrastructure investment, and therefore this allotment reflects the true, demonstrated clean water infrastructure needs of our state. We urge you to reject any changes to the CWSRF allotment formula that would decrease New York's share of the CWSRF, as this would lead to stalled projects, as well as adverse environmental and economic impacts across the state.

While local governments and ratepayers pay the vast majority of costs associated with maintaining and upgrading clean water infrastructure, they cannot do it alone and need help from the state and federal governments. Recognizing the state's clean water infrastructure needs, New York State stepped up and provided a historic \$2.5 billion investment in clean water infrastructure in the SFY2017-18 New York State budget. Increased federal investment through the SRF programs would now be stretched further and leverage even more resources, making significant progress in tackling the backlog of water infrastructure projects across New York.

With your leadership, New York State can benefit from cleaner water, healthier communities, and increased economic development. Please support at least doubling the CWSRF and DWSRF from current levels in FY18 budget, and ensure that New York State and all funding recipients receive proportionately more funding through the existing CWSRF allotment formula. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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