



The New York Water Environment Association, Inc.
The Water Quality Management Professionals

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November 27, 2012

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senate
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Schumer and Gillibrand,

As Congress negotiates a final Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 budget for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we are writing on behalf of New York State wastewater utilities across the state to urge you to ensure funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) at the Senate proposed figures of \$1.466 billion and \$917.892 million. Accordingly, we also ask that you provide \$238.403 million for the Clean Water Act §106 Operating Grant program and \$190.320 million for the Public Water Work System Supervision Program¹, which fund critical state jobs that help ensure clean and safe water to protect public health for all Americans.

The New York Water Environment Association (NYWEA), founded in 1929, is a statewide nonprofit organization of 2,500 water professionals dedicated to the preservation, protection and enhancement of New York's water resources.

As Hurricane Sandy reminded us, modernizing and replacing the country's aging water infrastructure may be the single largest public works need that our Nation faces and it will require a serious investment especially to hard hit areas of New York State. EPA estimates \$187.9 billion in wastewater needs and \$334.8 billion in drinking water needs over the next 20 years across the country. It must be noted, however, that EPA'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 more than \$1 trillion over the next 25 years. Clean water needs roughly parallel that.

¹ Furthermore, we strongly discourage EPA from directing that these already insufficient funds be spent on specific federal priorities. States must retain flexibility to direct funds to the largest pollution problems and activities.

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
November 21, 2012

Page 2

In order to meet our Nation's fiscal challenges and the needs in New York State while ensuring the economy continues to grow, it is critical that federal investments are made in programs that will yield substantial economic benefits. The U.S. Conference of Mayors reports that each public dollar invested in water infrastructure increases private long-term Gross Domestic Product 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 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 investments, 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, would yield \$4 in watershed investment for every federal dollar. We urge that funding for this program be provided at \$164.493 million.

It is clear that federal investment in water and wastewater leverages enormous benefits nationally and for our local economies. 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 NYWEA's Executive Director Patricia Cerro-Reehil at pcr@nywea.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Lyons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "L".

Richard J. Lyons, President
New York Water Environment Association