



June 17, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell of Kentucky
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator McConnell,

We write to you as a diverse coalition comprising representatives of the drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, flood risk management and local government sectors because we believe it is critically important for the full Senate to consider S. 2848, the *Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2016*, before the chamber breaks for its summer recess.

WRDA is strongly bipartisan legislation that passed the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on April 28 on a near-unanimous vote of 19-1. The bill authorizes critical U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects that drive investment in navigation, flood management, and ecosystem restoration.

Further, S. 2848 includes common sense reforms to the Clean Water Act (CWA) that, if enacted, will provide much needed relief to communities struggling to comply with unfunded federal mandates. The legislation will help ensure clean water investments remain affordable to ratepayers and focus on generating the greatest water quality gains at the lowest cost. The legislative package is especially valuable to communities like Lexington, Louisville, and those in Northern Kentucky, all of which are currently under federal consent decree to meet CWA requirements.

Beyond these badly needed reforms, S. 2848 includes authorizations for innovative programs that will help communities nationwide improve their municipal water infrastructure. Among other priorities, WRDA will help local communities reduce public health risks posed by lead, offer aid to schools seeking to improve the quality of their drinking water, increase assistance for rural water and wastewater utilities, advance research to improve water treatment, reaffirm the value of the State Revolving Funds and jumpstart a new financing program for major water infrastructure projects.

Communities across the country of all sizes stand to directly benefit from WRDA, but time is running short to enact the bill this year and maintain its two-year authorization cycle. We therefore urge you to bring this important legislation before the full Senate as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

U.S. Conference of Mayors

National Association of Counties

National League of Cities

Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies

American Public Works Association

American Society of Civil Engineers

American Water Works Association

National Association of Clean Water Agencies

National Association of Flood & Stormwater Management Agencies

National Association of Regional Councils

National Rural Water Association

Rural Community Assistance Partnership Inc.

Water Environment & Reuse Foundation

Water Environment Federation

Water Research Foundation

WateReuse Association

cc: Senators Reid, Cornyn, Schumer