

PRESS RELEASE

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NACWA Praises Bipartisan Low-Income Water Assistance Legislation

Demonstrates Critical Congressional Awareness of Water Affordability Challenges

(Washington, DC) – The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) strongly supports the [Low-Income Water Customer Assistance Programs Act](#) (S.3564), officially unveiled today by Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD). This legislation represents a critical step forward in helping address the daunting affordability challenges facing public drinking water and clean water utilities across the nation. NACWA thanks Sen. Cardin and his co-sponsor, Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS), for their bipartisan leadership on this important issue.

“This bipartisan legislation demonstrates that water affordability, and the federal government’s role in helping address it, is not a Democrat vs. Republican issue or an urban vs. rural community issue,” said Adam Krantz, NACWA’s Chief Executive Officer. “Instead, it demonstrates that water affordability challenges impact all Americans in all parts of the country, and these challenges require a unified, national approach that acknowledges the need for local communities to raise rates to cover the cost of service, while also providing assistance to those ratepayers most impacted by increased rates. If the federal government views food, heating, and cooling as basic needs that warrant federal assistance for those who can’t afford them, then water should certainly qualify for assistance as well. NACWA has been a national leader in promoting this concept, and is grateful to Sen. Cardin and Sen. Wicker for their bipartisan leadership on this legislation.”

As NACWA’s [Cost of Clean Water Index](#) shows, the average residential cost for clean water services has outstripped the Consumer Price Index over the past decade, and these costs are expected to continue rising well into the future. Further, nonpartisan research shows that more than 95% of investment in water and sewer infrastructure is funded locally – and local governments and their ratepayers will continue to bear the vast majority of increased rates. Given that much of these rising costs are related to unfunded federal mandates, alongside challenges like aging infrastructure, NACWA believes it is only appropriate for the federal government to provide some financial assistance to those low-income ratepayers who will be most disproportionately impacted as rates are increased to cover a utility’s true cost of service for environmental and public health protection.

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About NACWA

For nearly 50 years, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) has been the nation's recognized leader in legislative, regulatory and legal advocacy on the full spectrum of clean water issues. NACWA represents public wastewater and stormwater agencies of all sizes nationwide. Our unique and growing network strengthens the advocacy voice for all member utilities, and ensures they have the tools necessary to provide affordable and sustainable clean water for all. Our vision is to represent every utility as a NACWA member, helping to build a strong and sustainable clean water future. For more information, visit us at www.nacwa.org.